

## 2020 Millennium Circle Fund Nomination – D

### Volunteers in Medicine CLINIC SUPPORT

Volunteers in Medicine (VIM) is for the community by the community. VIM is truly a FREE clinic and not a federally qualified center that charges for services. Patients are working, on unemployment, or actively looking for work and their income is at 200% of the federal poverty guidelines. Medical, dental and behavioral health services are provided by an interprofessional team of staff and volunteers. In June of 2020, VIM received the Patient Centered Medical Home recognition by the National Committee of Quality Assurance to validate the quality care being provided for the last 12 years. There are only 6 free clinics out of 1800 in the nation that have received the PCMH certification. Primary and preventative care, chiropractic, counseling, chronic disease management, psychiatric evaluations, medicine therapy, case management, women's health, dental care, medications, testing and specialty services were expanded to ensure comprehensive care.

The Coronavirus pandemic has caused a change in the lives of all Americans. The unemployment rate in Luzerne County rose to a high of 18.5% in April, 2020 and continues to be very volatile. Over 30 million Americans remained uninsured with the ACA and an additional 10 million could lose health insurance due to the pandemic related to job status by the end of 2020. Reports from the Indicators Report by the Institute show higher poverty levels in Luzerne County compared to the state of Pennsylvania, as the poverty rate in Wilkes-Barre amounts to an astonishing 28.6%. The pandemic has put vulnerable populations at an even higher risk of social determinants of health to include food insecurity, financial issues, job uncertainty and housing crisis.

VIM is seeing a 20% increase in new patients this year, and will continue to expand services based on the needs of our community and serve as the safety-net provider for those falling between the cracks of the healthcare system. Patients earn too much to qualify for Medicaid and not enough to afford private or the marketplace insurance. Many new potential patients have lost their jobs, lost their health insurance and small businesses closed during the pandemic.

Many are sharing the following stories:

"I never imagined I would struggle with employment and lose my health insurance."

"My family is very frightened of getting COVID. We only leave the house to go to work and school. We are very anxious."

"My husband's hours got cut again and we aren't sure how to pay our bills."

"Counseling at VIM has helped me get through the many struggles each day."

"I was nervous to go in person for a visit but felt very safe and they found a breast lump."

This is a critical time for the health and wellness of our community. The underserved populations are most vulnerable especially during a pandemic. A decrease in their work hours may mean they are choosing between food and medications. VIM provides a comprehensive

program to ensure all patients receive quality compassionate care including free imaging, lab testing and medications.

The funds from the Millennium Circle will assist VIM in continuing to be the safety net provider of those in our community that need it most. The pandemic has caused an increase in patients and patient visits, which ultimately causes an increase in expenditures. Supplies, utilities, medications, and PPE's are an expensive cost of VIM. There are 5 full time employees that collaborate with the volunteer health care providers to ensure continuity of care and quality of care is provided to every patient. VIM is the only full service, full time free clinic in the region. The funds would ultimately allow us to keep our doors open to provide healthcare at this critical time. Everyone benefits from a healthy community.

Volunteers in Medicine Project Budget	
Access to Care	<b><u>2020</u></b>
	<b>Luzerne Foundation</b>
<b>Revenue:</b>	
Millennium Circle	\$25,000.00
Other grants and donations	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$25,000.00</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>	
Supplies	\$5,000.00
Staff	\$10,000.00
Equipment/furniture (PPE)	\$5,000.00
Direct patient testing	
Educational material	
Group session expenses	
Meeting expenses	
Patient Packets	
Medications	\$2,500.00
Marketing	\$2,500.00
Promotional material	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$25,000.00</b>