

Aetna Foundation, Inc.

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Founded in 1972 by then Aetna Chairman John Filer, the Aetna Foundation has a long tradition of giving and community support. As the foundation works to improve the health status and quality of care of individuals and communities, it focuses on opportunities that lead to meaningful improvements in health and the health care system particularly among vulnerable populations. The foundation serves the general population, with special emphasis and interest in minority and underserved communities.

Program Information: The Aetna Foundation is dedicated to promoting wellness, health, and access to high-quality health care for everyone while supporting the communities it serves. Grantmaking efforts take place at the local/regional, national, and international levels. The foundation's relevant priority areas are: Utilizing Technology to Advance Innovations and Promote Healthy Choices; Increasing Access to Healthy Foods and Opportunities for Physical Activity in Underserved Communities; and Health Equity: Bridging the Health Divide. Since 1980 Aetna and Aetna Foundation have contributed nearly half a billion dollars in grants and sponsorships.

➤ Financial Information:

Total Assets: \$47.1 million (FY 2013)

Amount Dedicated to Health-Related Grants: \$8.1 million (FY 2013)

➤ Special Initiatives and/or Representative Health and Human Services Grants:

- **American Heart Association** – The American Heart Association Teaching Gardens national program offers underserved elementary school students a real-life laboratory where they learn about growing and harvesting food, and deepen their understanding of the value of good eating habits and physical activity. Ten Teaching Gardens across the nation are benefiting from Aetna's volunteer commitment and the foundation's financial support (\$100,000).
- **Healthier World Innovation Challenge** – This \$4.5 million initiative is designed to steer digital health innovation to improve chronic health outcomes in underserved communities. The challenge is part of a larger, three-year commitment, and with the addition of the challenge, the foundation's commitment to digital health will now total \$5.7 million between 2014 and 2016. An example of funding under this initiative is a \$75,000 grant to Fair Food Network for an effort that seeks to advance mobile payment technology to process food assistance benefits more simply and affordably at farmers markets, allowing for

widespread adoption of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program incentive programs.

- **National Reach Coalition** – The National Reach Coalition (NRC), in collaboration with the Morehouse School of Medicine and the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, recently announced the launch of the Health Equity Leadership and Exchange Network (HELEN) – A Campaign to Advance Health Equity. The NRC will build HELEN into a national forum to bolster leadership development and the exchange of ideas and information about health equity (\$150,000).
- **GoLocal: Cultivating Healthy Communities** – This program supports community-based initiatives that help nonprofits create momentum behind healthier lifestyles— through better nutrition and greater physical activity. In 2014 the foundation made grants to 119 organizations across the country, including FEEST (Food, Empowerment, Education and Sustainability Team) Seattle to support a program that aims to increase students' knowledge and enjoyment of cooking nutritious food through a weekly dinner program and educational workshops and field trips. Program staff will lead discussions about processed and fast food, and students will create their own blog posts and Instagram feeds to share their experiences more broadly (\$25,000).

Role of Philanthropy in Meeting Pressing Needs:

“Our work brings together policymakers, businesses, health professionals, and community nonprofits to look at a given issue holistically. That way, we can work together to pursue the changes needed for positive health outcomes for individuals and communities. Foundations are catalysts for change— by consolidating valuable knowledge and sharing it in ways that accelerate progress for everyone. As President of the Aetna Foundation, I’m focused on ensuring that we connect good ideas with vital resources and tools, so that we can create the knowledge and approaches to achieve ambitious health goals.”

Garth N. Graham, M.D., M.P.H.
President

