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## **The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts Announces 2023 Activation Fund Grants**

*More than \$1 Million in Funding Supports Organizations Across the Region*

**WORCESTER, Mass.** (Oct. 17, 2023) – [The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts](https://www.healthfoundationofcentralmassachusetts.org) today announced it has awarded 10 grants totaling \$1,063,451 through its Activation Fund program, which provides capacity-building support for organizations working to address community-identified health issues.

The 2023 recipients represent a diverse mix of organizations located throughout the region, five of which are receiving Activation Fund grants for the first time.

“The Activation Fund and related community outreach efforts are the primary vehicles through which the Board and staff receive information about community needs and barriers to accessing health-related programs and services,” said Judge Timothy M. Bibaud, the Health Foundation’s Board Chair. “We are honored to partner with these 10 organizations striving to fill critical gaps and support historically marginalized populations in our community.”

“The goal of the Activation Fund is to provide a one-time infusion of funds for discrete needs within an organization aimed to build its capacity and/or increase its impact in a manner that can be sustained long-term,” said Dr. Amie Shei, President and CEO. “In recognition of the many demands on nonprofit organizations and limited staff resources, we have made a concerted effort to simplify the application process and offer technical assistance in hopes of making the grant opportunity more accessible.”

The grant awards are as follows:

**Abby’s House** – \$120,000 for accessibility-related renovations to its overnight shelter for homeless women and children in Worcester, a component of a larger effort to convert the shelter to a non-congregate model and expand its capacity from nine to 18 beds.

**Boston Area Gleaners** – \$81,500 for the purchase of a refrigerated truck to help facilitate expansion of its farm crop gleaning, surplus food recovery, and distribution services into Worcester County.

**Building Futures** – \$105,213 for purchase of furniture, appliances and supplies to equip its 24-unit permanent supportive housing development in Worcester called “A Place to Live” aimed to serve the chronically homeless population.

**Camp Starfish** – \$110,000 to replace an unusable basketball court and tennis courts at its year-round campsite serving children and young adults from Central Massachusetts with emotional, behavioral, social, and learning challenges, enhancing access to recreational activities and team sports and supporting overall well-being.

**Employment Options** – \$70,935 for commercial kitchen equipment to launch a new culinary workforce training program for individuals with mental illness participating in its Clubhouse program in Fitchburg.

**GAAMHA** – \$130,000 for room furnishings and kitchen equipment to outfit a new 32-bed recovery home for women with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders in Athol.

**Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center** – \$110,000 for purchase and installation of an elevator to ensure ADA accessibility at its new 44-unit, affordable housing development for low-income veterans and their families in Winchendon.

**Project Just Because** – \$120,000 for the purchase of a freezer trailer to significantly increase the organization’s capacity to accept, store and distribute donations of protein, dairy products and fresh produce to support food-insecure individuals and families and other local food pantries.

**Regional Environmental Council** – \$95,400 for warehouse renovations to increase the capacity of its Mobile Farmers Market program, connecting more food-insecure residents of Worcester, Southbridge, and Webster with healthy, affordable, and culturally relevant produce.

**Southeast Asian Coalition of Central MA** – \$120,403 for purchase and installation of equipment to create an indoor hydroponic mushroom farm at the agency’s headquarters in Worcester and build the capacity of its Food Security program that caters to the cultural needs of clients.

### **About The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts**

The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts is dedicated to improving the health of those who live or work in Central Massachusetts, with particular emphasis on vulnerable populations and unmet needs. Through its unique and impactful approach to grantmaking, the Foundation supports community-identified health issues, with health defined broadly to include social determinants of health and with a focus on promoting health equity. As a health conversion foundation launched in 1999 following the sale of the not-for-profit HMO Central Massachusetts Health Care Inc., the Foundation’s grants have totaled over \$54 million to more than 200 unique organizations over its history. For more information, visit [www.hfcm.org](http://www.hfcm.org).

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