

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **County partners with ACF for additional grassroots opiate abatement grants**

**SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO**—On February 28, 2022, County Executive Ilene Shapiro and County Council approved legislation to send \$250,000 in opiate settlement funds to Akron Community Foundation (ACF) for the Opiate Small Grant Program. Previously, in June 2021, County Executive Shapiro and County Council provided \$500,000 to ACF to launch the grant program and to date, 16 local grassroots organizations have received grants to support their efforts to abate the ongoing opioid epidemic.

Last year, the Opiate Abatement Advisory Council, the group of experts and individuals with lived experience convened by County Executive Shapiro to guide settlement funds investment, determined there are numerous small non-profit agencies in Summit County that provide grassroots assistance to individuals with substance use disorders and their families. These organizations typically need less than \$25,000 toward their mission, but do not often receive funding from larger agencies. To support these smaller community organizations, County Executive Shapiro worked with ACF to establish a program to provide grants of up to \$25,000 to eligible organizations.

“We were incredibly lucky to be among the first communities in the nation to receive financial settlements from those who flooded our county with dangerous and addictive opiates. Since receiving these funds, my team has worked intentionally to make sure those on the front lines of this epidemic receive financial support to help those struggling with addiction,” said County Executive Shapiro. “We are so thankful for ACF’s partnership in supporting our local grassroots organizations that are small in size, but make an incredible difference in the lives of so many.”

Since opening the grant program for a second round of applications, ACF received requests totaling nearly \$500,000. Another round of funding for the program will help ensure critical community organizations can continue to aid in the abatement of the public health emergency that has come from the proliferation of opiates. County officials believe demand for the grants demonstrates a clear need for financial assistance due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and economic consequences affecting non-profits. ACF anticipates approving the second round of grants in early March.

“The pandemic has had devastating effects on addiction in our community,” said John Garofalo, vice president of community investment for Akron Community Foundation. “We’re incredibly thankful to Summit County for making this investment in the health of our community and entrusting the community foundation to administer grants to the nonprofits who work closely with affected residents and families.”

Since 2019, County Executive Shapiro and Summit County have now distributed over \$7 million in opiate litigation settlement funds and lifesaving medications to local organizations and hospitals in the County based on guidance from the Key Stakeholders Group and Opiate Abatement Advisory Council.

The following organizations received funding from the Opiate Small Grant Program in 2021:

3R Foundation \$20,500

Akron Say No To Dope \$15,000

AxessPointe Community Health Centers \$25,000

Broken Chains Jail & Prison Ministry \$25,000

CASA Board Volunteer Association \$23,985

Freedom House for Women \$25,000

Hope United \$20,000

Keys to Serenity \$25,000

Legacy III \$25,000

MODE – Miracles Occur, Days Enriched \$20,000

Rachel's Angels \$15,000

Safe Harbor Norton \$25,000

Sarah's House Inc. \$7,000

South Street Ministries \$25,000

The Packard Institute \$20,000

Truth & Honor \$25,000

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