



Washtenaw County Health Department

For Immediate Release

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Building Healthy Communities: 13 Washtenaw County organizations awarded grants to promote healthy eating and physical activity

YPSILANTI, Mich., Feb. 1, 2018 – The Washtenaw County Health Department is pleased to announce over \$160,000 in grant funding to 13 community projects that are helping build foundations for residents to live healthy lifestyles.

The health department awarded the funding through its Building Healthy Communities program. Building Healthy Communities creates policy, system, and environment changes that support physical activity and healthy eating. The program aims to reduce cardiovascular disease, obesity, and other chronic conditions.

“These projects will be creating lasting changes throughout the year, from park and food pantry improvements to connections to local farmers markets and bike sharing,” said Susan Ringler Cerniglia, MPH, program administrator with Washtenaw County Health Department. “We are incredibly excited to be able to support our local partners and to work together to find unique and effective ways to support health in our local communities and for everyone who lives there.”

Chelsea Senior Center, one of the grantees, will use the funding to grow their healthy eating programs for all ages. In 2012, the senior center created an intergenerational garden to teach children the joys and benefits of gardening, build a manageable gardening experience for seniors, and help bridge the intergenerational gap between the two age groups. The grant will allow them to purchase a mobile cooking station and equipment to engage kids and seniors in healthy eating and cooking demonstrations.

“We are thankful to have this grant opportunity that will allow us to better support our intergenerational garden,” said Trinh Pifer, executive director at Chelsea Senior Center. “Connecting seniors and youth around healthy eating and physical activity outdoors - it’s very rewarding for all involved.”

Charter Township of Ypsilanti Recreation Department is partnering with Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley and the New West Willow Neighborhood Association for their grant project. The collaboration is building upon efforts to make West Willow Park a safe, accessible space to be active and gather as a community. The grant funding will be used to carry out park improvements to increase park use.

Congratulations to all the partners selected for the 2017-18 Building Healthy Communities program:

- Charter Township of Ypsilanti Recreation Department (in partnership with Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley & New West Willow Neighborhood Association)
- Chelsea Senior Center

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- Eastern Michigan University (in partnership with Parkridge Community Center & Ypsilanti Housing Commission)
- Ecology Center
- Food Gatherers
- Growing Hope (in partnership with Cultivate Coffee and Taphouse & Taste the Local Difference)
- IDEA Buenos Vecinos
- Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County (in partnership with Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels)
- Northfield's Human Services (in partnership with Whitmore Lake Health Equity Leadership Team)
- Saline Farmers Market (in partnership with Saline Area Senior Center)
- Saline Parks & Recreation
- St. Joseph Mercy Ann Arbor
- Whitmore Lake Public Schools (in partnership with Whitmore Lake Health Equity Leadership Team)

Building Healthy Communities is funded by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Past projects have helped launch local farmers markets in Ypsilanti and Chelsea, healthy food assistance programs, non-motorized planning initiatives, walking and biking trails, the Washtenaw County Food Policy Council, and Prescription for Health. For more information about the Building Healthy Communities program, please visit bit.ly/WashtenawBHC.

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The Washtenaw County Health Department promotes health and works to prevent disease and injury in our community. Our mission is to assure, in partnership with the community, the conditions necessary for people to live healthy lives through prevention and protection programs.

The Washtenaw County Health Department has achieved national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board. Visit us at <http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org> or call 734-544-6700.

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