

# NEWS RELEASE



*For Immediate Release*

## **Four Wisconsin Nonprofits Awarded \$100,000 in Grants from UnitedHealthcare to Improve Independence for People with Disabilities**

- *Lt. Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch presented the grants during a ceremony at Independence First*
- *Four grants of \$25,000 each to support organizations that address health needs and barriers for Wisconsinites with disabilities*

**MILWAUKEE (July 18, 2017)** – A total of \$100,000 in grants from UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Wisconsin will enable four community organizations across the state to enhance their programming and improve access to health resources for Wisconsin residents with disabilities.

Lt. Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch joined Yasmine Winkler, regional CEO, UnitedHealthcare Community & State, and Ellen Sexton, CEO, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Wisconsin, in awarding \$25,000 grants to four organizations during a ceremony today at Independence First in Milwaukee.

“UnitedHealthcare’s grants to these four organizations will go a long way toward helping Wisconsin residents receive the support they need to live on their own,” said Lt. Gov. Kleefisch. “Many people with disabilities in Wisconsin are able to live independently and work thanks to organizations such as the four being recognized with grants from UnitedHealthcare.”

The four grant awardees include:

- **The Arc Wisconsin** (<https://www.thearc.org/>) – The grant will enable the organization to train 20 human-service professionals across Wisconsin who will provide future-planning education and support to 60 families and individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.
- **Easterseals Southeast Wisconsin** (<http://www.easterseals.com/wi-se/>) – The grant will help Easterseals provide training and employment services for 350 people, including assessment, job shadowing, job coaching and follow-up.
- **Independence First** (<https://www.independencefirst.org>) – The grant will help Independence First expand access to mobility equipment by providing 30 people with equipment vouchers and increase connections to independent-living resources for people with disabilities.
- **Life Navigators** (<http://www.lifenavigators.org/>) – The grant will fund the Intergenerational Family Support Program with in-home and telephonic intervention services for 40 caretakers and consumers, community training for 50 caregivers, and training for 50 financial-planning professionals.

“UnitedHealthcare partners with community organizations that understand how each individual’s circumstances in life affect their health care and well-being,” said Sexton. “We are grateful for the opportunity to support these four Wisconsin organizations that are working to improve the health and independence of Wisconsin residents with disabilities and special needs.”

People with disabilities often face challenges including finding and maintaining employment, securing affordable housing and managing their disability, along with health conditions. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), people with disabilities are more likely than people without disabilities to report poorer overall health, less access to quality health care, and have higher rates of smoking, physical inactivity, stress and depression. In Wisconsin, there is a gap of more than 40 percent between employment rates of working-age people with and without disabilities, according to the [2014 Annual Disability Status Report](#).

Grant applications were submitted in March following community brainstorming sessions across the state, led by UnitedHealthcare, where local care providers and other stakeholders discussed opportunities to address health care for the disabled. Wisconsin-based nonprofits, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and government agencies were among the qualifying organizations that submitted proposals.

UnitedHealthcare serves more than 1.6 million people in Wisconsin enrolled in employer-sponsored, individual, Medicare and Medicaid health plans, with a network of 163 hospitals and more than 32,000 physicians and other care providers statewide.

**About UnitedHealthcare**

UnitedHealthcare is dedicated to helping people nationwide live healthier lives by simplifying the health care experience, meeting consumer health and wellness needs, and sustaining trusted relationships with care providers. The company offers the full spectrum of health benefit programs for individuals, employers, military service members, retirees and their families, and Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries, and contracts directly with more than 1 million physicians and care professionals, and 6,000 hospitals and other care facilities nationwide. UnitedHealthcare is one of the businesses of UnitedHealth Group (NYSE: UNH), a diversified Fortune 50 health and well-being company. For more information, visit UnitedHealthcare at [www.uhc.com](http://www.uhc.com) or follow @myUHC on Twitter.

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