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Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation Awards over \$1 Million in First Grant Cycle to Improve the Health and Wellbeing of Highlands, Cashiers and Surrounding Communities.

The Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation (The Foundation) is pleased to announce that grants totaling \$1,287,260 have been awarded to area non-profits and organizations.

Planning for this first grant cycle began soon after the Foundation was established on February 1, 2019 with its broadened purpose to support the health and wellbeing of our Highlands, Cashiers and surrounding communities.

Programs and Grants Committee Chair, Stephanie Edwards, activated the committee soon after being appointed by Board Chair Dr. Walter Clark in early March. The committee is comprised of four Board members and three community advisory members representing communities across the Highlands and Cashiers area. “We are fortunate to have the talents of this dedicated committee who devoted extensive time and effort reviewing, scoring and evaluating the grant applications,” said Dr. Clark.

Using the basis of Social Determinants of Health, and information obtained through research and listening sessions, the committee identified four focus areas for grant funding: Access to Healthcare, Education, Economic Stability and Community Vitality. Grant workshops were conducted, and the first grant cycle opened May 15.

Board-approved policies and best practices were closely followed throughout the process of reviewing, vetting and prioritizing the grant applications.

“The committee dedicated more than 1000 collective hours of intense analysis of each of the applications in a detailed grant review process that ensured accuracy, integrity, and transparency throughout consideration,” said Ms. Edwards.

On July 31, the Programs and Grants Committee recommended grant awards totaling \$1,287,260 to the Foundation Board of Directors. The Board unanimously approved. Selected projects spanned all ages from early childhood to-end of-life care; and addressed a wide spectrum of solutions from on-site school nurses and social workers to equipment and technology upgrades, as well as capital improvements and critical support for our indigent population.

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Support for children and youth included facility upgrades, instructor support and creative programming. A particularly unique project combined more than one focus area and included family-based services with food security.

Ms. Edwards noted commonalities across some of the grant proposals. “Some requests were similar, involving emergency services and transportation, school-based health, mental health services and healthcare for the uninsured. These commonalties represent opportunities for collaborative initiatives in the future.”

“I am extremely impressed with the good work of the applicant organizations. Their successes provide the channels to fulfill our charitable purposes. We look forward to ongoing partnerships that reach far into the future as we strive to build healthy and vibrant communities,” said Dr. Clark.

CEO Robin Tindall said, “Over the coming weeks we look forward to sharing impact stories about how the funded organizations will move the needle to improve the health and wellbeing of our Highlands, Cashiers and surrounding communities.” Plans for a second grant cycle in 2019 are underway. For further information please visit the Foundation’s website www.hchealthfnd.org.

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