

Bethany Christian Services

Connecting Refugees to Health Services



Grand Rapids has a long history of welcoming refugees in need of a safe place to establish a new life. Local religious organizations have contributed greatly to this work. The late Gerald R. Ford also demonstrated leadership in helping Vietnamese families escape that war-torn nation to put down roots in Grand Rapids during his time in office in the 1970s.

Today, Bethany Christian Services resettles 300 refugees in our area each year. This is nearly half of the total refugee population coming to West Michigan annually.

From years of living in substandard conditions, many of these people arrive in our community with extensive and serious health issues. For a brief window of time they receive Medicaid benefits and it is optimal for their health needs to be met as soon as possible. To help facilitate expeditious access to services, Bethany Christian Services is receiving an \$80,000 grant from Grand Rapids Community Foundation.

With this support, Bethany Christian Services will assist newly arrived refugees with scheduling appointments, providing transportation, and ensuring clients follow through with referrals and prescriptions. They will also serve as liaisons between medical providers and refugees, helping both sides understand the cultural differences between our healthcare system and that which refugees are accustomed to, if any at all.

Health services will be offered by Spectrum Health through a recently opened half-day Refugee Health Clinic as part of its new Family Residency Center.

This is Community Leadership

Grand Rapids Community Foundation supports nonprofit programs that provide access to healthcare for all people in our community. Though grants like this one, the Community Foundation demonstrates its commitment to reducing healthcare disparities by ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

Grant Facts

Organization: Bethany Christian Services

Grant amount: \$80,000

Grant Purpose: To start a program to help connect refugees relocating to Grand Rapids with health services.

Grant awarded: December 2011

Website: www.bethany.org

No. served: 300 refugees

Ways You Can Help

To help ensure the success of this grant you may give to address any of the needs listed below. Please call Bethany Christian Services at 1-800-BETHANY to learn more.

- Health Education (in-home, per family): \$250
- Intensive case management for refugees with severe medical conditions: \$500
- Transportation for medical appointments (bus tickets, mileage reimbursement, taxi vouchers, per family): \$1,000

To ensure the Community Foundation can make grants like this one in the future, please consider a gift to the **Fund for Healthy People.**

Please call Jonse Young at 616.454.1751 to learn the benefits of Community Foundation giving and how gifts can be made.



Grand Rapids
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