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KAISER PERMANENTE ANNOUNCES \$6 MILLION IN NEW GRANTS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA FOCUSING ON MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

WOODLAND HILLS, Calif., – Dec. 3, 2018 – [Kaiser Permanente Southern California](#) announced a \$6 million, five-year Community Mental Health and Wellness Initiative with an immediate Local Partnership Grant (LPG) grant allocation of \$1.28 million to combat and improve access to mental health services. The initial grant allocation is funding a group of two-year grants to support 16 nonprofit community partners working to improve mental health and wellness in under-resourced Southern California communities.

“The prevalence of mental illness is significant and growing in Southern California and across the country,” said John Yamamoto, vice president, Community Health & Government Relations, Kaiser Foundation Hospitals/Health Plan. “For adults and youths affected by mental illness, the effects can be devastating, increasing their risk for serious medical conditions, diminished quality of life, and even suicide. These grants are designed to address the mental health needs within our most under-resourced communities by funding trusted nonprofit organizations that serve these areas and populations.”

In Kaiser Permanente’s continued efforts to improve mental health and wellness in the communities it serves, it once again identified mental and behavioral health as a top community health initiative.

The grant will award approximately \$80,000 to each of the 16 nonprofit community partners to aid these organizations that are representing the clinical, social service, advocacy, public, and primary and secondary school sector in Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego counties. These organizations’ efforts include:

- Improving access and connection to care to mental health services in clinical and community settings.
- Enhancing and building the current and emerging mental health workforce to meet community mental health needs.
- Reducing self, public, and institutional mental health stigma and boosting resilience in individuals, communities, and organizations.

Every day, millions of adults and youths with mental health issues struggle in silence, either because they cannot get the appropriate care or are too ashamed to seek help. Mental health disorders are among the most common health conditions faced by Americans and Californians, with nearly one in five American adults experiencing mental illness and one half of all chronic mental illness beginning by age 14.

Kaiser Permanente’s mental health and wellness initiative seeks to address these issues in communities through improving equitable access to high-quality care and reducing the effects of mental health stigma. Some of the grantees supported by this funding have found unique ways to address mental health through a grassroots approach directly into at-risk communities. An example can be seen through one of Kaiser Permanente’s mental health grant recipients, **The Village Family Services**, the lead social services agency for foster and homeless youth in L.A. County’s Service Planning Area 2.

The 20-year-old agency is a hub for homeless children and teenagers, providing them with safe housing placement and trauma-informed care to vulnerable young people throughout the San Fernando Valley and in Calabasas. “The key to our model is our wraparound care with a housing first approach,” said Zachery Scott, VP of Development and Communication for The Village Family Services. “Many of these youth are running away

from a traumatic experience at home and ending up on the streets where they experience more trauma. If you don't address that with appropriate mental health services, and get them connected with educational and employment support, then that housing placement will fail."

The agency, which serves many lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) youth, participated last June at a KP-sponsored LGBTQ Conference in Woodland Hills. According to Scott, 15 percent of clientele at The Village Family Services identify as being unwelcome in their homes because of sexuality-related issues, and another 35 percent are escaping physical violence. "That's 50 percent escaping violence or an unhealthy environment," he said.

The Village Family Services was started with a focus on Spanish-speaking families who were caught up in domestic violence, and has expanded over the years to encompass other community members in need.

"We see ourselves as a holistic approach to solving and preventing youth homelessness," said Scott. Housing navigators broker placements with landlords, while other supportive staffers teach financial literacy classes, provide mental health counseling, and help with reintegration of students into schools. "We're excited to be partnering with Kaiser Permanente," he said.

For more information, visit them online at www.TheVillageFS.org

The complete list of all 16 community grant recipients of the Local Partnership Grant are:

1. Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science
2. San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools
3. Mental Health of America of Los Angeles (MHALA)
4. National Alliance for Mental Illness Orange County
5. Cajon Valley Union School District
6. The Achievable Foundation
7. Jewish Family Service of the Desert
8. Foothill Family Services
9. California State University, Bakersfield
10. California State University, San Bernardino
11. Family Service Association
12. Tarzana Treatment Centers, Inc.
13. Riverside University Health System Foundation
14. Mental Health of America of Los Angeles – Antelope Valley
15. Coalition for Human Immigrants Rights of Los Angeles
16. The Village Family Services (VFS)

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