

The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida

Winter 2003 Grant Summaries

Dollar amounts are for one year, unless otherwise specified

Alachua County Organization for Rural Needs, Inc. (ACORN), Brooker

Amount: \$67,035

Purpose: Addresses the full range of women's health needs by funding the "Across the Generation Improving Women's Health" program which offers standard OBGYN services, health education and women's preventive care, as well as nutritional counseling and mental/behavioral health counseling. The "Across the Generation" program expands ACORN's "Better Babies & Birth Outcomes Program" previously funded by The Blue Foundation. Both programs help address the critical shortage in obstetric and gynecological care in north central Florida and allow for care of women of all ages. ACORN currently serves uninsured people in a 100-mile radius of Brooker including patients from 18 rural counties.

Clearwater Free Clinic, Clearwater

Amount: \$50,000

Purpose: The Clearwater Free Clinic will use the grant funds to continue providing patients with care from a full-time family practice advanced registered nurse practitioner. This nurse practitioner brought long-awaited access to pediatric care for the low-income, uninsured residents of Clearwater. In fact, this ARNP position enabled the clinic to offer the only immediate, free pediatric care in the area. Since the position was added, the nurse has provided invaluable continuity of care and patient visits have increased by 40%, improving overall health outcomes. The grant will continue the services of the nurse practitioner so that patients will not be turned away or provided inconsistent care.

Community Connections, Inc., Jacksonville

Amount: \$65,113 for two years

Purpose: The funds will be used to provide mental health counseling for women and children living in a temporary housing shelter. Community Connections serves more than 350 homeless women and children each year, with many being victims of domestic abuse. Mental health counseling is an important component of this organization's goal, which is to help their clients become self-sufficient. The Blue Foundation recognizes the Community Connections grant as the 2003 John Propst Memorial Health Education grant award winner.

Diabetes Coalition of St. Lucie County, Inc., Port St. Lucie

Amount: \$50,000

Purpose: Continue funding for the Diabetes Community Outreach Program that was previously supported by a 2001 grant from The Blue Foundation. The project uses social influence to improve health outcomes for area diabetics by training lay outreach workers to deliver health information about prevention, screening, early detection, self-management and follow-up care for diabetes. It has increased the participation of non-Hispanic blacks in health prevention activities, provided greater access to health education and improved the level of diabetes management by people with the disease. St. Lucie County has a higher than average African-American population with a death rate from diabetes 33 percent higher than for the white population. The lay health promoters are based in hair and nail salons and churches and collect information, monitor behavior of people with or at risk of having diabetes and encourage treatment at health facilities when appropriate.

Good News Care Center, Florida City

Amount: \$75,000 for two years

Purpose: The Good News Care Center (GNCC) will use the funds to hire a physician assistant for two years to support its Diabetes/Hypertension Project. The addition of this position will allow the clinic to increase the number of patient visits by 35 percent. The GNCC provides free health care to an uninsured and underserved population in Dade County. The clinic treated 3,500 patients last year, with 13,500 patient visits. The Diabetes/Hypertension Project is designed to serve approximately 1,000 unduplicated patients. The project includes early intervention screenings, treatment, referrals, disease management training and preventive education.

The Good Samaritan Health Clinic of Pasco, Inc., New Port Richey

Amount: \$34,000

Purpose: These grant funds will provide supplemental funding needed to offset Hepatitis C medical laboratory fees, provide cervical cancer screenings, and fund salaries for two vital part-time clinic employees. The Blue Foundation made a similar grant to this clinic in 2002, which allowed the clinic to grow with the expanding healthcare needs of their community. The Good Samaritan Health Clinic uses a minimal staff and an extensive network of physicians and nurses to provide free health care to low-income, uninsured residents of Pasco County. While the clinic provides an array of services for many critical illnesses, their free Hepatitis C diagnosis and treatment are unique and invaluable.

Hamilton County Council on Aging, Inc., Jasper

Amount: \$58,827 for two years

Purpose: The Hamilton County Council on Aging will use the grant funds to hire a client services coordinator for its Prescription Assistance Program. This new position will enable the organization to provide better access to free or reduced-price pharmaceuticals for elderly, low income and chronically ill residents of Hamilton County. A volunteer program will be developed by the client services coordinators to help enroll qualified residents into free pharmaceutical programs offered by private drug companies. The coordinator will also provide follow-up with the clients to ensure that medications are refilled in a timely manner. The goal of the Hamilton County Council on Aging is to serve 350 clients through the Prescription Assistance Program within the first two years of hiring the client services coordinator.

The Migrant Association of South Florida, Boynton Beach

Amount: \$50,000

Purpose: Funding will continue the Caridad Health Clinic's Migrant Diabetes Project, which provides free diabetes screening, treatment, monitoring and prevention services to low-income, uninsured migrant adults and children who would otherwise go untreated. The Migrant Diabetes Project provides primary care services, lab work, vision screening and medications. Nutrition education and meal planning are incorporated to prevent further complications with those identified at risk. Special attention is paid to the increasing number of children at risk of getting diabetes. The program began in January 2003 with a previous grant from The Blue Foundation. Since that time, approximately 500 diabetic adults and children have been identified early enough to receive proper care and reduce emergency medical treatments. Currently, the Diabetes Project provides care for over 2,000 patients.

Neighborhood Health Clinic, Naples

Amount: \$10,210

Purpose: Funding will allow the Clinic to purchase specialized equipment to provide testing and treatment for cervical dysplasia. This additional equipment will increase access to healthcare services for the working poor and uninsured population the Neighborhood Health Clinic serves in Collier County. Approximately 59% of the clinic's patients are women between the ages of 19 to 64. Without this equipment, the volunteer physicians and nurses at the Neighborhood Health Clinic are restricted in their ability to detect cervical cancer early. The Blue Foundation provided a previous grant to this clinic for unrelated specialty equipment.

Nemours, Pensacola

Amount: \$20,000

Purpose: This grant will expand Nemours' home telemedicine program in pediatric asthma. Funding will allow Nemours to purchase additional units to increase and improve health care for children who need immediate access to healthcare providers on nights and weekends. These specialized units offer an audio and video connection with healthcare providers. Parents of critically ill children can more accurately monitor their child's health statistics and become better educated about medications taken at home. Overall health for these critically ill children has improved because health providers and parents work more closely together to potentially avoid emergency room visits. This is the second grant The Blue Foundation has provided to Nemours for their telemedicine program.

We Care Manatee, Bradenton

Amount: \$42,888 for two years

Purpose: Grant funds will be used to hire a full-time Clinic Coordinator and to increase the hours of a current employee to become a full-time Case Manager. These positions will support the We Care clinic located in the rural area of Manatee County (Palmetto) and a new clinic in Bradenton. We Care Manatee provides free and low cost medical care to uninsured and underserved residents of Manatee County. We Care is currently staffed by volunteers, with an executive director who coordinates volunteers, schedules clinic dates and determines client eligibility, as well as overseeing the day-to-day operations of the organization. The number of clients served during their past fiscal year increased by 150 percent. The addition of paid staff will allow We Care Manatee to treat more patients through better management and organization of medical volunteers.

WomanKind, Inc., Key West

Amount: \$100,000 for two years

Purpose: This grant will enable WomanKind to hire a part-time family nurse practitioner, and a family practice or internal medicine physician one day per week, to provide health care for working poor, uninsured or underinsured women. The clinic serves 4,000 women annually by providing gynecological health care, mental health and primary health care. It is the only Hispanic outreach program in the area. This area is highly dependent on the tourist trade and many service workers have no health insurance. The additional paid staff will allow the clinic to increase the number of patients it can treat.