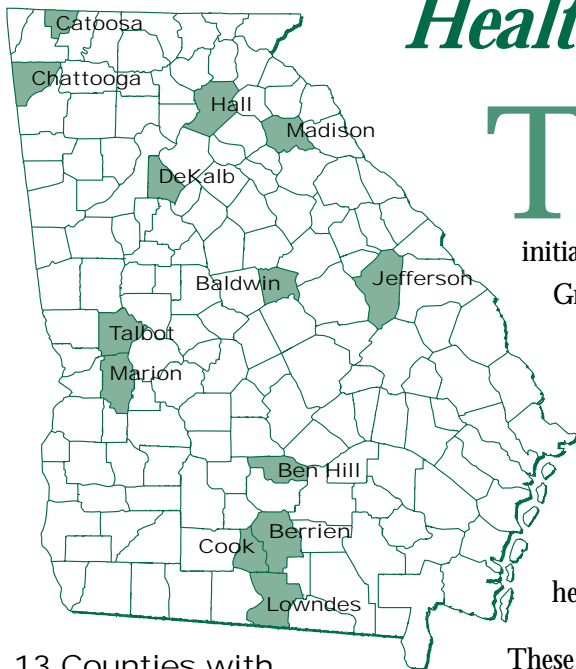


Philanthropic Collaborative Awards School Health Matching Grants



13 Counties with Funded Proposals

While the majority of the contributing foundations are based in Atlanta, the grant recipients blanket the State.

foundations from throughout the State, Governor Barnes charged the business and philanthropic sectors to work with state government in addressing Georgia's health care problems. In response to that challenge, the Philanthropic Collaborative was created – and the Department of Community Health offered to match, dollar for dollar, grant funds committed by the Collaborative for projects of mutual interest. Thus, the Collaborative's Matching Grants Program was borne, to focus public and private funds on high priority health care issues. The first priority was school health, with a goal of improving the physical and mental health of low-income and medically underserved school-age children through comprehensive school-based health programs.

This public/private initiative is not only unique to Georgia, but to the nation as well. Its success reflects the generosity and commitment of 20 Georgia foundations,

The Philanthropic Collaborative for a Healthy Georgia proudly announces that its first major initiative, the School Health Matching Grants Program, is now fully funded and operational. On July 1, 2001, the Collaborative awarded thirteen Georgia communities a total of \$901,000 to support local plans for improving the effectiveness of their school health programs.

These awards grew out of a challenge from Governor Roy Barnes at a conference nearly two years ago. At that landmark meeting in September 1999, attended by private, corporate, and community

About this issue...

The Philanthropic Collaborative for a Healthy Georgia serves as a forum for bringing foundations together to better understand and explore the health-related challenges facing Georgia.

This second issue of Update highlights a new initiative of the Collaborative: the School Health Matching Grants Program. It summarizes recent awards and highlights key features of funded projects. Plans for the Collaborative's next major effort, a matching grants program for rural health, are announced.

Continued on page 6

Highlights of Grants

Each of the 13 awards is distinct, reflecting the unique needs and resources of the community to be served. When viewed collectively, however, certain important themes emerge.

Projects directly serve and benefit low-income and medically underserved children.

The vast majority of children served by the program are impoverished and qualify for the Free and Reduced Lunch program. That percentage is as high as 85% in Chattooga County, which – like several other grantees – has been designated a federal Medically Underserved Area. The local hospital closed its doors in 1997 due to financial concerns, and only 5 doctors practice in the community. From 1990 to 1998, Chattooga County ranked 122 (out of 159) among Georgia counties in the ratio of physicians to population.

Programs are based on each community's assessment of the priority unmet health care needs of its school-age children.

