

BCBSMA FOUNDATION 2004 GRANT AWARDS
Strengthening the Voice for Access – Grant Summaries

Grants in the **Strengthening the Voice for Access** program area will help promote the interests of uninsured and low-income residents across Massachusetts. Funding will strengthen community-based policy activities, increase consumer participation in public policy development, and promote collaboration among policy and advocacy organizations. The grants range from \$25,000 to \$50,000.

Health Care For All (HCFA)

\$50,000

Support for the *Massachusetts Health Security Initiative*, which seeks to provide access to health insurance for everyone in the Commonwealth. To inform the legislature and public about the need for this change, HCFA will build a strong, statewide coalition consisting of patients/consumers, providers, plans, purchasers, and the public health community. In addition, HCFA will continue its work defending MassHealth, including efforts to protect and strengthen the Uncompensated Care Pool.

Massachusetts Community Health Worker Network (MACHW)

\$50,000

Funding to support MACHW's efforts to expand access to health care by developing the advocacy power of community health workers (CHWs) and the people they serve. This four year-old organization's mission is to strengthen the field of community health work through advocacy, professional development, and networking; to create a supportive, secure work environment for CHWs; and to inform and unify diverse CHWs of all disciplines within the state.

Massachusetts Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA)

\$50,000

Support to develop the immigrant community's participation in public policy development and to create collaborations among organizations on immigrant health care access issues. Funding will specifically support operations related to the MIRACLE Campaign – The Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Campaign for Long-Term Equality – to restore MassHealth coverage for legal immigrants, ensure the cultural competence of health services, and advocate for funding of interpreter services.

Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers

\$50,000

Funding for *Community Advocacy for Change* to create and maintain new approaches for mobilizing the community health center movement statewide to ensure access to affordable health care for underserved patients. The populations targeted by this initiative are members of the communities across the state served by 49 community health centers in Massachusetts. The League's mission is to support its membership and to promote accessible, quality, community-responsive health care.

Community Partners, Inc.

\$40,000

Support for the Community Health Access Network (CHAN) to: 1) provide support for community health access workers so they can more effectively help clients access needed health services; and 2) expand health access for Massachusetts residents by connecting administrative and legislative policymakers with the voices, experiences and feedback of community health access workers and their clients.

Health Law Advocates (HLA)

\$40,000

Support to continue HLA's current priorities: 1) improving access to dental care; 2) improving access to mental health services; 3) fighting for essential hospital services; and 4) maintaining health insurance after divorce. The organization is able to act as a lawyer for individual clients and grassroots coalitions, and as an advocate for Commonwealth residents who experience difficulty accessing medical services.

Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Inc. (MLRI)

\$40,000

Funding for the *MassHealth Improvement Project*. Support will be used to bring MLRI's legal expertise to bear in working toward the restoration of health coverage for low-income populations who have seen benefits reduced or eliminated over the past two years, defending against further restrictions, and building support for an expansion of health coverage in the future.

Voice and Future Fund, Inc. (VFF)

\$40,000

Funding to join the Massachusetts Immigrant Refugee Advocacy Campaign for Long-Term Equality (MIRACLE) Campaign. The Voice and Future Fund's role will be to identify, train, and involve low-wage immigrant workers, and mobilize them in policymaker education and advocacy. This initiative is strong because it engages a disproportionately uninsured workforce in advocacy for health care access, and builds advocacy leadership for SEIU 615 union members.

Massachusetts Senior Action Council (MSAC)

\$35,000

Support to promote broad civic involvement and participation in health care policy development and execution that are essential elements of insuring equitable approaches to meet the health needs of vulnerable seniors and other groups. MSAC will strengthen and expand existing coalitions, working with a range of community, labor, civil rights, and human service organizations.

Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance (MHSA)

\$25,000

Funding to continue advocacy for and development of policy and practice toward accessing health care for unaccompanied homeless adults. MHSA will increase accessibility and enrollment into health care insurance, collect and streamline data collection and monitor flow of homeless persons between systems of care, advance policy change for a more efficient and cost-effective use of health care resources, and encourage and develop new community and housing-based service delivery systems.