

The Minnesota Dental Foundation (MDF) offers financial support and in-kind services for outreach programs that meet the mission of the MDF by providing dental services to underserved populations, by promoting dental health initiatives, or by supporting dental profession career and volunteer opportunities. The focus is on providing resources that will make lasting improvements in the oral health of Minnesotans and enhance the dental profession in the state.

Each year the MDF Board of Directors reviews applications for grants that fit these criteria. Support for programs and oral health initiatives may change each year based upon issues facing the dental profession, but the core principle of benefiting the underserved remains constant. Since 2001, the Foundation has awarded \$2,155,938 in grants and/or in-kind services to fund 506 oral health initiatives.

2017 Recipients

In 2017, MDF gave \$207,029 in cash and/or in-kind services to 43 projects. Some of the recipients may have received assistance on more than one project. Of those dollars, funding was provided for six internal programs – the Minnesota Mission of Mercy, Donated Dental Services, Martha Mordini Rukavina Loan Forgiveness Program, Minnesota’s Heroes Orthodontic Program and the Retired Dentist Program, at a total cost of \$169,029. In addition, the Dedicated to Minnesota’s Dentists Loan Repayment for Service Program, which is a collaborative effort with Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation, provided an additional \$400,000 to assist two dentists in starting to practices in rural Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA) in Minnesota. All of the funded programs help increase access to care for underserved populations or help to build a sustainable oral health workforce in Minnesota.

Give Kids a Smile

The following community clinics received funding and/or in-kind support for the two-day charitable program in February that provides free preventive and restorative dental care to children from low-income families. Grant monies help defray the costs for dental supplies and oral health education materials for the children. In 2017, 2,335 children were seen in 128 community clinics and private dental offices. The value of the services provided was approximately \$1.039 million by 1,174 volunteers, which included 239 dentists.

Central Lakes College, Brainerd
CHI St. Joseph’s Health Community Dental Clinic, Park Rapids
Children’s Dental Health Services, Rochester
Children’s Dental Services, Minneapolis
Community Dental Care, Maplewood
Community Dental Care, Robbinsdale
Community Dental Care, RCTC
Community Dental Care, St. Paul
Lake Superior College – Dental Hygiene, Duluth
Minnesota State University – Mankato, Mankato

Rice Regional Dental Clinic, Willmar
St. Cloud Technical College Dental Clinic, St. Cloud
Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities, St. Paul
University of MN School of Dentistry, Minneapolis

Community Outreach

A number of community-based clinics and outreach programs provide critical dental services to children and adults who otherwise would not have access to oral health care.

CARE Clinic, Red Wing
Caring Hands Dental Clinic, Alexandria
Gillette Children's Hospital Foundation for Gillette Children's Specialty Care
Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery, Minneapolis
Jericho Road Ministries, Minneapolis
Just Kids Dental, Two Harbors
Lakewood Health System, Staples
Let's Smile, Inc., Owatonna
Lifetrack/Lifetrack Resources, Inc, St. Paul
Metrokids ECFE, Minneapolis
Minnesota State University – Mankato, Mankato
Mission Outpost Dental Clinic/Prince of Peace Church, Burnsville
North Shore Health Care Foundation, Grand Marais
Northern Dental Access Center, Bemidji
Open Door Health Center, Mankato
Ready Set Smile, Minneapolis
Sharing and Caring Hands, Minneapolis
Southside Community Health Services, Inc., Minneapolis
TeamSmile, Inc., North Kansas
Union Gospel Mission Twin Cities, Hope Dental Clinic, St. Paul

Allied Dental Education Programs

The following organizations in Minnesota received grants to help with resources to assist with educating dental auxiliaries while providing care to the underserved.

Central Lakes College, Brainerd

Internal Programs

The following projects of the Minnesota Dental Foundation helped provide care to the underserved.

Donated Dental Services (DDS), a program of Dental Lifeline Network, provides free dental care to disabled, elderly and medically fragile individuals in private dental offices. In the fiscal year ended June 30, 2017, 200 patients received \$1,001,708 in comprehensive care by 436 dental volunteers at a cost of \$85,000. Since the program's inception in 2003 in Minnesota, 2,006 vulnerable adults have received over \$10.4 million in free care.

The **Martha Mordini Rukavina Loan Forgiveness Program** is funded by the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB) to help dentists pay back educational loans if they are willing to practice in the Taconite Assistance Area of northeastern Minnesota for at least five years. The recipients selected for this program each receive \$30,000 for four years for a total of \$120,000 as long as they comply with the program requirements. This program started in 2009 with three dentists and became a program of the Minnesota Dental Foundation in 2011. Two more recipients were selected, one in 2013 and one in 2015. Applications are currently being accepted for 2018.

The **Retired Dentists Program** is a project dedicated to retired dentists who are no longer earning any income from dentistry to reimburse them for their license, professional liability insurance, CPR and CE in return for providing volunteer dentistry to the underserved. Retired dentists must provide at least 100 hours per year (about one day per month) and receive no compensation. Reimbursement is a maximum of \$4,000 in every two-year cycle. Currently, there are six retired dentists in the program.

The **Minnesota's Heroes Orthodontic Program** was initiated in 2015 to provide needed orthodontic care to children and spouses in Gold Star Families (families who have lost a family member to conflict in the armed services since 9/11). This program is in collaboration with Smiles Change Lives and the Minnesota Association of Orthodontists. Two children currently are in orthodontic treatment. The orthodontists provide the treatment for free and there have been no direct costs for this program.

The **Dedicated to Minnesota Dentists Loan Repayment** for Service Program provides loan repayment up to \$200,000 per individual if they practice in a rural Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) for five years. This program is in collaboration with the Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation and it provides the funding of the program. Two dentists were selected for 2017 in rural Minnesota with total payments of \$400,000. A total of eight dentists and \$1.6 million now has been utilized to provide dental services in rural HPSA areas of Minnesota.

The **Give Kids a Smile** program became a program of the Minnesota Dental Association in 2003 and was transferred to the Minnesota Dental Foundation in 2016. Grants and support from HealthPartners, 3M Oral Care, the Minnesota Dental Association and the Minnesota Dental Foundation contribute to the media exposure and program management of the program. Since the program's inception in Minnesota in 2003, 74,108 children have received \$20,864 million worth of free dentistry by over 30,000 volunteers.