

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Health Fund invites organizations to “think of the possibilities” and take advantage of special opportunities grants**

With the increased pressure on social services groups to find funding alternatives, the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund has announced a special opportunities grant program. The deadline for submitting a letter of interest is September 1, 2009.

“We’re calling these ‘Think of the Possibilities’ grants because we want to encourage potential applicants to consider approaches that may be beyond how they currently provide services,” said Kim Moore, President of the Hutchinson-based Health Fund. Qualified organizations may apply for a grant up to \$75,000. However, Moore said the average award will probably be in the \$50,000 range. He stressed that applicants for the grants do not have to be affiliated with the United Methodist church.

The Health Fund will focus its funding in three critical fields of work according to Moore: healthful physical activity and nutrition for young children; early screening, identification, prevention and treatment of mental, emotional, and behavioral health issues of young children; and access to primary care for unserved and underserved Kansans. He said for these grants “young children” is from birth through age six because “that’s an irreplaceable time in a child’s life when the brain is developing, habits are forming, and a foundation for lifetime health is being established”.

There are four types of “special opportunities” the Health Fund wants to address with its new grant program. Moore described them as: (1) start-up or material expansion of an activity which has sustainability beyond the term of the grant; (2) meaningful innovation in an existing activity which would improve the efficiency, quality, or scale of the work; (3) a project which attracts new dollars from outside the State or funding from a source not previously supporting similar work; and (4) bridge funding for an existing service threatened by current economic conditions.

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A series of informational webinars for interested parties will be held on: July 21, 22, 23, and 27. Reservations are required and can be made at [www.healthfund.org](http://www.healthfund.org). Those wanting to discuss a project idea may call Moore or Virginia Elliott, Vice President for Programs, at 800-369-7191.

Elliott explained that a limited number of the most promising concepts will be selected from the letters of interest and invited to submit final proposals which will be due by October 26. The awards can be used over a period up to two years beginning January 1, 2010.

The United Methodist Health Ministry Fund makes grants each year totaling \$2.5 to \$3 million. Since it was initially endowed by the Kansas West Conference of the United Methodist Church in 1986, the Health Fund has invested more than \$50 million in health, healing, and wholeness for Kansans. Additional information about its activities, as well as more details on the “Think of the Possibilities” grants, is available at [www.healthfund.org](http://www.healthfund.org).

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