

BCBSMA FOUNDATION 2006 AWARDS
Strengthening the Voice for Access – Grant Summaries

The *Strengthening the Voice for Access* program provides core operating support to statewide organizations whose mission and activities significantly include a focus on promoting the health care interests of uninsured and low-income residents of the Commonwealth. These organizations demonstrate strong models to strengthen community-based policy activities, increase citizen participation in public policy development, and promote collaboration among statewide policy and advocacy organizations on health access issues. The grants range from \$25,000 to \$50,000 and total \$610,000.

Community Partners

\$50,000

Renewed funding for the Health Access Network, a program they facilitate that promotes increased access and healthier communities by empowering frontline health workers to collaborate and share information with their peers and other health care leaders. CP will stay in constant contact with frontline workers statewide throughout the implementation of health care reform to provide them with increased informational support and respond to their needs as they arise.

Disability Policy Consortium

Collaborators: Massachusetts State Association of the Deaf, M-Power, Massachusetts Office on Disability, Greater Boston Interfaith Organization, Work, Inc., Statewide Independent Living Council, and DEAF, Inc.

\$35,000

Funding to provide professional expertise and advocacy to people with disabilities by educating them on the nature of the public policy system and training them on how to advocate and formulate messages. The organization will also monitor health care reform implementation's affect on people with disabilities.

Greater Boston Interfaith Organization

Collaborators: Affordable Care Today! Campaign and Health Care for All

\$50,000

Funding to ensure access to affordable, quality health coverage for low-income and uninsured residents during the implementation phase of health reform. GBIO affects the public debate by organizing ethnically, economically, and geographically diverse citizens that are led by clergy and community.

Health Care for All

\$50,000

Renewed funding to advance health care reform success by educating policy-makers and the public, organizing strong broadly based coalitions, and ensuring that low-income and minority consumers participate in the decision-making process. In the coming year, they will ensure implementation brings high quality health care, fairly and affordably, to all people in need of health insurance.

Health Law Advocates

\$40,000

Renewed funding to support ongoing efforts that include: monitoring the implementation of the new health care reform legislation; increasing attorney and client participation in its pro bono Legal Network; improving access to dental care; and improving access to mental health services for children. The organization's mission is to provide legal representation to vulnerable residents who have been denied access to health care.

Massachusetts Community Health Worker Network

\$50,000

Renewed funding to support efforts to expand the ranks of Community Health Workers (CHWs) in statewide health care advocacy. CHWs are public health professionals who promote access to health care and apply their personal understanding of the community to help consumers get care and coverage, and will play an instrumental role in the implementation of health reform.

Massachusetts Housing & Shelter Alliance

Collaborators: Shelter, Inc., South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Housing Assistance Corporation of Cape Cod, and Father Bill's Place

\$25,000

Renewed funding to support advocacy for and development of policy and practice toward accessing health care for the state's poorest citizens: unaccompanied homeless adults. MHSA advocates for a more efficient and cost-effective use of health care resources by supporting housing-based service delivery systems that stabilize housing and produce long term improvements in health and savings in health care resources.

Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition

Collaborators: SEIU Local 615, Public Policy Institute, Health Care for All, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Latino Health Institute, and member organizations across Massachusetts

\$50,000

Renewed funding to support their work in the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Campaign for Long-Term Equality (MIRACLE) campaign that seeks to promote access to health care, ameliorate health outcome disparities, and improve the quality of care for Massachusetts immigrants. MIRACLE will monitor the implementation of health care reform and its effect on immigrant communities.

Massachusetts Law Reform Institute

\$45,000

Renewed funding to prepare legal analyses and policy implications of proposals affecting MassHealth, Commonwealth Care, the Uncompensated Care Pool, and other public programs. They will work to assure continued availability of a health care safety net for those residents ineligible for health insurance programs and protect low-income populations from loss of essential income based on implementation of the individual mandate.

Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers

Collaborators: Community Partners, Health Care for All, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Massachusetts Association of Community Health, and the University of Massachusetts Office of Community Programs

\$50,000

Renewed funding to maintain and build upon successful approaches for mobilizing community health centers to ensure access to affordable health care for underserved patients in light of health care reform. Funding will enable them to monitor the changes that impact health centers and their patients, disseminate accurate and updated information to staff and board members, and facilitate a coordinated plan for sustaining and increasing patient access.

Massachusetts Senior Action Council

\$45,000

Renewed funding to promote the rights and well-being of vulnerable seniors, especially the 500,000 low-income elderly. They will work to protect, reform, and increase senior enrollment in Medicare and Prescription Advantage.

Neighbor to Neighbor

Collaborators: Health Care for All, Greater Boston Interfaith Organization, SEIU 1199, and Coalition for Social Justice

\$40,000

Funding to continue efforts to organize and educate low-income people about the need for their continued involvement in health reform. By organizing in public housing and other low-income neighborhoods, the organization ensures that those intended to benefit from health reform can participate in the decision-making process.

Public Policy Institute

Collaborators: Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, Voice and Future Fund, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, and Health Care for All

\$40,000

Renewed funding to support their instrumental role in the MIRACLE campaign by providing its convening partners with training, coaching, facilitation, and policy research. Its management role will work to ensure that health reform provides all legally residing immigrants unrestricted access to Commonwealth Care and facilitates access for immigrants whose only source of care is through the Uncompensated Care Pool.

Voice & Future Fund, Inc.

Collaborators: SEIU 615, Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, Public Policy Institute, and Health Care for All

\$40,000

Renewed funding to maintain the voice of uninsured working immigrants in the fight for health care access and effective health care reform implementation. It will test and distribute public health insurance education materials to low-wage working immigrants and will identify implementation issues by monitoring the new programs' impact on workers.