

Tufts Health Plan, Cambridge Communitiy Foundation team up for health project grants

Wicked Local Cambridge

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Cambridge — With local health providers' budgets strained by the current economy, two local foundations are teaming up to help keep Cambridge residents healthy. Tufts Health Plan Foundation and Cambridge Community Foundation joined forces to make \$17,000 in grants this week for local health projects.

Recipients of the awards are Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services, the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House, the Community Art Center, Agassiz Baldwin Community, and Child Care Resource Center.

Several of the grants stressed improving the lives of local elders. Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services (SCES) will use their grant to support disease prevention programs for local seniors. SCES will run a new series of workshops on how to prevent falls and increase strength and balance.

"Injury from falls is the leading cause of fatal and nonfatal injuries among older adults 65 and over," said John O'Neill, SCES's executive director.

The fall prevention program will be part of a broader program that also emphasizes managing chronic diseases, improving nutrition, and increasing physical activity.

The Agassiz Baldwin Community (ABC) will use its grant for an intergenerational program called Living Well Through Baking. The project will involve Cambridge seniors in baking with school-age youth on a weekly basis and in creating an annotated recipe book that includes nutritional facts.

"There is increasing social science research showing that participating in intergenerational programs benefits seniors in numerous ways," said Terry DeLancey, executive director at ABC.

The other funded projects are the Seven Secrets of Healthy Aging program at the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House that will reach out to elders in Area 4 of Cambridge, a Teens Take Charge program at the Community Art Center that uses the media arts to promote healthy nutrition and physical activity among teens, and a Health Access Project at Child Care Resource Center that will utilize CCRC's extensive contact with families to increase access to health care among low-income and underserved groups.

The Tufts Health Plan Foundation's mission is to promote healthy lifestyles and the delivery of quality care in its communities. The Tufts Health Plan Foundation is focusing on healthy aging to help meet the challenges of an aging society. The Cambridge Community Foundation supports a range of agencies that enhance the quality of life for Cambridge residents of all ages and backgrounds. CCF has a rich history of bringing people and institutions together to meet the challenges of changing community needs.

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