

# Sentinel & Enterprise

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## **SMOC receives grant for sober housing sprinkler system in Fitchburg**

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WORCESTER — The South Middlesex Opportunity Council has received a \$84,000 grant from The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts for the installation of an automatic fire sprinkler system and handicap accessible features in a building in Fitchburg that SMOC is renovating.

The renovation will create new single room occupancy units for 14 low-income homeless or formerly homeless single unaccompanied adults in recovery.

The grant was one of several Activation Fund grants recently awarded by the Foundation totaling almost \$800,000.

“Throughout Worcester County there are many outstanding health, education and human service agencies and organizations which are staffed by caring and compassionate individuals who are providing critical services to those in greatest need of these services,” said Francis M. Saba, Chairman of the Board of the Foundation.

“Each year, our Foundation learns about the wonderful work occurring in these agencies through the application process for support through our Activation Fund. In 2019, after an application process which included 38 letters of intent received from 37 organizations, rigorously managed by the Foundation staff, our Foundation was able to provide \$793,702 of financial support to 11 agencies. For our Foundation it is gratifying to know that through the Activation Fund, we are able to help many agencies and organizations continue their important missions,” Saba said.

The other grants awarded are:

LUK, Inc. – \$104,648 to utilize telehealth: to increase access to behavioral health services and family visitations in the North Central area by implementing telehealth.

Neighbor to Neighbor Massachusetts – \$100,800 for Neighbor to Neighbor to ramp up its door-to-door grassroots organizing to assist in complete counts for the 2020 Census and to re-engage the Worcester community.

GAAMHA, Inc. – \$43,288 to hire a part-time Positive Behavior Supports clinician for its community-based day programs located in Gardner and Orange.

Community Legal Aid – \$86,482 to hire a housing attorney who will raise funds by representing low-income tenants in eviction and conditions cases where attorney's fees can be collected from the landlord.

Seven Hills Foundation – \$109,903 to create a new workforce training program with sustainable farming as a potential career path for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Foundation was established in 1999 with the proceeds from the sale of Central Massachusetts Health Care, Inc., a physician-initiated, nonprofit HMO. For further information about these grants or about the Foundation's grantmaking programs and application process, please visit The Health Foundation's website at [www.hfcm.org](http://www.hfcm.org) or call 508-438-0009.