Michigan Health Endowment Fund awards nearly $15 million in health projects across Michigan

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Health Endowment Fund (Health Fund) will support dozens of Michigan organizations with just under $15 million in new investments. 33 organizations will receive grants ranging from $87,000 to $500,000 as part of two Health Fund programs: Behavioral Health and Nutrition & Healthy Lifestyles. (A full list of grant recipients can be found at the bottom of this release.)

Many of the behavioral health awardees are taking steps to integrate mental healthcare with existing systems of care, such as hospitals, primary care centers, and schools. The Jackson County Intermediate School District, for example, will use their grant money to develop a closed-loop referral system that will connect children and their families to mental health services, primary care, and social services. In Detroit, the Health Fund awarded Metro Solutions a grant to expand its successful DLIVE program, which works holistically with young victims of violent crime in hospitals, interrupting the cycle of violence.

The Health Fund also gave significant funding to strengthening Michigan’s behavioral health workforce, a key focus after a recent Altarum report, commissioned by the Health Fund, revealed that hundreds of thousands of Michigan residents with a mental illness or substance use disorder are not receiving treatment.

"The organizations we selected have displayed deep commitment to increased access to care for residents," said Health Fund program director Becky Cienki. "The projects are closely aligned with the recommendations in Altarum’s report, including strategies to address behavioral health workforce gaps."
In one collaborative effort, a coalition of five addiction recovery centers, Great Lakes Recovery Centers, Inc., will be improving infrastructure behind their substance use disorder care. Their goal is to bring quality treatment to more residents in northern Michigan, an area of the state especially in need of improvement.

In Nutrition & Healthy Lifestyles, the emphasis was on the impact healthy food can have on various vulnerable populations. It’s a familiar concept that can benefit from innovative implementations. Specifically, the request for proposals encouraged projects that included school-based models, place-based models, culinary medicine, or the potential to influence food security policy.

“We identified these categories as having the potential to have particularly significant impacts on Michigan communities,” explained program director Laurie Solotorow. “Schools as health homes, food as medicine, food security—we have seen projects related to these concepts have great success in the past, and we’re excited to see what benefits these new awards will bring.”

One noteworthy approach comes from the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, who plans to use the concept of “food is medicine” as a central theme of a new early childhood education program in order to prevent childhood obesity and food security in native children, using culturally appropriate foods and eating behaviors. In Jackson, Vista Grande Villa is creating an intergenerational garden to promote healthy eating while reducing social isolation for seniors and youth. Lastly, a unique project from the University of Michigan will expand an evidence-based feeding program for infants with complex conditions, promoting healthy eating behaviors for the long term.

**About the Health Fund**

The Michigan Health Endowment Fund works to improve the health and wellness of Michigan residents and reduce the cost of healthcare, with a special focus on children and older adults. The foundation has five annual grant programs. For more information about the Health Fund and its grantmaking, visit [mihealthfund.org](http://mihealthfund.org).
2019 Behavioral Health Initiative Grants

Altarum Institute
*Responding to Adolescent Depression through Integration and Telemedicine (RAD-IT)* | $490,847

This project will use telemedicine to improve the behavioral health outcomes of rural Michigan adolescents, increasing the recognition of depression and providing timely and effective treatment. Altarum and its partners will train clinicians to screen for depression, enact appropriate follow-up protocols, and establish telehealth services linking vulnerable youth to specialists.

Arbor Circle
*Kent County Behavioral Health Home for Children* | $499,998

Arbor Circle will develop and pilot a behavioral health home to provide integrated care for children with serious behavioral health conditions. They will work with Network180 to adapt its successful behavioral health home model for adults.

Beaumont Health Foundation
*Improving the Care of Patients with Mental Health Disorders in the Emergency Department* | $438,214

A new integrated medical/behavioral health team model in the Beaumont Taylor Emergency Department will expand psychiatric care. Wayne State University’s telepsychiatry system will allow for real-time video consultation between patients, remote psychiatrists, and other medical staff to develop a treatment plan for the patient.

Friends of the Children
*Life Navigators for Preventive Behavioral Healthcare* | $500,000

Over the first two years, Friends of the Children aims to pair 64 four- to six-year-old under-resourced children with salaried, full-time mentors and advocates. These “life navigators” will provide intensive services for 12.5 years, connecting them to community resources and behavioral health support as necessary.

