



Tomorrow's Doctors, Tomorrow's Cures®

THE AAMC COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM

15 YEARS OF IMPACT



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Prepared by

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Introduction

The AAMC (Association of American Medical Colleges) leads and serves academic medicine to improve the health of people everywhere. We aim to live up to our mission and values through ongoing community engagement and collaboration. For more than 15 years, the AAMC has demonstrated its commitment to the Washington, D.C., community through a range of activities — including giving nearly 300 awards totaling approximately \$4,000,000 — to district-based schools and nonprofits through its Community Grants Program.

During 2006-7, AAMC leadership set out to more formally “nurture a culture at the AAMC that promotes excellence in service to our members and the public good.” In turn, leadership supported the inaugural AAMC Cares Day, an annual day of volunteer service for employees at community-based organizations, and allocated \$200,000 “for community contributions to support charitable organizations in the D.C. metro region.” To ensure sustainability and ongoing support for local schools and community-based organizations, the AAMC’s grantmaking program was established and has persisted as an invitation-only program with a cadence of regular community grant cycles since 2008-9.

The Contributions Committee was formally chartered in 2008 and convened by the AAMC’s deputy chief of staff, Jennifer Schlener (now chief of staff). During 2011-12, the annual funding cycle began being referred to as the Community Grants Program. The committee and its grant program continued to evolve significantly in 2013, as the job responsibilities of the AAMC’s new grants manager, Adrienne Fielding, included serving as the committee’s dedicated convener. The annual funding cycle transformed into a more conventional, competitive grant program for project-based awards that followed best practices from the grantmaking field, such as utilizing application review panels and rubrics, and standardized scoring criteria. In 2015-16, the committee began to work closely with the newly established office of community engagement and its director. The ongoing learning and partnership between the AAMC’s grantmaking program and

its office of community engagement have provided opportunities for making deeper connections with our community to, ultimately, have a deeper impact.

In 2018-19, the committee formally rebranded as the AAMC Community Grants Committee to better reflect its scope and charge. It also updated its charter, debuted a co-convenor leadership model, and successfully secured an increase in the annual allocation.

In 2020, the committee and its partner, Clarence J. Fluker, the AAMC director of community engagement since July 2017, saw the disruption afforded by the pandemic as an opportunity to rethink the program and its approach, informed by trends in the broader grantmaking community. This resulted in both project-based grants and general operating support grants being given to schools and community-based organizations.

Concurrently, AAMC leadership added a fourth mission area, “community collaborations,” to the traditional missions of academic medicine. Leadership subsequently grew the local commitment by increasing the annual allocation to \$400,000 for the Community Grants Program, beginning with the 2022-23 funding cycle and a commitment of at least five awards in each of the three focus areas aligned with the office of community engagement: youth education, homelessness and housing insecurity, and access to health care. The committee has also reorganized and optimized its review and decision-making processes to improve quality and increase efficiency, and local community members with expertise in each focus area were added to participate as external reviewers.

For the 2023-24 funding cycle, community grants were accompanied with approved, one-time space use at AAMC headquarters, a nonfinancial need that Community Grants Program grantees have repeatedly expressed to the committee.

Through our volunteer engagement, innovative programming, deep partnerships, and philanthropic commitment to Washington, we hold fast to the vision and promise of a healthier future through learning, discovery, health care, and community collaborations.

OUR IMPACT INSIDE AND OUT

The Community Grants Program is a valuable opportunity for employee learning and engagement, and is an asset to the local community. Here are 15 testimonials from current and former committee members and community partners that speak to the impact of the program over the last 15 years.

La Clínica del Pueblo (La Clínica) has been a proud AAMC community grant recipient for nearly a decade, a testament to the unwavering support of the AAMC. Established in 1983 by Salvadoran refugees, La Clínica has grown into a Federally Qualified Health Center providing integrated health services to the local Latinx immigrant population for over 40 years.

La Clínica first received an AAMC community grant in 2014, which supported our vital diabetes education and treatment program. The AAMC's flexibility in transitioning to general operating support grants has proven invaluable in addressing our most urgent needs, from administrative support to direct services. Our most recently awarded community grant, which focused on mental and behavioral health, will empower La Clínica to provide mental health services to uninsured and underinsured D.C. residents, addressing a critical gap in care exacerbated by limited insurance coverage for these services among our patient population.

Beyond financial support, the AAMC has become an integral partner, actively engaging with us in community conversations and fostering a collaborative relationship. The meaningful impact of the AAMC's grant funds resonates in every facet of our organization, propelling us forward in our commitment to building a healthier, more resilient community.