No planning grants were awarded under this program; instead, the emphasis was on augmenting ongoing activities and resources. In some communities with substantial comprehensive school health programs, this entailed minimal financial support for targeted refinements to meet specific needs. For example, Madison County initiated its school

nurse program two years earlier. Each school already had a full-time nurse and collaboration between the school system and the Madison County Health Department was strong. Other active parties include Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, the Madison County Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS), and the Athens Regional Medical Center. A Comprehensive Health Advisory

Committee – comprised of parents, students, a medical professional, a representative from law enforcement and DFCS, a minister, teachers, and administrators – helped identify specific needs for the matching grant. These included materials for CPR training of all staff and otoscopes and resuscitators for each school. Funding for only one year was requested.

Other communities, like Lowndes County, will use funding to make a major leap towards a fully operational comprehensive school health program. Spanning three years, this project will support an additional nurse, thereby ensuring full-time nurses in every

school. Similarly, Catoosa and Jefferson Counties also received funding for three years to place a full-time nurse in their respective middle schools. In addition to basic health care services, these nurses will develop care plans for children with special needs, ensure that the mental and emotional needs of the middle school child are better



"Students and their families have many unmet needs which are affecting both their health and their productivity."

*Nurse Manager,
Chattooga County
Health Department*

addressed, increase parental involvement, and develop a resource directory for parents and staff.

Two additional 3-year awards to Columbus Regional Healthcare System, Inc., will help move Marion and Talbot Counties to a more comprehensive school health program by supporting ancillary nursing staff. Expanded services will include: administration of medications, immunization surveillance, case finding and management, health counseling, student health education and promotion, staff and parent education, care of students with special needs, and control of injuries and infectious agents.

Continued on page 3

Highlights *continued from page 2*

Communities are committed to developing coordinated school health programs.

Several funded counties, like Ben Hill, have a long-standing commitment to school health. In 1990, the Ben Hill County Board of Education funded its first nurse/health educator. Four years later, the Board collaborated with the county health department and the local hospital to start a school health clinic. Currently, staff includes three nurses housed at the elementary and middle schools and a staff assistant. Working closely with the community's Family Connection Partnership, issues of teen pregnancy, violence, and drug and alcohol abuse surfaced as priorities for the matching grant. These problems emerged from a Needs Assessment for Safe and Drug Free Schools over the past four years and are highlighted in Family Connection's Five-Year Strategic Plan.

Programs rely on collaboration of all relevant community stakeholders

The Matching Grants Program has truly fostered collaboration, as evidenced by the variety of organizations that serve as grantees. In most cases, the awards were made to school systems, boards of health, or medical care providers. In Cook County, however, the grant award was made to the Commission for Children and Youth, an established collaborative working in partnership with the Board of Education and numerous public agencies, private

businesses, civic groups, faith-based organizations, concerned citizens, parents, and families. The Commission has been a partner with Georgia's Family Connection organization since 1997, and with Communities In Schools of Georgia since 2000. The project will support a nurse in the county's high school to provide access to basic health services and counseling for all students. With a strong behavioral health component, services will emphasize mental health, crisis intervention, drug and alcohol prevention, violence prevention, and exercise.

Another unique grantee is the Medical Center Foundation, Inc., which in 1999 began a 3-year funding commitment for school nurse programs in Hall



County and Gainesville City school systems. This investment has evolved into a formal Partners in Health collaborative, consisting of representatives from the Medical Center, the medical community at large, both public school systems, a variety of other local health agencies and organizations,

and the business sector. Other collaborators include North Georgia College and State University and the Junior League. Grant funding will help procure basic equipment to improve health assessments, such as audiometers, vision screening machines, thermometers, otoscopes, stethoscopes, scales, blood pressure cuff sets, CPR mannequins, and tobacco prevention instructional aides.

Strategies reflect the unique circumstances of each community.

Often, the grants support creative solutions to basic health care needs. Oconee Regional Medical Center has a long history of supporting nursing care to medically underserved students in Baldwin County. Eight nurses

“Providing a comprehensive school-based health program will help to alleviate problems associated with poverty, allow for better participation and attendance of students, and encourage a connection with the school.”