Grand Rapids HQ
*Comprehensive Health Initiative for Homeless Youth* | $98,233

Grand Rapids HQ and 3:11 Youth Housing will expand their existing partnership to support the physical and mental health needs of young people who are experiencing homelessness. Services will include comprehensive health system navigation, substance use intervention, targeted trauma-informed and healing-centered therapy, along with holistic mindfulness-based activities.

Great Lakes Bay Health Centers
*Integration of Non-Pharmacological Pain Management Into Primary Care* | $300,000

Great Lakes Bay Health Centers will create a stronger continuum of care for older adults who are using opioids to manage chronic pain. Steps include forming a fully integrated pain management team in Saginaw, offering alternatives to medication when appropriate, credentialing non-pharmacological methods of treating pain, and educating other health practitioners.
Great Lakes Recovery Centers, Inc.
*Recovery Centers of Michigan Planning Grant* | $87,000

Great Lakes Recovery Centers will work with non-profit treatment agency partners to increase access to substance use disorder treatment services. The coalition will conduct a needs assessment of the five partner agencies, define gaps and barriers, and identify actionable steps for the partner agencies.

Henry Ford Health System
*iHeLP: Implementation of Technology-Based Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment in Pediatric Primary Care* | $370,594

This project will use the existing iHeLP screening tool to conduct evidence-based substance abuse screening on 14- to 17-year-olds in Henry Ford Health System clinics and identify appropriate, personalized interventions based on the level of risk.

Jackson County Intermediate School District
*Building a Robust System: Designing a Continuum of Behavioral Health Care for Children in Jackson County* | $500,000

Jackson County ISD and partners will design, test, and evaluate a person-centered continuum of behavioral healthcare—from prevention and identification to early intervention and treatment. This project will focus on children from birth to age 8, streamlining delivery and increasing access to treatment.

Metro Healthcare Services, Inc. (dba Metro Solutions)
*Detroit Life Is Valuable Everyday (DLIVE)* | $471,960

DLIVE works with youth and young adults who have sustained acute, intentional violent trauma to interrupt the cycle of violence, prevent re-injury and death, and facilitate a pathway to health and wellness. The new Healthy Minds & Wellness Program will increase DLIVE’s capacity to provide care.

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
*Optimizing Michigan’s Behavioral Health Home* | $500,000

This initiative will optimize and expand Michigan’s Behavioral Health Home, which provides integrated behavioral and physical health services to Medicaid beneficiaries with serious mental illness or serious emotional disturbances. The funds will be used to better serve and expand access to integrated services to the remainder of the region’s community mental health authorities.

Michigan Public Health Institute
*Michigan Innovations in Care Coordination* | $498,078

The Michigan Innovations in Care Coordination project will improve access to care for children with or at risk for autism spectrum disorder or developmental disability in Wayne County. It will strengthen the workforce and reduce the time between a child’s autism diagnosis and initiation of services by assessing barriers to access, promoting integrative care, and developing training materials for providers.
Michigan State University
Implementing and Sustaining Integrated Care for Perinatal Depression | $319,597

Michigan State University will implement a team-based integrated care approach in six health centers in Eastern, Central, and Western Michigan to improve outcomes for women experiencing perinatal depression. The six family medicine clinics will use a perinatal Collaborative Care Model (RE-AIM framework), a national model with a strong evidence base.

National Association of Social Workers
The NASW MI Social Work Training Supervision Institute: Strengthening Substance Use Disorder Workforce Through Clinical Supervision and Adolescent SBIRT Training | $310,130

This project will address the capacity of Michigan’s mental health workforce by supporting two educational programs: an adolescent SBIRT model for clinical providers and the NASW’s social work core supervision model. Both training initiatives will include an intensive digital and marketing outreach strategy.

Northwest Michigan Health Services, Inc.
Manistee CareConnect | $486,262

This project will improve and increase prevention, early identification, and treatment of mental health and substance use disorders for youth and senior citizens in Manistee County. Sustainable, collaborative infrastructure will provide integrated health services and trauma-informed screenings at easy access sites within the community.

Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health
Improving Care Integration for Unenrolled Seniors in Kalamazoo County | $500,000

The project will improve Medicaid-eligible Kalamazoo County older adults’ functional ability, health status, and quality of life by providing managed care coordination for those not eligible for it through Medicaid. Southwest Michigan Behavioral Health will adapt best practices in care coordination to fit within the Kalamazoo County health and human services ecosystem.

