



The California Endowment

FACT SHEET

The California Endowment, a private, statewide health foundation, was founded in 1996 to expand access to affordable, quality health care for underserved individuals and communities, and to promote fundamental improvements in the health status of all Californians. The Endowment was established by the Blue Cross of California and currently has assets of approximately \$4 billion. Since its inception, The Endowment has awarded approximately 9,700 grants totaling nearly \$1.8 billion to organizations in California.

Guiding the Endowment is its belief that California should be the beacon of an effective *Multicultural Approach to Health* – an all encompassing approach that serves individuals regardless of financial status, racial origin, cultural beliefs, gender, age, sexual orientation, geographic location, immigration status, and physical or mental abilities.

The Endowment’s vision for a healthy California involves more than the absence of disease. It is a state where community members and policymakers work together to improve health and health care, and where there is a respect for the experience and knowledge of the people who are most directly affected by health disparities. It is a state where all have a strong sense of self-worth and practice healthy lifestyles, where diversity is a source of strength for communities, where health problems are addressed promptly and effectively to minimize their consequences, and where prevention is a shared agenda and partnership is the norm.

The Endowment strongly believes that to fulfill the mission of a healthier California, we must all become more effective leaders and catalysts for change. This “we” includes community residents, policymakers and grant makers. An important factor in our work as a change agent is “grassroots-to-treetops” advocacy and mobilization. The Endowment actively promotes and supports an array of grassroots coalitions which are deeply rooted in communities and know best the conditions that need to change, as well as statewide and, in some cases, national organizations. Together, these individuals, organizations and coalitions act to influence health decision makers and shape policies and systems at all levels so that they reflect ideas that emerge from the grassroots and work for everyone.

Grants are awarded to organizations that support The Endowment’s mission and whose applications are focused on one of the three following goals:

- ***Access to Health:*** To improve the health of underserved individuals and families by expanding access to health and mental health services.
- ***Culturally Competent Health Systems:*** To advance the knowledge, attitudes, skills and experience of health providers and health systems to effectively serve California’s diverse communities.
- ***Community Health and Elimination of Health Disparities:*** To build healthy communities by improving the social and physical environments that shape health behaviors and outcomes.

Led by its Board of Directors and President & CEO Robert K. Ross, M.D., The Endowment is headquartered in downtown Los Angeles with regional offices in Sacramento, San Francisco, Fresno and San Diego. Program officers actively work throughout the state to identify, support and partner with community-based organizations. For more information about The California Endowment, please call (800) 449-4149, or visit our Web site at www.calendow.org.