Mariela L. Cabanillas

Senior Grants & Funded Contracts Coordinator, [La Clínica del Pueblo](#)

Sasha Bruce Youthwork is honored to recognize the AAMC as a valued funder and partner. The grants we have received from the AAMC have had a significant social impact on young people experiencing homelessness and housing instability in Washington, D.C. We especially appreciate that the AAMC has evolved its funding model to recognize the importance of general operating grants. They truly understand the cost of doing business that nonprofits like Sasha Bruce Youthwork experience.

The AAMC has done more than just provide funding. They've connected us to other nonprofits in our community, helping us build partnerships to increase our impact. We look forward to a long and rich partnership with the AAMC.

Leigh Bailey

Senior Manager, Institutional Giving, [Sasha Bruce Youthwork](#)

Over the course of the last 13 years, the partnership between the AAMC and Miriam's Kitchen has played a pivotal role in catalyzing profound transformations within the community. Initially founded in 1983 with a primary focus on providing meals to people experiencing homelessness, Miriam's Kitchen has evolved into a dynamic force for systemic change through collaborative endeavors with the AAMC.

The turning point in our trajectory coincided with the commencement of our partnership with the AAMC. In 2011, a significant milestone was reached as we officially revised our vision statement, boldly committing to the ambitious objective of *ending* chronic homelessness in D.C. This visionary pursuit was reinforced by the establishment of our Advocacy Program, fostering alliances between community and political leaders to instigate systemic change. Simultaneously, in recognizing the critical role of case management in ensuring the stability of individuals transitioning from the streets to housing, we established the Permanent Supportive Housing Team.

Acknowledging the diverse needs of the community, we expanded our outreach beyond the confines of Foggy Bottom, where our organization is based. And in 2016, the Street Outreach Team was formed to engage with individuals in various locations to help facilitate their journeys toward housing.

Throughout this dynamic period of growth and change, the AAMC has unwaveringly supported Miriam's Kitchen. Their contributions span volunteerism, financial support, and a shared commitment to our vision for a better world. As we embark on our journey in 2024 and beyond, we eagerly anticipate the continuation of this collaborative effort and the positive impact it will bring to our community.

Rachel Glassman

Director of Corporate Partnerships, [Miriam's Kitchen](#)

The Calvin Coolidge Senior High School NAF Academy of Health Sciences scholars and school community are grateful to the AAMC for their community grant. Our scholars and families from various wards throughout the district have been able to make college and career dreams a reality. Specifically, first-generation college students have participated in informational workshops and received college book vouchers and scholarship funding. These resources have helped educate our students and families on the college process and have relieved some of the financial burden.

Through this partnership, we have been able to strategically support the interests of male students exploring careers in medicine. Keeping in mind the relationship between health disparities and the lack of representation in the medical field, we've strengthened our efforts to address this gap through intentional pipeline development. Scholars have been afforded the opportunity to take part in leadership training, paid internships, and family health and wellness service activities.

Thank you for the opportunity to plan boldly.

Masalely Kargbo

Director, [Calvin Coolidge Senior High School NAF Academy of Health Sciences](#)

Since 2011, Bread for the City and the AAMC have partnered to help uninsured Washington, D.C., residents access quality health care, free of charge. In that time, the AAMC has helped support our dental clinic and primary care practice, fully supporting the medical care for 254 unique patients and helping to ensure that our more than 3,000 patients annually are able to get vaccinations, job physicals, dental cleanings, screenings and exams, and referrals for specialty services. Bread for the City appreciates the AAMC's commitment to supporting the small neighborhood clinics that form the backbone of the health care safety net in D.C. and beyond.

Kristen Kozlowski

Senior Associate Director of Development, Institutional Giving, [Bread for the City](#)

For more than 12 years, Joseph's House has partnered with the AAMC as a beneficiary of its Community Grants Program. These generous awards have advanced the mission of Joseph's House by supporting our core programs. The funding also has allowed us to purchase much needed medical equipment and supplies for our clients, and it has helped us offer vital housing opportunities and case management services to our respite clients, who also receive our long-term, follow-up care. Essentially, because of funders like the AAMC, each year Joseph's House can continue serving 25 or more of our clients with holistic care, which includes physical, emotional, and spiritual nourishment; 24-hour nursing care; care coordination; and counseling services. The funding also ensures that Joseph's House can be here for the approximately eight to 10 individuals who come to us each year for end-of-life care.

