

# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 30, 2024

Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA)

Contact: Gary Dinges, Director of Communications and Marketing

[garyd@hacanet.org](mailto:garyd@hacanet.org)

(512) 477-4488 (office)

(281) 748-5226 (cell)

## **Housing Authority of the City of Austin receives nearly \$800,000 in grants to increase, improve services**

*Funding comes from St. David's Foundation,  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

Two significant grants totaling more than three-quarters of a million dollars will help provide transformational services for people assisted by the [Housing Authority of the City of Austin](#).

Through its [Austin Pathways](#) subsidiary, HACA plans to increase its efforts focused on providing healthcare, as well as self-sufficiency education. Austin Pathways is a 501(c)(3) organization.

“HACA is always looking to expand the transformative programs that improve health and self-sufficiency outcomes for our families,” HACA President and CEO Michael Gerber said. “We are grateful to our funding partners for supporting our critical wrap-around services that truly improve resident quality of life.”

A \$500,000 Community Driven Change grant from the St. David's Foundation will allow for the continuation of the Bringing Health Home (BHH) program. The funding sustains five Community Health Worker positions for two additional years, enabling them to help HACA residents make informed health decisions, creating long-term positive outcomes for historically marginalized communities.

Chronic diseases disproportionately affect low-income communities. In a recent HACA Community Health Needs Assessment, 76% of respondents reported having at least one chronic disease. The nationwide prevalence of diabetes, for example, is around 10.5%, while data from HACA's assessment reflected rates as high as 36%. The causal relationship between poverty and chronic disease is exacerbated by the fact that, for those in treatment, direct health care costs for a chronic disease average more than \$6,000 annually.

Maritza Echavarria is one of many HACA residents who rely on the BHH program.

"It means a lot to me. It helps take care of my disabled son's needs. Without it, the issues he faces would be a lot more severe," she said.

"BHH is very good for the community. It helps people feel better for themselves because they know they have someone there who helps take care of them."

The St. David's Foundation debuted its Community Driven Change grants in May of this year, focusing on organizations fostering healthier communities and improving access to healthcare. A total of 23 groups received a combined \$9.1 million in funding. The grant term begins this month.

Previous funding sources for HACA's Community Health Workers have included Austin Public Health and United HealthCare.

The second grant, which totals \$265,540, comes from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.\*\* First-year funding totals \$129,381; second-year funding comes out to \$136,159.

This grant will jumpstart the second phase of HACA's evaluation of its self-sufficiency programs, aiming to better understand residents' needs with an eye towards improving services offered. Self-sufficiency programs focus on job training, childcare assistance, financial literacy and health services.

The funding will also enable HACA to expand its new case management system to more effectively monitor residents' progress as they utilize the various services that are available to them.

### **ABOUT THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN**

Established in 1937, the Housing Authority of the City of Austin works to cultivate sustainable, affordable housing communities that inspire self-reliance, growth, and optimism for those we serve: families, seniors, persons with disabilities, and persons experiencing homelessness.

HACA envisions neighborhoods where poverty is alleviated, residents are healthy and safe, and all people have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

The agency serves nearly 37,000 Austinites through 21 Project-Based Rental Assistance Properties, Voucher Programs, and the Austin Affordable Housing Corporation.

**###**

*\*\*This project is supported by the Administration for Children and Families of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (Award #: 90PE0076). The contents of this release are those of HACA and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, ACF/HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit the ACF website, [Administrative and National Policy Requirements](#).*