Berrien County Board of Education

serve the county's three schools, through a contract between the Board of Education and the Medical Center. After careful review of the program and input from the school nurses, several areas of need were identified: routine vision and hearing screenings

Continued on page 4

Highlights continued from page 3

for children in higher grades, growth assessments to prevent obesity, and depression and suicide prevention. Consequently, grant funds are being devoted to the purchase of equipment and resources to fund vision and hearing

reimbursement, PeachCare, etc. However, only one – Berrien County Board of Education – provided evidence of success in this arena. This community enjoys a comprehensive school health program, with a functioning health clinic in each of



“As we all know, healthy children are better able to learn and grow up to become healthier adults.”

*Superintendent,
Valdosta City Schools*

screenings and growth assessments for 3rd, 5th, and 9th graders; and a depression and suicide prevention program for 8th graders. Faculty and students from Georgia College and State University School of Health Sciences will help administer these activities, and a special fund will be established for medical care and the purchase of eyeglasses and hearing aids for children not covered by Medicaid or PeachCare.

Sustainability depends on strong local leadership and public will.

One of the major challenges of a comprehensive school health program is ensuring its long-term sustainability. Many applicants recognized the need to establish an effective system for recouping costs through Medicaid

four schools, two full-time registered nurses, and two licensed practical nurses who serve as parent involvement coordinators. During the most recent school year, the nurses cleared a monthly average of \$5,500 through Medicaid reimbursements – giving them confidence that they will be able to sustain the third nursing position supported by the matching grant and to add other components to their program over time. Building on the experience in Berrien County, the Philanthropic Collaborative hopes to support training to all grantees in strategies for sustainability.

Budgets are reasonable and include a strong local match.

As noted earlier, award amounts varied considerably and all awards were

leveraged with matching local support, either in terms of in-kind services or cash. The grantees with the largest cash matches were: Berrien County (with a local match 4 times as large as the Collaborative’s award), Chattooga (3 times larger), and DeKalb Medical Center Foundation (2.5 times larger). In the latter award, the Medical Center Foundation requested modest funding for a 1-year pilot program in the City Schools of Decatur, designed to provide all students with a “medical home” by linking each student with a physician. Two school nurses with health education experience, an administrative assistant, and a part-time evaluator will function as a team and work in partnership with the school system administrators, faculty, social workers, and mental health consultants. Other responsibilities will include ensuring that healthcheck and immunizations are current, maintaining adequate student health records, developing referral and feedback systems for coordinated care, providing CPR and first aid training for staff, and offering health education for students and parents. Matching funds are provided by City Schools of Decatur, DeKalb Medical Center, Decatur Hospital, DeKalb Community Service Board, DeKalb Department of Family and Children’s Services, Georgia Baptist College of Nursing, and GUIDE, Inc. (a group offering mental health services for middle and high school students funded by DeKalb Regional Board).

The Review Process

The Georgia Health Policy Center coordinated the review process on behalf of the Collaborative and the Department of Community Health. A detailed Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued in February and posted on the Collaborative's website. Eligible applicants included government entities and nonprofit organizations.

On May 1, thirty-two proposals from communities throughout the State were received. These proposals were randomly assigned to a 10-member Internal Review Committee, comprised of representatives from foundations, state government (Department of Community Health and the Division of Public Health) and the Georgia Health Policy Center.

Reviewers used a standard evaluation tool to rate each proposal according to the criteria in the RFP. These criteria assessed the extent to which applicants: based their requests on an assessment of the community's school health needs, collaborated with existing providers and community groups, had a feasible and thoughtful plan (including program objectives, activities, and time line), proposed a realistic budget with a local match, and offered an evaluation plan for measuring success.

The Committee met as a group to discuss the merits of all applications and make recommendations that were forwarded to the School Health Matching Grants Committee. This 7-member group, representing foundations and the Department of Community Health, made final funding decisions.

