

BCBSMA FOUNDATION 2007 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 \$635,000.

Community Partners

\$50,000

Renewed funding supports the *Health Access Network* (HAN). HAN is a program 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 statewide frontline workers 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

Renewed funding supports DPC's professional expertise and advocacy efforts to help people with disabilities by educating them on the nature of the public policy system and trains 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

Renewed funding ensures 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 advances HCFA's efforts to monitor health care reform's 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, HCFA will continue their efforts to improve how health reform is implemented and will continue its effort to expand the capacity of the Helpline hotline and their coalition efforts.

Health Law Advocates

\$40,000

Renewed funding supports the organization's mission to provide legal representation to vulnerable residents who have been denied access to health care. HLA will monitor the implementation of the new health care

reform legislation; increase attorney and client participation in its pro bono Legal Network; improve access to dental care; improve access to mental health services for children and develop a web site to educate and communicate with consumers, advocates and legal practitioners.

Massachusetts Association of Community Health Workers

\$40,000

Renewed funding supports the work of Community Health Workers as they promote access to health care by applying their personal understanding of the community to help consumers get coverage and care. MACHW will engage community health workers and communities in health care policy development and strengthen the community health worker field through collaboration with local, statewide and national organizations.

Massachusetts Coalition of School-Based Health Centers

\$30,000

Funding supports MCSBHC's expansion efforts of building a strong network of school-based health centers in the state. In the upcoming year, MCSBHC will document and develop policy solutions that address the constraints on growth among school-based health centers, such as barriers to receiving third party reimbursements. It will also document best practices among school-based health centers such as mental health and substance abuse programming.

Massachusetts Correctional Legal Services

Collaborators: Center for Prisoner Health and Human Rights, Brown University School of Medicine, Institute on Urban Health Research, Bouvé College of Health Sciences of Northeastern University

\$35,000

Funding increases MCLS's capacity to advocate for improved health care delivery to prisoners by increasing the resources available to investigate potential health care deficiencies. Funding will facilitate more timely interventions and enhance prisoner health care education efforts. MCLS's health care work will improve the health of the Commonwealth's prisoners by securing improved medical and mental health services for individuals.

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 supports the advocacy for and development of policy and practice toward accessing health care for the state's poorest citizens: unaccompanied homeless adults. MHSA will advocate 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 (MIRA)

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 supports MIRA's involvement 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 continue to

monitor the implementation of health care reform and its effect on immigrant communities. MIRA will also focus in immigrant health access via Commonwealth Care and the Safety Net Trust Fund.

Massachusetts Law Reform Institute

\$45,000

Renewed funding helps MLRI prepare legal analyses and policy implications of proposals affecting MassHealth, Commonwealth Care, the Health Safety Net, and other public programs. MLRI will work to ensure optimal implementation of the Community First waiver to assist elderly and disabled residents avoid institutionalization. MLRI will also continue its effort to improve health reform implementation and analyze the new Safety Net Trust Fund regulations.

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

\$45,000

Renewed funding maintains and builds 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 MLCHC to monitor the changes impacting health centers and 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

\$40,000

Renewed funding helps MSAC promote the rights and well-being of all people of the Commonwealth, especially vulnerable senior citizens. MSAC will work with other groups to protect and increase senior enrollment into Medicare and Prescription Advantage. MSAC will also focus on increasing SHINE counselors and advocate on other prescription drug access measures, such as bulk purchasing.

Neighbor to Neighbor

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

\$25,000

Renewed funding supports the agency's efforts to organize and educate low-income people about the need for their continued involvement in health reform. N2N will employ a variety of strategies ranging from door-to-door organizing, community education, forums, and rallies in an effort to ensure working families have the information needed to take action on the economic justice issues affecting them.

Public Policy Institute

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

\$25,000

Renewed funding supports the institute's instrumental role in the MIRACLE campaign of providing its convening partners with training, coaching, facilitation, and policy research. In the upcoming year, PPI will work to strengthen and deepen the internal capacity of the MIRACLE campaign to continue monitoring the regulations and implementation of the Safety Net Trust Fund, Commonwealth Care and Commonwealth Choice programs.

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 maintains VFF's efforts of improving the lives of uninsured working immigrants who wrestle with health care access and effective health care reform implementation. In the coming year, VFF will continue to 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. VFF will also share the information gained through monitoring, with other partners and key stakeholders.