



The Aetna Foundation Helps Improve the Health of 25 Communities Nationwide Through More Than \$2 Million in Grants

Grants will support improvements for more than 300,000 people as part of the Cultivating Healthy Communities initiative

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WASHINGTON--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Approximately 60 percent of a person's life expectancy is driven by factors outside of the doctor's office – our individual behaviors, as well as social and environmental factors¹. As part of its continued effort to address social determinants of health, the Aetna Foundation announced today more than \$2 million in grants to 25 nonprofit organizations across the U.S., as part of its Cultivating Healthy Communities initiative.

Grants from the Cultivating Healthy Communities initiative support organizations working to address social determinants of health, like access to healthy food and safe places to play. These grants are being made at a time when more than 42 million individuals in the United States live with food insecurity² and one out of three adults is obese, putting them at risk for heart disease, stroke and type two diabetes³.

"Building a healthier world starts at the grassroots level, in communities committed to making a difference," said Mark Bertolini, the chairman of the Aetna Foundation and the chairman and CEO of Aetna. "This year's Cultivating Healthy Communities grantees are designing local solutions to local problems, and striving to improve the health of their communities."

Bertolini will discuss the Cultivating Healthy Communities initiative as part of his keynote session on November 2 at the U.S. News and World Report Healthcare of Tomorrow forum in Washington, D.C. His conversation with Brian Kelly, U.S. News editor and chief content officer, will begin at approximately 1:45 p.m. Eastern. More information on the conference is available at www.usnewshot.com.

A key focus of the Cultivating Healthy Communities grants will be expanding access to spaces that promote active living and healthy eating. Nearly \$1 million will support projects that will enhance the physical spaces people use in their everyday lives, such as routes for walking and biking, and the retail spaces or gardens that bring fresh foods to communities without easy access to grocery stores. The lack of sidewalks, bike paths and recreational areas in some communities discourages physical activity and contributes to obesity⁴. Not only are people in low-income and minority neighborhoods more likely to live in food deserts, they also have fewer recreational facilities than wealthier and predominantly white communities, a factor that may contribute to ethnic and socioeconomic disparities in obesity rates⁵.

In addition, minority groups are more at-risk for exposure to unhealthy air conditions. African-Americans, Latinos and Asians are the most likely to live in communities that are heavily affected by pollution and environmental hazards such as high concentrations of pesticides⁶. A total investment of \$300,000 will support projects that are focused on reversing air quality disparities and decreasing exposure to dangerous chemicals.

Since 2016, the Aetna Foundation has awarded more than \$4 million in grants through Cultivating Healthy Communities, which is a key part of the Foundation's overall multimillion-dollar commitment to building a healthier world, community by community.

This year, grants have been awarded to the following programs:

Organization	Project Description	State Served
City of Phoenix Housing Department	Affordable bike-sharing for low-income residents who live and work in the Edison-Eastlake Community in Phoenix	Arizona
Friends of Public Radio of Arizona	Digital media bullying and cyberbullying prevention campaign	Arizona
Rich City Rides	Free bikes, educational workshops and ride celebrations to Oakland-area residents	California
Institute for Community Research	Leadership development for urban teens engaged in creating new options for accessing fresh foods in their communities	Connecticut
Jack & Jill Children's Center	Stress management, healthy eating and financially sound decision-making in a predominantly African-American neighborhood in Fort Lauderdale	Florida
Alachua County Board of County Commissioners - Department of Court Services	Healthy lifestyle and gardening workshops for incarcerated individuals participating in a work release program	Florida
University of Florida/IFAS Extension Clay County 4-H	Hands on urban-agricultural experience for Clay County youth	Florida
Miami Children's Museum	Ten classes modeling nutrition and wellness strategies for 100 low-income families that have children in Head Start or Early Head Start	Florida
East Central Florida Regional Planning Council	Urban agriculture and bike repair activities to teach healthy life and vocational skills to Holden Heights residents in Orlando	Florida
Farmworker Association of Florida	Educational program focusing on chemical-free farming via community gardens in Florida, New Jersey, and Washington state	Florida
Concordia Place	Nutrition and youth employment program for low-income Chicago teenagers	Illinois
Boston Public Health Commission	Technical assistance and training for Boston's hair and nail salons, auto shops to prevent pollution and chemical exposures	Massachusetts
BikeWalkKC	Leadership training to improve community health, for a large focus on increasing walking and biking	Missouri
Hopeworks 'N Camden Inc	Youth-driven program highlighting and encouraging use of community resources for Camden residents through a custom app designed by youth	New Jersey
First Nations Development Institute	Connecting tribal food retailers with suppliers from Native owned local farms to increasing Native families' access to fresh foods	New Mexico
The Doe Fund	Access to healthy foods in disadvantaged communities and food deserts in Brooklyn	New York
Bountiful Cities	Three organizations joining to improve food security through educational programs in Asheville and Buncombe County	North Carolina
Centralina Council of Governments	Improvement of Charlotte's dangerous road conditions through on-the-ground demonstrations of cost-effective traffic calming measures	North Carolina
Guilford Child Development	Two generation integrated service system teaching families about self-sufficiency	North Carolina
Clean Air Council	Resident-led program to improve air quality in Philadelphia's Kensington neighborhood	Pennsylvania
John Bartram Association	Utilization of 45-acre river garden in Southwest Philadelphia to encourage active lifestyles and promote healthy eating	Pennsylvania
The SAFE Alliance (SAFE Stop Abuse For Everyone)	Safe and healthy relationships workshops for youth	Texas
It's Time Texas	Revamping of low-use public spaces into locales for fitness classes and walking groups for people of all ages in high-need neighborhoods	Texas
University of Houston Foundation	Program to engage high-risk African-American and Latino youth in mindful eating and exercise	Texas

About The Aetna Foundation

The Aetna Foundation is the independent charitable and philanthropic arm of Aetna (NYSE:AET). As a national health foundation, we promote wellness, health, and access to high-quality health care for everyone. This work is enhanced by the time and commitment of Aetna employees, who volunteered 430,000 hours in 2016 alone. For more information, visit www.aetna-foundation.org.

- ¹ Kaiser Family Foundation: "Beyond Health Care: The Role of Social Determinants in Promoting Health and Health Equity". <https://www.kff.org/disparities-policy/issue-brief/beyond-health-care-the-role-of-social-determinants-in-promoting-health-and-health-equity/>
- ² Feeding America: "Poverty and hunger in America". <http://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-and-poverty-facts.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/>
- ³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: "Adult Obesity Facts". <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/adult.html>
- ⁴ National Institutes of Health: "Obesity, physical activity, and the urban environment: public health research needs". <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1586006/>
- ⁵ Harvard School of Public Health: "Environmental Barriers to Activity". <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/obesity-prevention-source/obesity-causes/physical-activity-environment/>
- ⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: "CDC Health Disparities and Inequalities Report – United States, 2013". <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/other/su6203.pdf>

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