

The News Sun

AMA Foundation awards \$10,000 grant to Samaritan's Touch Care Center

Special to the News-Sun

SEBRING -- In an effort to address the growing problem of the uninsured and to recognize physician volunteerism, the American Medical Association (AMA) Foundation has awarded a \$10,000 Healthy Communities/ Healthy America grant to Samaritan's Touch Care Center (STCC).

The grant will help support STCC's participation in the Florida Academy of Family Physician Foundation's Diabetes Master Clinical Program. A local not-for-profit, Heartland Rural Health Network Inc., received a federal grant to establish the DMCP program in Highlands, Hardee and DeSoto counties.

The program helps patients with diabetes work toward their personal goals, understand the reasons for certain tests and medications and gives them the chance to talk to other people in the community who have diabetes. Samaritan's Touch will enhance their program services through a diabetes patient advocate who can provide more dedicated support to the DMCP and their patients.

"The patient advocate is a critical part of the DMCP," said Samaritan's Touch Care Center's Medical Director, Dr. Luis Pena. "This position is helping us with greater patient compliance through added education and guidance. We are seeing positive results since we implemented this program."

The AMA Foundation's Healthy Communities/ Healthy America program is one of the few national funding opportunities devoted solely to free clinics. These not-for-profit, volunteer based organizations provide a range of free or low-cost medical services to approximately 46 million Americans without health insurance. Their funding is generally raised on the local level with little, if any, government support.

Samaritan's Touch Care Center is one of only seven free clinics to receive a Healthy Communities/ Healthy America grant.

"We are pleased to honor Samaritan's Touch Care Center for striving to continually improve the diabetes care they provide," said AMA Foundation President Richard Hovland, CPA, CHE, CAE. "Diabetes requires intensive care management and those who are uninsured face even greater challenges in successfully controlling their disease."

The AMA Foundation offers a broad range of programs in public health and medical education. This year's Healthy Community /Healthy America program is supported by an educational grant from Lilly USA, LLC.

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