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Seniors Community Revitalization & Development Fund Awards \$350,000 to Organizations Serving Seniors in Eastern Missouri and Southern Illinois

The Community Health Commission in partnership with Deaconess Foundation partnered to invest in transportation, safety, and health navigation support for seniors

ST. LOUIS (Nov. 19, 2024) – The Seniors Community Revitalization & Development Fund (Seniors Community Fund) has awarded \$350,000 in its second year of grantmaking, continuing its mission to enhance essential services for seniors in five Missouri counties and three Illinois counties. The Fund, launched by the Community Health Commission of Missouri (CHCM) in partnership with Deaconess Foundation, is dedicated to strengthening public health infrastructure, promoting transparency, and addressing the needs of residents aged 55 and older.

Since its inception in 2023, the Fund has provided critical support to organizations working to close service gaps for seniors in the region. This year, the Seniors Advisory Board, composed of seniors, community leaders, and service providers, selected 13 grant recipients focusing on transportation, safety, and health navigation support.

“As someone who has personally navigated the challenges of aging, I’m proud to see the Fund continue its transformative work in this second year,” said Rosetta Keeton, Patient Advisory Consultant at the CHCM and member of the Seniors Advisory Board. “The grant recipients reflect the power of seniors coming together to shape initiatives that address our real needs and ensure a future of dignity and independence.”

Now in its second year, the Fund has solidified its role as a community-driven initiative. Priorities such as expanding transportation access, improving home safety, and enhancing health navigation reflect the feedback gathered from the Seniors Advisory Board during in-person focus groups and surveys. These grants address issues like accessible transit, home modifications, medical resource support, and reducing isolation—critical for fostering independence and community engagement among seniors.

“The Fund’s second year reflects our ongoing commitment to addressing systemic gaps for seniors in our region,” said Riisa Rawlins, CEO of the Community Health Commission of Missouri. “The work of these grantees inspires us as we continue building on the progress made last year, creating sustainable solutions for generations to come.”

The list of grant recipients is found below:

Transportation

- **Northside Youth and Senior Service Center** – Transit access for comprehensive daily needs in St. Louis City.
- **Serving Neighbors Foundation - Black Veterans Services of IL** – Transit access to nutritional, medical, and social needs in Madison County, Monroe County, and St. Clair County.
- **St. Louis Society for the Blind and Visually Impaired (SLBVI)** – Accessible transit for visually impaired seniors in St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Charles County, Jefferson County, Madison County, Monroe County and St. Clair County.
- **WalkNFaith** – On-demand transportation services for medical and essential trips in St. Louis City and St. Louis County.

Health Navigation

- **Criminal Justice Ministry** – Housing and resource navigation for seniors affected by incarceration in St. Louis City.
- **DePaul USA - St. Louis** – Housing, health, and income stabilization for chronically homeless seniors in St. Louis City and St. Louis County.
- **Ignite Hope** – Mental health and resource navigation for underserved seniors in St. Louis City and St. Louis County.
- **Monarch Immigrant Services** – Connecting immigrant seniors with critical health and social service resources St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Charles County, and Jefferson County.
- **RxOutreach** – Offering education and financial support for life-saving medications in St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Charles County, Jefferson County, Franklin County, Madison County, Monroe County, and St. Clair County.

Safety

- **Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House** – Providing meals and community for seniors, promoting independence and wellbeing in Madison County and St. Clair County.
- **Rebuilding Together Southwest Illinois** – Home repair programs ensuring safer living conditions in Madison County.
- **St. John's Community Care** – Medical equipment loans to help seniors age at home in Madison County, Monroe County and St. Clair County.
- **St. Louis Health Equipment Lending Program (STLHELP)** – Providing access to durable medical equipment in St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Charles County and Jefferson County.

For more information about the Seniors Community Fund, visit <https://www.stlrhc.org/blog/the-chcm-and-deaconess-foundation-launch-grant-applications-for-organizations-serving-seniors-in-eastern-missouri-and-southern-illinois/>.

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About Community Health Commission of Missouri

In 2023, the St. Louis Regional Health Commission and Alive and Well Communities announced an affiliation to advance health equity. The new organization, Community Health Commission of Missouri, is dedicated to eliminating health disparities by promoting equity-centered, trauma-informed care. Our mission is to ensure that all community members have access to affordable, available, accommodating and acceptable healthcare and resources, particularly those historically marginalized or underserved.

Today, we work in partnership with communities in St. Louis, Kansas City and Southeast Missouri (“the Bootheel”). For more information, visit chcmissouri.org. Follow the Community Health Commission of Missouri on Facebook, X and Instagram @chcmissouri.

About Deaconess Foundation

Deaconess Foundation envisions a community that values the health and well-being of all and gives priority attention to the most invisibilized. Deaconess seeks to create conditions where liberation is the lived reality within seven generations. A ministry of the United Church of Christ, Deaconess has invested more than \$96 million to improve the health of the St. Louis community since 1998. Our grants and cultivated relationships support the accelerated change in conditions through policy, advocacy, and/or organizing efforts building and wielding power to transform systems to respond to the will of the people.

The Foundation’s advocacy and grantmaking footprint includes St. Louis City, St. Louis, Jefferson, St. Charles and Franklin Counties in Missouri and Madison, St. Clair and Monroe Counties in Illinois. For more information, visit deaconess.org. Follow the Foundation on X and Instagram @deaconessfound and on Facebook at facebook.com/deaconessfoundation.