Lastly, throughout the year, the AAMC invites Joseph's House to join in on networking and strategic meetings and webinars. All of us at Joseph's House are honored and appreciate that the AAMC includes us in these sessions, and they have been rewarding and helpful events for us.

K.C. Price

Director of Development, [Joseph's House](#)

The Young Doctors Project is grateful for the support and partnership from the AAMC. The Young Doctors Project, an organization established to address health disparities in medically underserved communities of color through developing the next generation of Black men in medicine, was founded in 2012, shortly before the AAMC published its report, [*Altering the Course: Black Males in Medicine*](#), which highlighted the declining numbers of Black men in medicine. The Young Doctors Project trains high school boys of color — the “young doctors” — to conduct community-based health fairs and be health ambassadors for their neighborhoods. After publishing their report, the AAMC has genuinely worked to “alter the course” of the number of Black men in medicine by becoming a primary partner of the Young Doctors Project, hosting health fairs for their staff that are conducted by the young doctors and opening their space for yearly fundraisers for the last decade.

Through their Community Grants Program, the AAMC has also provided resources that have allowed our organization to purchase essential medical equipment: One grant allowed the Young Doctors Project to purchase dopplers, tools used to test for signs of peripheral vascular disease, for use in historically medically underserved communities in Washington, D.C.; another grant was used to buy CPR dummies, so the young doctors could learn critical life-saving techniques. We are honored to partner with the AAMC and thankful for their support in helping to create the next generation of Black men in medicine.

Dr. Malcolm Woodland
Co-Founder and Director, [*Young Doctors Project*](#)

The AAMC has been an essential supporter of the Latin American Youth Center's comprehensive sexual and reproductive health programs in D.C., giving us the flexibility to sustain crucial health programs that empower youths who are seeking resources related to safe sex, pregnancy, and young parenting. Though the overturn of *Roe v. Wade* further stigmatized youth seeking sexual wellness education and resources, the AAMC has ensured that we can maintain many of the most innovative strategies our program uses to combat typical service barriers. For example, our sexual and reproductive health programs operate via a mobile clinic within communities most in need of preventative care and sexual health education, and the AAMC has helped us cover routine van maintenance and repairs to ensure it can travel across all D.C. wards. Similarly, the AAMC has supported our recruitment of peer educators, youths who serve as ambassadors for safer sex and healthy relationships within youth spaces and encourage engagement with our health services. We are deeply grateful for the AAMC's investment in our work over the years and look forward to our continued partnership.

Haley Monts

Lead Writer, [Latin American Youth Center](#)

Thoughts From Current and Past Community Grants Committee Members

Being a part of the AAMC Community Grants Committee has been a transformative experience, especially considering my personal journey through housing insecurity. This role has allowed me to witness firsthand the profound impact that targeted community support can have on individuals facing similar challenges.

As a child, living with housing instability was once my reality, and now, as a committee member, I am empowered to contribute to changing this narrative for others. It is immensely humbling to review and recommend grants that directly address housing issues within our community. Each awarded grant represents a step toward stability for someone in need, echoing the compassion and understanding I longed for during my own struggles.

This experience has not only shaped my perspective but has also fueled a sense of purpose in giving back. As a committee member, I am able to offer my time as a small symbol of hope, advocating for initiatives that break the cycle of intergenerational housing insecurity. The ripple effect of our decisions extends beyond the AAMC and the awardee organizations, touching lives and fostering a stronger, more supportive community. I am honored to be a part of this committee, turning personal challenges into opportunities for positive change.

Staci Mason
AMCAS Operations Director

Serving on the AAMC Community Grants Committee was a deeply meaningful experience for me, providing benefits on multiple fronts. From a professional standpoint, the collaborative environment allowed me to learn from my fellow committee members, while simultaneously enabling me to contribute expertise to the grant evaluation and selection process. This engagement not only enhanced my skills but also fostered a sense of accomplishment.

On an employee engagement level, I was profoundly inspired by the AAMC's commitment to our D.C. neighbors. It was truly uplifting to witness the organization's dedication to allocating mission-aligned grants, free from operational restrictions, to community-based organizations striving to improve the health, education, and housing stability of D.C. residents. It instilled in me a sense of pride in being part of an organization that goes beyond rhetoric, actively addressing disparities and advancing the well-being of our community.

Having worked for various organizations and industries, the AAMC stands out for its integrity based on its commitment to allocating resources to make a tangible impact on reducing disparities and advancing the health of D.C. residents. The AAMC's recognition of the importance of aligning professional efforts with meaningful social impact is impressive and engenders both loyalty and pride.

