



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# BCBSMA Foundation Announces Grants to Address Health Care Needs of Immigrants

**BOSTON (Dec. 20, 2022)** – The [Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation](#) today announced \$250,000 in grant funding to support nonprofit organizations that help connect new immigrants to resources and services for their health care needs in communities across the Commonwealth.

Each of the 10 organizations receiving funding from the Foundation’s *Special Initiatives* grant program has extensive experience assisting with the health care needs of immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. Their work has taken on a new level of urgency with the recent influx of individuals and families arriving in Massachusetts.

“Community-based organizations across Massachusetts have stepped up to meet the needs of families entering the United States with limited means, by connecting them with health care and other needed services,” said Audrey Shelto, President and CEO of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation. “As we did when the COVID pandemic first hit, we are investing in the organizations on the front lines that are filling critical gaps and providing the life-sustaining services that these new members of our community urgently need.”

The Foundation regularly awards *Special Initiatives* grants, in addition to its major grantmaking programs, to support nonprofits that seek to positively impact health or health care access for Massachusetts residents who have been economically, socially, culturally or racially marginalized.

Each of the following organizations received \$25,000 in one-year funding:

- **African Community Economic Development of New England**, of Roxbury, ensures that new immigrants and arriving refugee families have the support they need to successfully acclimate and thrive in their new home country.
- **Agencia ALPHA**, an immigrant-led grassroots organization in Boston, improves the quality of life of immigrants in Massachusetts by empowering community members to become leaders, overcome social challenges and fight xenophobia. The nonprofit works in community organizing, legalization and citizenship services.



- **Brazilian Women’s Group**, located in Allston, promotes political and cultural awareness and contributes to the development of the Brazilian community.
- **Centro Presente**, a statewide Latin American immigrant organization based in East Boston, is dedicated to the self-determination and self-sufficiency of the Latino immigrant community of Massachusetts.
- **Immigrant Family Services Institute**, located in Mattapan, works to expedite the successful integration of recent immigrants into the social and economic fabric of the United States with justice and dignity.
- **International Institute of New England**, with offices in Boston and Lowell, creates opportunities for refugees and immigrants to succeed through resettlement, education, career advancement and pathways to citizenship.
- **Rian Immigrant Center of Boston** empowers immigrants, refugees and international exchange visitors to get on the path to opportunity, safety and a better future.
- **Lawyers for Civil Rights**, a Boston-based organization, works statewide with communities of color and immigrants to fight discrimination and foster equity through creative and courageous legal advocacy, education and economic empowerment.
- **True Alliance Center Inc.**, a Mattapan organization, seeks to promote advocacy in the Haitian community related to education, housing, immigration, health and economic development.
- **Volunteers in Medicine Berkshires**, of Great Barrington, provides access to free, comprehensive health care for those in the Berkshires who are income-qualified and uninsured or underinsured. It envisions a society in which everyone has an equal opportunity to achieve good health.

These grant recipients will meet with individuals and families to help determine their health needs and connect them with resources and services to meet those needs. They will also coordinate as needed with other community-based organizations and local and state agencies to ensure that their services are additive, not duplicative.

### **About the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation**

The mission of the [Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation](#) is to ensure equitable access to health care for all those in the Commonwealth who are economically, racially, culturally or socially marginalized. The Foundation was founded in 2001 with an initial endowment from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. It operates separately from the company and is governed by its own Board of Directors.

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