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News Release

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Utah Department of Health Awards Grants Worth 200,000 to Reach the Medically Underserved

(Salt Lake City, UT) – The Utah Department of Health (UDOH), along with Utah Issues and Association for Utah Community Health, today announced the recipients of 11 grants that are intended to help reach and enroll low-income families who qualify for Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program commonly known as CHIP.

The Health Access Mini-Grants Program for Families with Children will begin early next year and will run for one year. The UDOH has the option of renewing successful projects for a second year. The mini-grants will be funded through Utah’s remaining \$1.2 million share of the Federal/State “Medicaid-Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Delinking Funds,” \$500 million set aside for states to maintain eligibility for Medicaid through the transition from welfare to work. Before 1996, eligibility for Medicaid was automatically “linked” to eligibility for cash assistance. Once these programs became “delinked” it became necessary to base Medicaid eligibility on income levels.

Of the 28 grant applicants, 11 organizations were each awarded 20,000 or less totaling nearly \$200,000. The following is list of successful applicants and a small summary outlining the grant’s purpose.

Southern Area

Mountainland Head Start, Inc.

\$20,000

Provo, Utah

This organization proposes to target all children who they serve as well as their siblings. By hiring a bilingual (Spanish) outreach worker to work with their caseworkers Mountainland Head Start will target all eligible head start children and siblings for enrollment in Medicaid/CHIP. By using current relationships and the corresponding level of trust, this organization will assist their clients with enrollment.

Mountainlands Community Health Center

\$19,859

Provo, Utah

This organization states they are serving more than seventy five-hundred patients with 62% of them being uninsured and only 16% being covered by Medicaid/CHIP. They feel by remodeling space to house an onsite Medicaid/CHIP employee and by hiring a part time outreach worker to assist customers with eligibility they can greatly increase the uninsured participation.

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Wayne Community Health Centers, Inc. \$19,420 Bicknell, Utah

This organization proposes to concentrate on overcoming the perceived stigma associated with participation in government social programs in their part of the state. To do this, they will hire a part time Care Coordinator to interact directly with their customers to eliminate those stigma barriers. This Care Coordinator will then help with the paperwork and assist in submitting the application of Medicaid/CHIP.

Salt Lake Area

National Tongan American Society \$20,000 Wasatch Front

This is a broad project that works through Tongan churches to enroll participants. The network of churches has the potential to reach 15,000 people with potential enrollment of thousands of children. The model is faith based and will draw from the authority and relationships with church leaders. Application assistants will provide follow-up.

Indian Walk-In Center \$20,000 Salt Lake County

The Center will conduct two focus groups to develop and test outreach media materials for the Native American population. The newly developed materials are expected to reach about 3,000 people statewide and have an enrollment increase by 232 people. The Center will provide incentives for community members to fill out applications.

Child Care Management Associates \$17,155 Statewide

CCMA manages the USDA Federal Foods program and monitors its use to 305 day care providers. The agency has a network in place to monitor and educate thousands of private day care providers that participate in the Federal Subsidized Foods programs. CCMA hopes to enrollment about one thousand children.

Northern Area

Bear River Head Start \$13,500 Cache/Rich counties

Bear River Head Start serves low-income families in Cache, Box Elder, and Rich counties. This grant will concentrate on Cache and Rich counties. The agency has established contacts and communication channels with low-income families and other agencies in the area.

Lincoln Center Boys and Girls Club \$17,670 Box Elder

The Lincoln Center works directly with many agencies and programs in Box Elder County. This agency has established a method for identifying families who need access to medical care when they contact any of the partner agencies. The Lincoln Center and the Bear River Head Start will work together so that outreach activities in Box Elder County do not overlap.

Ogden Area Community Action Agency (OACAA) \$20,000 Weber County

OACAA has worked with low-income families and children in Weber County since 1965 and has established community partnerships throughout the county. OACAA also administers programs for the low-income families including Head Start.

Your Community Connection (YCC) \$18,344 Weber County

YCC has assisted families and children in Weber County for over fifty years and has strong collaborative relationships with other community agencies and organizations. The UDOH Division of Health Care Financing will work closely with OACAA and YCC so that duplication of outreach activities won't occur.

Family Connection Center \$13,110 Davis County

The Family Connection Center serves families and children in Davis County and is the Community Action Agency for that county. The Family Connection Center serves about 27,000 individuals annually and administers many programs including the Davis County Food Bank.

The Health Access Mini-Grants Program for Families with Children is the product of a unique public-private collaboration between the UDOH's Division Health Care Financing (Medicaid), Utah Issues (Center for Poverty Research & Action), the Association for Utah Community and the Bureau of Primary Care, Rural and Ethnic Health. These agencies have met with more than 40 community groups from across the state to craft the mini-grants program to meet the diverse outreach needs of Utah's uninsured populations.

For information, log onto the Utah Issues' web site: www.utahissues.org or the UDOH web site at <http://www.health.state.ut.us> and select media relations. For more information, call Elizabeth Heath, Program Manager, Division of Health Care Financing at 801-538-9982, Judi Hilman at Utah Issues at 801-521-2035 or 1-800-331-5627 or Jesus Blanco at Association for Utah Community Health at 801-974-5522 ext. 33.

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