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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

Mayor Fulop and Interdepartmental Support from Health & Human Services and Recreation & Youth Development Award over 80 Grants to Community Partners

Boosting Health Equity & Youth Opioid Prevention

JERSEY CITY, NJ — Mayor **Steven M. Fulop** and the **Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** announce a significant boost to health equity throughout Jersey City with the allocation of *over \$1 million in grants to more than 80 community organizations demonstrating exceptional capacity in building coalitions and employing best practices to address the social determinants of health.* The grants are designed to help kickstart worthy initiatives and promote innovation.

“With these grants, we are advancing health equity for underserved populations through our established community partnerships. These latest grants serve as a catalyst for innovative projects that address the root causes of health disparities and empower our underserved populations to lead healthier, more fulfilling lives,” said **Mayor Fulop**.

The funding is dedicated to programs that build social support networks and foster community resilience, recognizing the crucial role of social connections in overall health and well-being.

“We are leveraging federal opioid funds to expand our reach and provide much-needed financial support wherever possible,” said **Stacey Flanagan, HHS Director**. “These grants represent a significant investment in initiatives to bridge gaps in access to healthcare, youth prevention, community safety, and other vital resources.”



“Working in partnership with our dynamic nonprofit community to address our urgent health priorities puts funding and decision-making in the hands of our trusted residents and community leaders,” added **Maryanne Kelleher, Project Director of the Partnership for a Healthier JC**. “This year, we have over 100 applicants interested in working with HHS to increase health and wellness in Jersey City. This robust response proves that our consistent efforts to establish meaningful partnerships are working to create a healthier, more equitable Jersey City for all.”

The grant initiative is a collaborative effort between Healthier JC and a network of dedicated community organizations, targeting six critical areas of focus:

- Health Care Access and Integration
- Community Safety and Open Spaces
- Health Education
- Management of Chronic Illnesses
- Sexual Activity
- Maternal and Child Health

In addition to the 80 community organizations, HHS is investing over \$30,000 in faith-based opioid prevention in partnership with the **Clinton Global Foundation** and \$80,000 for vertical farming in schools through the **Board of Education**. The **Department of Recreation and Youth Development (RYD)** will also distribute \$90,000 in opioid grants to combat substance abuse among youth.

“We have thoughtfully selected 19 community nonprofits dedicated to the well-being and future of Jersey City's youth with supportive initiatives that promote prevention, intervention, and recovery services. These nonprofits are receiving funding to host drug-free social or athletic events, create opportunities to engage our youth in community action, and offer youth and parent education and training,” said **RYD Director Lucinda McLaughlin**.

A portion of the \$200,000 in grants dedicated to opioid intervention will fund the newly installed “testandgo” kiosk located at the City Hall Annex on MLK Drive. Utilizing opioid settlement money, Jersey City’s kiosk program will be the first in the country to offer a new FDA-approved rapid fentanyl test along with Narcan, COVID testing, and other intervention strategies for free to help combat the addiction and overdose crisis gripping the nation. HHS hopes to expand the pilot program to all 6 wards.

For more information on Jersey City's efforts to promote health equity, please visit healthierjc.com.

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About the Partnership for a Healthier JC

Established in 2014, Healthier JC was created to establish and strengthen relationships with residents and local leaders to improve the community’s health through different social spheres. The Jersey City Department of Health and Human Services is at the forefront of change and believes building a platform where Jersey City residents can effortlessly find resources is a critical way to successfully promote and enhance public health in the city. Creating relationships with the community has proved vital in addressing public health needs and to the success of a healthier JC.

All media inquiries should be directed to Kim Wallace-Scalcione at KScalcione@jcnj.org.