**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**The Community Health Commission of Missouri and Deaconess Foundation Launch Third Round Grant Cycle for Seniors Community Fund, Led by and for Local Seniors**

*$350,000 will be awarded to support services for seniors in the region; throughout previous funding rounds to date, the Fund has supported 21 area organizations*

**ST. LOUIS – September 22, 2025 –** Today, the [Community Health Commission of Missouri](https://www.stlrhc.org/) (CHCM), in partnership with [Deaconess Foundation](https://deaconess.org/), announced the opening of the third round of grant funding for the Seniors Community Revitalization & Development Fund (Seniors Community Fund). The Fund is led by seniors and for seniors, supporting older adults in Eastern Missouri and Southern Illinois and putting funding decisions directly in their hands. The Fund’s community-led Senior Advisory Board, comprised of residents aged 55 and older, leaders of organizations serving seniors and families, and community leaders, is now accepting proposals for up to $30,000 from organizations, projects, and/or initiatives that are addressing three priority areas: safety, transportation, and health navigation support for seniors.

These priority areas are especially vital in this moment, as many in the St. Louis region continue to feel the impact of the devastating May 16 tornado. The tornado had an especially acute impact on the region’s older adult population. In the aftermath, organizations that support the well-being of seniors have been, and will continue to be, critical on the road ahead.

“The Seniors Community Fund offers an accessible, tangible, and inclusive space for seniors, a platform where our most experienced community members inspire real change,” said Rev. Bethany Johnson-Javois, President and CEO of Deaconess Foundation. “By honoring the wisdom of our elders, championing their aspirations for the future, and supporting their power to decide how the future is realized, we are working together to build deeper connections for generations to come.”

Since its launch in 2023, the Seniors Community Fund has awarded 27 grants to 21 organizations focused on closing service gaps for seniors in Eastern Missouri and Southern Illinois. In the last grant cycle, Rx Outreach was awarded a grant which supported their Fill the Gap Prescription Assistance Program, a pilot initiative providing free medications for eligible older adults in the greater St. Louis region. The Fill the Gap Prescription Assistance Program is just one example of how the Seniors Community Fund’s investments are improving the public health system infrastructure to better serve residents 55 years of age and older.

“Seniors deserve to have ownership over the decisions that impact their health and livelihoods as much as any other group of people,” said Riisa Rawlins, CEO of CHCM. “The Seniors Community Fund empowers the local older adult population to identify where gaps in support exist across the Eastern Missouri and Southern Illinois region. Their voices and input are absolutely essential in determining where more resources are needed, as we know that seniors face pervasive and systemic gaps in healthcare and safety.”

The Senior Advisory Board is comprised of seniors, leaders of organizations serving seniors and families, and community leaders in St. Louis City and County, St. Charles, Jefferson, and Franklin Counties in Missouri and Madison, St. Clair, and Monroe Counties in Illinois, who share decision-making power in order to advocate for and invest in the needed services.

"As a member of the Senior Advisory Board, I am proud to be a repeat representative for the Senior Community Fund Sub Committee. This initiative has given me an opportunity to make a direct and visible impact on the providers of specific resources for our senior community,” said member Tony Davis. “It is inspiring to receive feedback from the recipients of the funding. I am looking forward to continuing to provide my input and insights related to the senior community.”

The request for proposals for the Seniors Community Fund is now open. Proposals must be submitted by Friday, October 17, 2025, at 11:59pm. Prospective applicants should serve seniors in Missouri (St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Charles, Jefferson, and Franklin County) or Illinois (Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair County).

Questions regarding the Seniors Community Revitalization and Development Fund can be emailed to Velva Hollimon, Community Health Commission of Missouri Senior Director of Operations at [vhollimon@chcmissouri.org](https://tracking.us.nylas.com/l/cdb40f52a2be4fe784e4c4b29e4828cc/3/fcac47f32a5957deacaa2989d9adf293bdf85bc00c9e2d5c1624595339e3560e?cache_buster=1727881349).

Questions regarding application technical assistance can be emailed to [GrantHelp@deaconess.org](mailto:GrantHelp@deaconess.org).

Learn more about the Seniors Community Fund and apply [here](https://deaconess.org/funding-opportunities/).

**About Deaconess Foundation**

Deaconess Foundation envisions a community that values the health and well-being of all and gives priority attention to the most invisibilized. Deaconess seeks to create conditions where liberation is the lived reality within seven generations. A ministry of the United Church of Christ, Deaconess has invested more than $100 million to improve the health of the St. Louis community since 1998. Our grants and cultivated relationships support the accelerated change in conditions through policy, advocacy, and/or organizing efforts building and wielding power to transform systems to respond to the will of the people.

The Foundation’s advocacy and grantmaking footprint includes St. Louis City, St. Louis, Jefferson, St. Charles and Franklin Counties in Missouri and Madison, St. Clair and Monroe Counties in Illinois. For more information, visit [deaconess.org](https://tracking.us.nylas.com/l/65129f21504848408126c7f60cda5e2e/8/30cd8d56f27199429c776fdc8ab800c5fb023be855d2796984e35f29c36517ee?cache_buster=1757004260). Follow the Foundation on Twitter and Instagram @deaconessfound and on Facebook at [facebook.com/deaconessfoundation](http://facebook.com/deaconessfoundation).

**About The Community Health Commission of Missouri**

On March 16, 2023 the St. Louis Regional Health Commission (RHC) and Alive and Well Communities (AWC) announced an affiliation to advance health equity across the State of Missouri and beyond. On July 17, 2024, the merged entity of the RHC and AWC was renamed to the Community Health Commission of Missouri (CHCM). CHCM envisions achieving zero health disparities through community and health system partnerships. We power the connection of community and systems to co-create innovative solutions that yield health equity in all policies and outcomes.

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