



**For Immediate Release**  
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### **Community Health Options Continues Its Commitment to Wellness**

Lewiston, Maine, May 2, 2022 – Lewiston-based Community Health Options (Health Options), the only Maine-based, nonprofit, Member-led health insurer and plan administrator, has awarded grants to ten Maine nonprofit agencies focused on encouraging physical activity to improve overall health and wellbeing in the state.

Grant recipients include: the Boys & Girls Club of Bangor, Central Maine Community Health Corporation (Healthy Androscoggin), Fit Girls of Wilton Maine, Healthy Communities of the Capital Area, Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, Intercultural Community Center, Operation ReBoot Outdoors, Teens to Trails, Tree Street Youth, Inc., and Women for Healthy Rural Living.

“From fly-fishing programs that will help the wellbeing of our veterans to youth outdoor enrichment programs, it’s inspiring to see the healthy initiatives influencing our communities across the state,” said Kevin Lewis, president and CEO of Health Options. “We are thrilled to support these community-based organizations that will have a positive impact on the lives of Mainers for years to come.”

By supporting these organizations, Health Options hopes to shine a light on nonprofits in Maine building the basis for wellness through physical activities. At Teens to Trails, the team is busy preparing for their Explorer Clubs for nature and outdoor skill activities across the state. Teens to Trails Executive Director, Alicia Heyburn comments, “Sharing time outdoors provides essential nourishment, inspiration, and wholeness in the lives of our youth who are the future stewards of our land. We are thrilled to offer Outdoor Explorer programs for middle school students in partnership with recreation departments across Maine.”

Healthy Androscoggin looks forward to creating a Story Book Trail at the Park Avenue Elementary School in Auburn with the Health Options’ funding. “The trail will encourage physical activity for students and community members while reading their favorite stories through the school garden and orchard,” says Emily Smith, Health Promotion Coordinator. Tree Street Youth, Inc., also in the Androscoggin area, looks forward to building more programs outdoors for children and teens. Julia Sleeper, Co-Founder and Executive Director remarks, “These funds will go towards supporting our youth to get outside and create opportunities for them to explore, learn, and foster healthy lifestyles beginning at an early age.” Similarly, in Westbrook, “Funding will enable the Intercultural Community



Center to offer no-cost, structured opportunities for physical activity to immigrant, low-income, and historically marginalized families”, says Christopher Feely, youth program director for the center. “Youth and adult students will be able to engage in a wide array of fun and healthy activities, such as swimming, basketball, gymnastics, hiking and aerobic exercise.”

A Maine non-profit focused on veterans’ wellbeing will also benefit from a Health Options’ grant. At Operations Reboot Outdoors, the organization’s president, Nicole White, states, “We believe in the healing powers of the outdoors as a critical weapon in the battle against the Veteran Suicide Epidemic. The Community Health Options Grant will help fund our Fly-Fishing and Fly-tying seminars, allowing us to bridge the gap between military and civilian life for an additional 80 Veterans, Service Members, and Law Enforcement Officers each year.”

Health Options will hold another grant cycle in the Fall supporting small community-based programs that encourage physical activity as a way to improve overall health and wellbeing.

#### **About Community Health Options**

[Community Health Options](https://www.healthoptions.org) is the only Maine-based, nonprofit, Member-led health insurer and plan administrator providing comprehensive health plans for individuals, families, and businesses. Health Options offers a robust network of 48,000 healthcare providers in New England, plus plans with U.S. National coverage for individuals and businesses.