



BCBSMA FOUNDATION 2009 AWARDS
Strengthening the Voice for Access – Grant Summaries

The *Strengthening the Voice for Access* grant area 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 this year they total \$600,000.

The Disability Policy Consortium

Boston
\$30,000

The Disability Policy Consortium (DPC) is a statewide, cross-disability organization active in the Massachusetts policy arena. The funding will enable DPC to address health care disparities rooted in disability and to disseminate findings of their report on the subject released in 2009. They will focus on collection of comprehensive statewide data on disabilities, insurance and access to care, and ensuring that the voices of people with disabilities are heard in the health policy arena.

The Greater Boston Interfaith Organization

Boston
\$50,000

Funding supports work with 70 religious congregations and organizations in the Greater Boston area to promote social justice in the area of health care access. The Greater Boston Interfaith Organization works with approximately 50,000 people, many of whom are under- or uninsured who give voice to the need for insurance affordability. They will focus on affordability and cost containment.

Health Care for All

Boston
\$50,000

Funding supports work building a movement of empowered people and organizations to create a health care system that is responsive to the needs of all people, including those who are most vulnerable. Health Care for All will continue to monitor the implementation of health reform, keeping affordability at the top of the agenda. They will focus on consumer voice in payment reform, addressing health disparities, and maintaining coverage for immigrants and other vulnerable populations.

Health Law Advocates*Boston*

\$40,000

Funding supports legal representation of vulnerable residents who have been denied access to health care. The current priorities include monitoring the implementation of the health reform law; increasing attorney and client involvement in the *pro bono* Legal Network; improving access to dental care; and improving access to mental health services for children. They will work on the issue of re-establishing full coverage for legal immigrants.

The Massachusetts Association of Community Health Workers*Shrewsbury*

\$40,000

Funding supports work organizing more than 1,000 community health workers around the state. In 2010, the organization will conduct regional trainings to improve the advocacy skills of community health workers and continue its work promoting health care policy development. They will focus on certification for Community Health Workers (CHWs) in Massachusetts, and inclusion of CHWs in national health reform and in Massachusetts's medical home pilots.

The Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center*Boston*

\$25,000

Funding supports Mass Budget's research, analysis, and training on the relationship between health care spending, the state budget and revenue policies as well as a public information campaign. They will produce materials for advocates working to promote access to affordable health care, and will offer capacity building on the state budget process and analysis of how various bills and proposals will affect the most vulnerable citizens of the Commonwealth.

The Massachusetts Coalition of School-Based Health Centers*Boston*

\$25,000

Funding supports work improving children's access to health care through school-based health centers partnered with hospitals, community health centers, and public health departments. Currently, 20,000 children receive health care services through school-based centers. They will work to strengthen and expand the network and to advocate in support of these clinics. They will also partner with health and education experts to address health implications of the drop out crisis and the impact of school-based health services on educational attainment.

Massachusetts Correctional Legal Services*Boston*

\$35,000

Funding supports advocacy for the health care needs of the Commonwealth's 25,000 prisoners. In 2010, they will continue to investigate health care deficiencies and facilitate timely interventions. They will expand their work into county jails and look to improve policies that ensure access to quality health care for prisoners. They will also focus on accessibility of medications to prisoners with HIV or AIDS.

The Massachusetts Housing & Shelter Alliance*Boston*

\$30,000

Funding supports advocacy for the health care needs of homeless adults. They will continue to build on their "Home and Healthy for Good" program for ending homelessness and supporting housing-based service delivery systems that stabilize housing and produce long-term improvements in health. In 2010 they will strengthen the involvement of the medical community in these efforts, work for Medicaid reimbursement for case management services, share data on the related medical cost savings, and assist other organizations statewide as they adopt this model.

The Massachusetts Immigrant & Refugee Advocacy Coalition

Boston

\$50,000

Funding supports advocacy for immigrants and refugees across the Commonwealth. A priority in 2010 will be to support the perspective of immigrants in advocating for equitable access to health care and to restore health insurance benefits for legal immigrants. They will promote the recommendations of Governor Patrick's *New Americans' Agenda*, that they helped to produce in 2009 and they will educate the public on the importance of immigrant access to quality primary and preventive care.

The Massachusetts Law Reform Institute

Boston

\$45,000

Funding supports legal analyses and policy education around the implementation of health reform, regulating the Safety Net Trust Fund, and improving the operations of MassHealth, the state's Medicaid program. Three areas of focus in 2010 are analyzing the impact of budget reductions, assuring optimal implementation of the Community First waiver to assist elderly and disabled residents to avoid institutionalization, and protection of health insurance coverage for legal immigrants.

The Mass. League of Community Health Centers

Boston

\$45,000

Funding supports advocacy and organizing on behalf of the state's 52 community health centers. The League will work to monitor health system changes that impact community health centers and their patients. In particular their 2010 efforts will include a focus on financial stability for health centers, payment reform, expanding the medical home model, and continued access to care for legal immigrants in the Commonwealth Care Bridge program.

The Massachusetts Senior Action Council

Boston

\$40,000

Funding supports work to protect, reform, and increase the enrollment of seniors in Medicare and Prescription Advantage. A priority in 2010 will be achieving prescription drug affordability and quality home care for people with disabilities and seniors with long-term illnesses. They will continue to build the leadership skills of their members to enhance their impact as health reform advocates.

Neighbor to Neighbor

Boston, Worcester, Salem, Lynn, Leominster, Fitchburg, Holyoke, and Springfield

\$35,000

Funding supports advocacy for and organizing low-income residents, especially around health access issues. A focus in 2010 will be on issues of affordability, maintaining the coverage gained since 2006, revenue generation to expand health access, and bringing a citizen voice into discussions on payment reform.

The Pro-Choice Massachusetts Foundation

Boston

\$25,000

Funding supports work on eliminating barriers to reproductive health care services through public education, advocacy by their 20,000 members, research and policy initiatives. In 2010, they will work to ensure that women's health issues are an integral part of state and national health reform, engage in work on health disparities, release status reports on five reproductive health indicators, and monitor reproductive health coverage in young adult plans.

The Voice and Future Fund

Boston

\$35,000

Funding supports work educating low-wage workers, particularly immigrants, about their health access rights and responsibilities. In 2010, they will continue to work with employers to expand employer sponsored health insurance for low wage workers, offer health access education to their members, promote correct use of Worker's Compensation benefits and engage worker voices as advocates for health reform in Massachusetts and nationally.