

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, through December 31, 2021, the Foundation has awarded \$3,252,591 in grants and/or in-kind services to fund 682 oral health initiatives. In addition, \$2,000,000 has been dispersed by the Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation in the collaborative project to help access dental care in rural HPSAs. And collaborative projects with DentaQuest are valued at \$7,500. Thus, a total of \$5,360,091 has been allocated to help the underserved access dental care.

2021 Recipients

In 2021, MDF gave a total of \$166,714 in cash to 35 projects. Some of the recipients may have received assistance for more than one project. Of those dollars, funding was provided for four internal programs – the Minnesota Mission of Mercy, Donated Dental Services, Martha Mordini Rukavina Loan Forgiveness Program and the Retired Dentist Program, at a total cost of \$126,132. 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 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. At the 19th consecutive event in 2021, 1,050 children were seen in 59 community clinics and private dental offices. The value of the services provided was approximately \$460,211 by 497 volunteers, which included 89 dentists. COVID-19 had a significant affect on the participation of dentists and patients in this year's program.

Carris Health Dental Clinic, Willmar
CHI St. Joseph's Community Dental Clinic, Park Rapids
Children's Dental Services, Minneapolis
Community Dental Care, Saint Paul
Community Dental Care, Rochester
Community Dental Care, Robbinsdale
Community Dental Care, Maplewood
Minnesota State University, Mankato
Open Door Health Center, Mankato

Community Outreach

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

C.A.R.E. Clinic, Red Wing
Children's Dental Health Services, Rochester
Fostering Love Project, Oakdale
Gillette Children's Hospital Foundation for Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare, Saint Paul
Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery, Minneapolis
HealthFinders Collaborative, Inc., Faribault
Hope Dental Clinic, Saint Paul

Lakewood Health System, Staples
Let's Smile, Inc., Owatonna
Minnesota Dental Association – GKAS, Statewide
Minnesota State University, Mankato
Mission Outpost Dental Clinic, Lakeville
Portico Healthnet, Saint Paul
Ready Set Smile, Minneapolis
Sawtooth Mountain Clinic, Grand Marais
Sharing and Caring Hands, Minneapolis
Southside Community Health Services, Inc., Minneapolis
The Salvation Army of Rochester, MN, Rochester

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 provided care to the underserved.

Donated Dental Services (DDS), a program of Dental Lifeline Network, provided free dental care to disabled, elderly and medically fragile patients in private dental offices. In the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021, 197 patients received \$896,656 in comprehensive care by 419 dental volunteers and 88 laboratories at a cost of \$85,000 to administer the program. This program is funded by a grant from the Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation. Since the program's inception in 2003, 2,468 patients have received \$14,298,688 in free dental services. Again, COVID-19 had a significant affect on this program.

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. This program started in 2009 and became a program of the Minnesota Dental Foundation in 2011. Since 2011, two dentists have completed the five-year requirements of the program and two dentists are still receiving financial assistance. Funds are available for more applicants.

The **Minnesota Mission of Mercy (MnMOM)** did not have a project in 2021 due to COVID-19 but one is scheduled for July 2022. In the six events since the inception of the program in Minnesota in 2012, 45,480 free dental procedures valued at \$6,016,859 in 9,497 patient encounters have been provided.

The **Retired Dentists Program** is a project for 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 and receive no compensation. As of December 31, 2021, there were eight retired dentists in the program. Total expenditures for the program in 2021 were \$2,285 and \$230,563 in free dentistry was provided. Since the inception of the program in 2014, 19 retired dentists have participated and have provided \$2.663 million in free dentistry.

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 in service to our country). This program is in collaboration with Smiles Change Lives and

the Minnesota Association of Orthodontists. Four teen-agers have completed 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 at least five years. This program is in collaboration with the Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation and it provides the funding of the program. A total of ten dentists and \$2 million now have been utilized to provide dental services in rural HPSAs of Minnesota. The cities include Bigfork, Cook, Deerwood, Ely, International Falls, Montevideo, Mora, Tyler, Walker and Warroad.

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. 3M Oral Care, the Minnesota Dental Association, the Minnesota Dental Foundation and several individual donors contributed funds for the media exposure and program management. Since the program's inception in Minnesota in 2003, 81,653 children have received \$24.9 million worth of free dentistry.