



# ST. LUKE'S HEALTH INITIATIVES AWARDS \$375,000, STARTS ARIZONA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FUNDING PARTNERSHIP \*Three Innovation Projects Funded, Kickoff of New Partnership\*

## MEDIA CONTACT

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PHOENIX – St. Luke's Health Initiatives (SLHI) today announced that it has awarded \$375,000 in innovation grants to three organizations, and the Arizona Community Foundation will fund a fourth proposal as part of a new partnership between the two foundations.

The innovation grants will fund projects whose goals range from creating a sustainable and equitable food system to promoting a livable wage in Arizona. SLHI also partnered with the Arizona Community Foundation to fund an additional \$100,000 in health-related programs.

“What all these three grants have in common is a focus on systems change and innovative approaches that improve health,” notes Melanie Mitros, SLHI's director of Strategic Community Partnerships. Suzanne Pfister, SLHI's president and CEO, agreed, adding “the challenges to improving health haven't gotten any smaller. To meet them, we need breakthrough work that's either capable of being taken to scale or in a position to effect large scale change.”

This year's innovation grant recipients:

- **Arizona Community Action Association** received \$125,000 to implement a statewide Living Wage Initiative. Research consistently confirms the correlation between low-incomes and poor health. Modeled in part on Local First Arizona, *Raise Arizona* will focus on improved health and decreased need for social services by encouraging employers to voluntarily raise wages, thereby driving consumer support for those businesses.
- **City of Phoenix, FitPHX** received \$125,000 to spur local adoption of “Physical Activity Prescriptions.” Building on successes and lessons from other cities, FitPHX will educate healthcare providers and encourage them to utilize existing community infrastructure as a “treatment” for patients' obesity and related health conditions. The prescriptions themselves will encourage use of city recreational and health programs and facilities.
- **Cultivate South Phoenix (CUSP)** received \$125,000 to develop a community-driven “food hub” to facilitate a sustainable system for local healthy food production. CUSP will convert vacant and neglected properties, improve access to fresh and healthy foods, enhance the



capacity of local growers to process and distribute their produce, and contribute to developing policies, systems, and business models for long-term sustainability.

SLHI was honored to include the Arizona Community Foundation (ACF) as a collaborator in the grant review and funding process. The process resulted in the Arizona Community Foundation agreeing to provide The Rightcare Foundation with \$100,000 to launch an immediate resuscitation program at senior living communities around the Valley to improve neurological outcomes of sudden cardiac arrest. "Health Innovations are a growing part of ACF's philanthropic portfolio," says Jacky Alling, Chief Philanthropic Services Officer at the Arizona Community Foundation. "We are very pleased to engage in this work with SLHI to encourage and support some very creative solutions that improve community health."

#### **About SLHI**

St. Luke's Health Initiatives is Phoenix-based, \$120 million public health foundation focused on improving well-being in Arizona by addressing root causes and broader issues that affect health. Learn more at [www.slhi.org](http://www.slhi.org).

#### **About ACF**

Established in 1978, the Arizona Community Foundation is a statewide family of charitable funds supported by thousands of Arizonans. More information is available at [www.azfoundation.org](http://www.azfoundation.org).

**Members of the news media:** To arrange interviews with grantee representatives and/or SLHI staff, use the media contact information above.

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