



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:

Deanne Probst

612-676-3630

dprobst@ucare.org

UCare announces UCare Fund grants for 2008

Funds granted to programs and organizations supporting health care needs of diverse communities and people with disabilities in Minnesota

MINNEAPOLIS, Oct. 27, 2008 – [UCare](#) announced today that its [UCare Fund](#) has made grants totaling \$697,627 in the form of 17 community grants and two research grants between \$10,000 and \$50,000 each. Funds were awarded to Minnesota organizations addressing diversity and disability issues, and promoting healthy lifestyles and quality medical care.

The UCare Fund is a community-directed initiative of UCare, the fourth-largest health plan in Minnesota. Established in 1998, the Fund provides grants and staff support to projects that advance UCare’s mission to improve the health of UCare members through innovative services and partnerships across communities.

Community grants support projects that promote health and health care access. Research grants are directed to health data collection, data analysis, and health care delivery initiatives.

UCare Fund community grants were made in 2008 to a broad spectrum of organizations whose initiatives will help improve the health and overall well-being of people with a wide range of physical, developmental, sensory, or mental disabilities. The two research grants to the University of Minnesota Department of Family Medicine and Community Health are aimed at improving the delivery of health care to newborns and people with diabetes.

“We are very pleased to provide financial support to so many innovative health care, social service, and community-based organizations working to help Minnesotans facing different health and life challenges,” said [Nancy Feldman](#), UCare’s President and Chief Executive Officer. “We directed many of our UCare Fund grants this year to initiatives that help our growing and often underserved diverse populations. Our financial support helps these proactive programs close the health care gap that exists for a growing number of immigrants of all ages, aging citizens, newborns and new mothers, victims of torture, and people with physical and developmental disabilities.”

Following is a list of the 17 UCare Fund community grants, totaling \$612,577:

- **[Access Press](#)** – *Access Press* is a non-profit newspaper serving Minnesota’s disability community. Grant funds awarded to this publication will facilitate a redesign of its web site to add reader interactivity, online advertising, and greater accessibility in order to increase readership and enhance revenue.
- **[Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Seton Services Prenatal Program](#)** – The grant helps fund the Seton Services Prenatal Program, a previous recipient of UCare Fund support. The program works to improve birth outcomes and the presence of quality, and offer consistent social services and medical care for high risk, low-income pregnant women and teens throughout pregnancy, delivery, and postpartum follow-up.
- **[The Center for Victims of Torture](#)** – Funds will help cover the development of another post-doctoral psychology fellow needed to work in the areas of trauma and torture survivor rehabilitation.
- **[Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio \(CLUES\)](#)** – The grant will pay for the provision of linguistically appropriate and culturally proficient mental health services in St. Paul, and reduce disparities in mental health care for the Latino community.
- **[Hennepin County Public Health Promotion](#)** – Grant money will support “Safe Routes to School” activities that facilitate and promote walking and biking among children at five Robbinsdale school district elementary schools.
- **[Inter-Tribal Elder Services](#)** – The grant will fund the health promotion and nutrition program and staff position at Inter-Tribal Elder Services. The program provides urban American Indian elders with health and nutrition information, and activities such as a walking program and a fall prevention initiative.
- **[Lifeworks Services, Inc.](#)** – Funds will cover start-up costs associated with the development of an income-generating business offering Lifeworks multi-sensory environments to community members with disabilities or other sensory disorders.
- **[Mesabi Family YMCA](#)** – The grant will help expand child, adolescent, and adult obesity reduction programs to positively impact individuals and families dealing with obesity. The Trim Kids targets children, pre-teens, and teens age 7-17 years, while Get Real is designed for adults.
- **[National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Minnesota Chapter](#)** – Grant funds will support a two-phase development of two adult day programs in Greater Minnesota.
- **[The Na-way-ee Center School, Inc.](#)** – Financial support is granted for a diabetes prevention program called “Healthy Choices Project” among American Indian youth. It will provide students and families with screening and follow-up services, health education classes, expanded exercise and healthy meals programs, and a school vegetable garden project.

- [Nicollet Public School District 507](#) – The grant will provide start-up costs for year-long walking activity program for elementary students. Funds will be used for pedometers and staff time to work with the project on a steady basis.
- [Portico Healthnet](#) – The grant will enable Portico’s bilingual community health workers to help uninsured Latinos in the Twin Cities obtain health care coverage. Their outreach efforts will provide comprehensive application assistance for enrollment in Minnesota Health Care Programs.
- [Sawtooth Mountain Clinic](#) – Funding will enable the northern Minnesota clinic to continue providing primary, part-time health care physician services to the Grand Portage Health Services site on the Grand Portage Reservation in Cook County.
- [Special Olympics Minnesota](#) – The grant offers general operating support to enhance and expand its Special Olympics programs (including sports training and competition, health initiatives, and leadership activities) that promote healthy lifestyles for individuals with intellectual disabilities.
- [St. David’s Child Development & Family Services](#) – The grant will help fund St. David’s Child Development & Family Services Teen Pregnancy Support Program, which works to improve the birth outcomes of high-risk teen parents through various pregnancy, childbirth, and early parenting initiatives.
- [Vietnamese Social Services of Minnesota](#) – Funding will help The Refugee Health Access Project increase awareness of health care and health insurance resources among Vietnamese and Karen refugees and immigrants in the Twin Cities and St. Cloud, improve access to these resources through culturally appropriate assistance, and help providers overcome cultural and linguistic barriers that block delivery of health care to this population.
- [Volunteers of America Minnesota](#) – Grant funds will help Somali youth and their families increase access to quality, culturally competent mental health services through a new satellite clinic at the Somali Education Center in South Minneapolis, and through Somali staff at community and home sites.

Following are two UCare Fund research grants to the [University of Minnesota Department of Family Medicine and Community Health](#), totaling \$85,050:

- **“Effect of Revised Nursery Orders on Newborn Preventive Services”** – The study seeks to determine whether changing nursery orders to reflect four current guidelines improves quality of care by improving compliance with the recommendations. It also seeks to determine whether there are racial or ethnic disparities in the quality of newborn care.

- **“Minnesota Complexity Assessment Method in Diabetes Patients”** – The proposed research will investigate the validity of the Minnesota Complexity Assessment Method (MCAM) in a sample of outpatient patients with poorly controlled diabetes.

About UCare

UCare (www.ucare.org) is an independent, nonprofit health plan providing health care and administrative services to more than 147,000 members. UCare partners with health care providers, counties, and community organizations to create and deliver innovative health coverage products for:

- Individuals and families enrolled in income-based Minnesota Health Care Programs, such as MinnesotaCare and Prepaid Medical Assistance Program.
- Adults with disabilities and Medicare beneficiaries with chronic health conditions.
- Minnesotans dually eligible for Medical Assistance and Medicare.
- Medicare-eligible individuals throughout Minnesota and in western Wisconsin.

UCare for Seniors, UCare's Medicare Advantage plan, was ranked by Medicare in the top 13 percent of health plans nationwide for outstanding performance. UCare addresses health care disparities and care access issues through its UCare Fund grants and a broad array of community initiatives.

###