Rural Health Symposium and Matching Grants Initiative

The next priority for the Collaborative's Matching Grants Program is rural health. The goal of this initiative is to enhance the health status and reduce the health disparities of persons in rural and underserved areas of Georgia through the development of regional systems of quality healthcare. Partnering again with the Department of Community Health, grants awarded through this process will provide financial and technical support to rural communities wishing to organize health care access and care management programs.

To inform the philanthropic community and other interested individuals and groups about Georgia's rural health issues, the Collaborative will sponsor a symposium on August 22, 2001. At this meeting, participants will learn that improving the health status of rural citizenry, reducing disparities, and maintaining quality access can best be achieved by restructuring the healthcare system. Continuing to focus solely on saving the local hospital will no longer suffice. While such restructuring is difficult, it is essential and doable. Symposium participants will have the opportunity to hear about the experiences of successful communities and the applicable lessons for Georgia.

The Matching Grants Initiative will be coordinated by the Health Policy Center at Georgia State. A formal Request for Proposal (RFP) will be developed and issued in late summer/early fall. Interested applicants will go through a competitive review process similar to the School Health Matching Grants Program. Grantees will be expected to identify a significant community match (25%) for their share of the funding. Grant awards will be made in early 2002.

For more information about the Symposium or Matching Grants Initiative, please call 404-651-3104.

Expected Impact

Grantees will be monitoring and evaluating the impact of their school health program on the health of the students served. Future Updates from the Collaborative will inform the philanthropic community and other interested parties about progress and results of this endeavor. A luncheon is planned in Spring 2002 to engage grantees and foundations in a fruitful discussion of experiences and lessons learned.

Matching Grants continued from page 1

whose initial contribution of \$476,000 was matched by the Department of Community Health and then leveraged even further with local dollars.

Awards ranged from \$13,125 to \$149,219, with an additional local match of in-kind services and cash ranging from \$7,875 to \$344,682. Summing all of these contributions brings the total committed to this school health initiative to an unprecedented \$2,128,213 – nearly a 5-fold increase over the foundations’ initial investment!

The awards recognize that communities vary in the level of school health

services they currently provide, as well as the pace at which they will be able to expand their programs. Thus, six grants provide only one year of funding, one grant spans two years, and the remainder cover a full 3-year period. While the majority of the contributing foundations are based in Atlanta, the grant recipients blanket the State. In addition, grantees reflect extensive involvement from a variety of community stakeholders: school systems, boards of health, Family Connection groups, hospital foundations, a medical center, and a regional healthcare system.

Summary of Grant Awards

Grantee	Years	Award	Children Served
Ben Hill County School System	1	\$50,000	987
Berrien County Board of Education	1	\$33,085	3,100
Catoosa County Board of Health	3	\$130,684	943
Chattooga County Board of Education	3	\$117,161	958
Columbus Regional Healthcare System (Marion County)	3	\$43,119	1,579
Columbus Regional Healthcare System (Talbot County)	3	\$32,760	918
Cook County Commission for Children and Youth	2	\$90,000	770
DeKalb Medical Center Foundation (City of Decatur)	1	\$50,000	2,573
Jefferson County Board of Health	3	\$149,219	345
Lowndes County Board of Health	3	\$130,547	1,885
Madison County Schools	1	\$13,125	4,489
Medical Center Foundation (Hall County & Gainesville)	1	\$46,300	24,000
Oconee Regional Medical Center (Baldwin County)	1	\$15,000	1,806

Steering Committee

In response to the Governor’s challenge, a Steering Committee was formed. Individuals from foundations involved on the Committee include:

Beverly Blake
Carlos and Marguerite Mason Trust

George Brumley, M.D.
Zeist Family Foundation

Bobbi Cleveland
Tull Charitable Foundation

Rhodes Haverty, M.D.
Georgia Health Foundation

Pete McTier
Robert W. Woodruff Foundation

Alicia Philipp
Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta

Evonne Yancey
Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of Georgia

The Georgia Health Policy Center is coordinating the work of the Philanthropic Collaborative.

For more information, please contact:

Mary Ann Phillips
404-651-3104

www.philanthropiccollaborative.org