Michelle Shader
Director of Holistic Initiatives and Learning

Serving on the AAMC Community Grants Committee has been an integral part of my professional and personal lives for the last few years. The work that the committee does every year is significantly impactful, and I am very proud to work at an organization like the AAMC that prioritizes giving not only funding, but also its time to local nonprofits.

Reading about the nonprofit organizations that apply for grants and gaining an understanding of how they make an impact every single day is inspiring. It is even more inspiring and hits home when you're able to volunteer at one of these organizations. While I am unable to give large sums of money to charities myself, I can donate my time, which is very valuable. I volunteered at Joseph's House for AAMC Cares Day, and it was an experience I will never forget. Joseph's House provides 24/7 medical care, including compassionate and dignified end-of-life care, to people experiencing homelessness; most of these clients have terminal cancer, HIV, or AIDS. I got to spend the day helping the staff prepare for a beautiful end-of-life celebration for the people they lost over the course of a year. Without the AAMC and the Community Grants Committee, I likely would not have had this opportunity.

Molly Devine
Constituent Engagement Senior Specialist

It is an honor to serve on the AAMC's Community Grants Committee. As a mission-driven professional, I believe in and strive to advance the AAMC's mission and goals. The Community Grants Committee is another way that the AAMC and the committee members can lead by example and support the AAMC's community collaborations mission area. I'm impressed that the association engages with and supports the Washington, D.C., community in this way, and I'm grateful I have the chance to participate in the effort. I'm humbled by the life-saving services, support, dedication, and passion that our local nonprofit partners offer to the Washington, D.C., community.

I've learned a lot about the city and its needs, which has broadened my understanding of challenges faced throughout the United States. I value the opportunity to learn more about health justice, anti-racism, and social justice, and apply those lenses throughout my work at the AAMC and beyond. Plus, my committee service has allowed me to get to know more colleagues across the association — people I would never meet otherwise. I'm so appreciative of the opportunity to serve on the Community Grants Committee and to engage in and support the AAMC's community engagement efforts.

Jennifer L. Blanck, MEd, MSWB
Director of Constituent Engagement

My engagement and participation began with the lunch for the 2013 grant awardees, the year that I started with the AAMC. At that lunch, I spoke with a representative from one of the awardees (Miriam's Kitchen), and when I said that I was the chief information officer, she immediately told me about issues they were having with Salesforce. That led to me volunteering as a consultant to the leadership team at Miriam's Kitchen, where we discovered that the issue was not the software; the organization did not have a good control over their donor data. So on AAMC Cares Day in 2014, I was able to lead a team of information technology colleagues in spending the day creating a central database, removing duplicates, and improving the quality of the data. After these engagements, I became a member of the then-named Contributions Committee.

In the nine years that I have served on the committee, there have been many wonderful changes, including renaming the committee, automating the application process, increasing the annual contribution, and evolving our approach to requesting applications and, most importantly, how we evaluate the applications.

Another interesting aspect of my participation on the committee was working with Adrienne Fielding and others on the formation of the AAMC's office of community engagement. Members of the committee did research on how other organizations developed a community engagement approach and recommended to leadership the formation of this office to extend the AAMC's community engagement efforts beyond the annual grant process. The office of community engagement has served as a wonderful resource for helping the Community Grants Committee continue to focus on the issues that are most impactful for our D.C. community.

Finally, participation on the committee has provided some of my most fulfilling AAMC experiences, as well as helping me to learn more about the challenges of the D.C. community related to homelessness, health equity, and education.

Diana Bourke

Chief Strategic Operations and Data Officer

As a member of the Community Grants Committee for three years, I had the privilege of connecting with hardworking and dedicated colleagues at the AAMC. This experience not only allowed me to learn more about the commitment of community leaders to enhance the health and well-being of our district's residents, but it inspired me to weave community-mindedness into my personal and professional spheres. I continue to engage with my local community, serving on various scholarship review committees; volunteering at the local Volunteers of America, Utah's Center for Women and Children; and ensuring that the voices of different communities resonate in my scholarly writing and program development efforts. There is no doubt that serving on the Community Grants Committee enhanced my professional development, helping me to cultivate a profound appreciation for effective collaboration with colleagues and members of the local community on meaningful initiatives.

Adrien Barrios

Workforce Transformation Program Specialist II

The Community Grants Committee was a great opportunity to give back to the broader D.C. community. I am proud that the AAMC prioritizes staff spending time volunteering on this type of community engagement. There are a lot of amazing nonprofit organizations in our city, and the AAMC's support of these organizations makes a difference in their ability to pursue their missions.

Chris Wagner
Delivery Manager



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