Starr Commonwealth
Trauma Assessments and Treatment at Children’s Hospital of Michigan: A Project of Starr Commonwealth | $499,450

This project will integrate trauma assessment with primary care, and it will include physical, social, emotional, and behavioral health interventions that are specific to trauma and toxic stress. The collaboration will also address the challenges presented during primary care, where overlapping trauma and common childhood mental health disorders often result in misdiagnoses.

The Regents of the University of Michigan
3-Tiered School Mental Health Program with Detroit Public School Community District | $400,000

The TRAILS program at the University of Michigan works to increase community access to effective mental health services. This project will build on a successful planning grant, and, together with the Detroit Public Schools Community District and local agencies, it will implement a multi-tiered TRAILS-informed approach to all 110 district buildings within DPSCD.
The Regents of the University of Michigan
*Building the Capacity of Rural Health Centers to Deliver Adolescent-Friendly Integrated Behavioral Health* | $311,779

Using a proven clinic training and competency model, this project will increase capacity for rural clinics in the Upper Peninsula to integrate behavioral health services for adolescents into primary care health centers.

The Regents of the University of Michigan
*Enhancing and Sustaining the Michigan Collaborative Care Implementation Support Team to Expand Access to Quality Mental Health Treatment in Primary Care for Older and Low-income Adults* | $172,629

This project addresses the poor access to mental health services faced by older and low-income adults with depression, anxiety, and other common mental health conditions living in underserved communities throughout Michigan. This model will integrate two new clinical roles into the primary care teams at three federally qualified health centers and train clinicians in collaborative care model service delivery.

**2019 Nutrition and Healthy Lifestyles Grants**

American Heart Association
*EmPowered Clinicians: Improving Hypertension Through Clinical Quality Improvement and Lifestyle Change* | $500,000

This initiative will address the negative health effects of poor blood pressure measurement, diagnosis, and treatment at ten Federally Qualified Health Centers and improve hypertension control rates through an enhanced version of Target:BP. This enhanced program will link provider care with online and digital tools and resources and support from partner centers.

District Health Department #10
*Northwest Michigan Chronic Disease Prevention: Partnership for Prescription for Health* | $250,000

This project connects primary care and treatment of chronic disease with evidence-based prevention practices. The project will increase access to healthy foods among vulnerable populations, provide training on healthy food and physical activity choices, and integrate community and healthcare resources for residents who are living with or at risk for chronic diseases.

Eastern Market Corporation
*Nourishing a Sustainable Culture of Health and Wellness in Detroit* | $329,497

This project will increase access to fresh produce in underserved communities and provide nutrition and cooking education to encourage residents to select fresh ingredients and prepare healthy meals. In partnership with the Detroit Parks and Recreation department, Eastern Market and three partners will embed food access and education into neighborhood revitalization efforts, parks and recreation programming, and classroom learning.
Feeding America West Michigan  
*Mobile Food Pantries + Health Interventions | $150,000*

Through this planning grant, Feeding America West Michigan and Upper Peninsula Health Care Solutions will determine ways to address food security and access to healthcare in the Upper Peninsula, including collaboration, potential models, and integration of healthcare and food access.

FoodCorps  
*FoodCorps Michigan: Program Expansion in Detroit and Muskegon | $467,456*

FoodCorps will expand their evidence-based program to help children improve attitudes and behaviors toward healthy food and reduce the likelihood of future diet-related diseases. Involved members and partners will provide 200 classroom nutrition lessons, monthly cafeteria taste tests, and other programs.

Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities  
*Cultivating Community Resilience: Expanding culinary medicine to grow culinary literacy, increase food access and promote a culture of healthful eating in NW Lower Michigan | $495,000*

Cultivating Community Resilience will connect healthcare facilities, schools, and food pantries to improve access to healthy food and wellness programs. Groundwork Center will provide nutrition and behavioral health counseling for regional health practitioners, strengthen a prescription for produce program, and pilot and evaluate a clinical, place-based "food as medicine" intervention.

Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan  
*Mishkikiwan Miidjim | $499,845*

The Michigan Tribal Food Access Collaborative seeks to reduce childhood overweight/obesity and the related risks for chronic disease by developing and implementing culturally appropriate policies, system procedures, and standardized screening protocols. Participating tribes will also pilot the 13 Moons curriculum, an early childhood education program.

Leaders Advancing and Helping Communities  
*FQHCs and LAHC, Building Healthy Communities Together | $254,937*

This initiative will address childhood obesity by working with parents and caregivers to teach young children healthy habits. LAHC will provide nutrition education for staff of four Federally Qualified Health Centers and implement a prescription for nutrition and physical fitness program for pre-school and school-aged children and their parents.

