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Grant recipients for “Adopting Healthy Habits” Initiative Announced

The Northern New York Community Foundation and Cornell Cooperative Extension have awarded eight community organizations and schools with grant funding for projects as part of its “Adopting Healthy Habits” initiative. The program is centered on collaborating with agencies, organizations and schools to introduce best practices designed to increase nutrition and physical activity and combat obesity. The Community Foundation approved a grant of \$10,000 last year to support and partner with Cornell Cooperative Extension on this initiative.

“A healthy lifestyle is about the choices we all make,” said Amanda Root, Community Nutrition & Health Program Leader at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County. “Those choices, however, are shaped by the opportunities that surround us. Research demonstrates that people are more likely to engage in healthy behaviors when communities have easily available options that encourage and promote healthy habits.”

The program was open to applicants from Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties. Thirteen applications were received and reviewed by a tri-county advisory committee at Cornell Cooperative Extension and the Community Foundation. The eight grant recipients are:

- **LaFargeville Central School** – implement physical activity programs during open fitness center hours.
- **City of Watertown Parks & Recreation** – expand outdoor access and offer nutrition education as part of the organization’s Outdoor Youth Running Club.
- **Mental Health Association of Jefferson County** – funding to purchase a greenhouse and enhance the ability to grow fruits and vegetables for participants.

- **Lyme Central School** – create an outdoor garden and serve produce in the school cafeteria and surrounding community.
- **St. Lawrence Central Garden Club** – increase access to fruits and vegetables for at-risk middle school students.
- **Canton Golden Bear Packs Program** – purchase healthy and nutritious foods for at-risk youth over school weekends and holiday breaks.
- **Thousand Island Land Trust** – expansion of the organization’s Kids Korner to promote children’s participation in growing, harvesting and preservation of food in the Zenda Farms Community Garden.
- **Alcohol and Substance Abuse Council of Jefferson County** – establish regularly scheduled workplace physical activities.

Cornell Cooperative Extension will assist each agency and school district with implementation and evaluation of its respective project or program. Projects will be under way this spring.

“This is a perfect example of a strategic grant with wide-spread community impact,” said Max DelSignore, Community Foundation coordinator of donor services. “We’re grateful to work in concert with Cornell Cooperative Extension to help address this global concern at a local level. It is great to see these organizations and school districts take a proactive approach and continue to focus on community betterment in multiple aspects.”

The Northern New York Community Foundation makes grants to support the work of non-profit organizations in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties. This work is made possible by donors who have established permanent, charitable funds with the Foundation during their lifetimes or through their wills.

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