Michigan Department of Education  
*Best Food Forward | $499,375*

Best Food Forward is a planned 10-year program to bring the families of two Michigan school districts to full food security in order to improve measured outcomes in academic achievement, student behavior, mental and physical health, and economic stability. The initiative will create community links between schools and community organizations to build healthy food systems within each targeted school community. This initial two-district pilot will inform an understanding of how to create a scalable and replicable model that can be implemented at other districts statewide.
**Michigan State University**  
*FirstStep2Health: An Intergenerational Program to Promote Healthy Eating Habits | $425,618*

This is a 14-week intergenerational program designed to educate young children on healthy foods and nutritious eating, and to engage and empower their parents to continue those behaviors in the home. The program will include two modules for parents (cooking and budgeting, and a stress management program) and age-appropriate healthy eating programming for children.

**Muskegon Area Intermediate School**  
*Creating Healthy Schools Project | $325,636*

This project aims to address some of the root causes of poor child health by equipping schools with resources to provide alternative school breakfast programs, incorporating nutrition and physical activity education into K-6 classrooms, and integrating health and wellness into the school improvement planning process.

**Oakland University**  
*Prescription for a Healthy Pontiac | $484,418*

This program will facilitate and create a culture of healthy eating and physical activity within families with children or seniors, reduce loneliness and social isolation among seniors, and strengthen community relationships. The initiative will connect these families to health education, fresh fruits and vegetables, and physical activity opportunities, with the goal of improved health behaviors and food security.

**The Regents of the University of Michigan**  
*Creation of a Learning Health System for Prevention and Management of Childhood Obesity Across the State of Michigan | $238,019*

This initiative will create a learning health system to measure the burden of overweight/obesity in the state, implement nutritional interventions for prevention and treatment of childhood overweight/obesity, and create collaborative learning models for health systems, community partners, patients, and families. It seeks to increase coordination between stakeholders.

**The Regents of the University of Michigan**  
*Helping Michigan's Babies Make Major Gains | $499,941*

This project will create an integrated, interdisciplinary infant feeding program for babies who arrive early or have special medical conditions. Clinicians and parents will be trained on evidence-based feeding behavior strategies that will reduce the anxiety around feeding, which may cause the infant to associate eating with pain, stress, and anxiety and lead to long-term feeding disorders.

**Trinity Health dba St. Joseph Mercy Ann Arbor**  
*Two-way Learning for At-risk Children and Physician Residents through Nutrition Buddies Pilot Program | $410,193*

The Nutrition Buddies Pilot Program will pair medical residents and middle school students in Ypsilanti to promote healthy eating behaviors and wellness. Medical residents will plan and lead weekly sessions, kitchen demonstrations, and wellness activities for students, adapting approaches to meet the needs of each student.
United Way for Southeastern Michigan

*Feeding, Eating and Succeeding Together (FEAST)* | $228,500

This project builds on the innovative FEAST program, which trains adults to adopt authoritative feeding practices based on an evidence-based feeding model. United Way will enhance the training curriculum, provide ongoing technical support and additional in-person educational opportunities, develop an online training center, and provide “train the trainer” sessions to help protect against childhood overweight and obesity.

Vista Grande Villa

Village Garden Venture | $148,592

Vista Grande Villa and partners will create a community garden and produce distribution system serving economically disadvantaged seniors and disenfranchised youth in Jackson County. The intergenerational community garden will promote healthy lifestyles in seniors and youth by increasing access to, appreciate for, and consumption of fresh produce throughout the year and reduce social isolation among seniors.

Wayne State University

*Dearborn SHINES (School Health through Integrated Nutrition & Exercise Strategies (D-SHINES) for Healthy Kids – Wave 2* | $500,000

This project will bring Dearborn SHINES to six additional Dearborn Public Schools and the district’s early childhood center. Dearborn SHINES decreases risk factors for obesity, nutrition-related health problems, and chronic diseases, and it creates a culture of health for children and their families through increased physical activity and healthy eating; garden builds; parent, principal, and teacher engagement; and policy and systems-level changes.

Wayne State University

*Building Healthy Communities* | $500,000

Wayne State University and its partners will develop more robust technological platforms to expand the capacity and effectiveness of Building Healthy Communities, a comprehensive nutrition and physical activity program implemented in elementary and middle schools. These improvements will allow Building Healthy Communities to reach an additional 12 schools during the grant period.