



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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McAULEY MINISTRIES AWARDS 18 GRANTS TOTALING OVER \$2.3 MILLION TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Grants support capacity building, disaster response, education, environmental care, essential needs and social services, and whole-person health initiatives

PITTSBURGH (October 23, 2023) – [McAuley Ministries](#), [Pittsburgh Mercy's](#) grant-making foundation, awarded in July of 2023, 18 grants totaling over \$2.3 million to support capacity building, disaster response, education, environmental care, essential needs and social services, and whole-person health initiatives in Pittsburgh's Hill District, Uptown, and West Oakland; its three focus neighborhoods.

This is the first set of grants awarded as the organization marks its 15th Anniversary Celebration that began July 1, 2023, and will continue through August 2024. In 2022, McAuley Ministries announced it would focus its grantmaking on the diminishment of racism and violence in the communities it serves so it can be a catalyst for transformational efforts in Pittsburgh, the U.S., and the world. This emphasis will be accomplished through four pillars:

- Supporting our neighbors
- Celebrating our communities
- Building our communities' resilience
- Uniting our communities.



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McAuley Ministries awards 18 grants totaling over \$2.3 million to nonprofit organizations

Page 2 of 5

One of the grants awarded is a new special initiative called **Neighbor to Neighbor Aid**. Granted to Macedonia Family and Community Enrichment (FACE) and Neighborhood Resilience Project, each nonprofit organization will receive \$76,500 to address emergent and critical needs of residents in the Hill District, Uptown, and West Oakland that when supported, may prevent families from falling into crisis.

“One of the tenets of our work is being more than a foundation; it is being a good neighbor to the residents we have the blessing to live and work among,” stated [Marisol Valentin](#), executive director of McAuley Ministries. “Adding to our grantmaking portfolio funds that directly support resident needs was very important to us, especially at a time when inflation and other factors are eroding the safety nets that support families. Just like with Neighborhood Capital, we hope the philanthropic community will join McAuley Ministries in expanding this essential program.”

Organizations awarded grants of \$10,000 or more were given an additional 2% in funding to focus on the mental health and spiritual well-being of their employees. “Focusing on the mental health and spiritual well-being of our partners is so important due to long-standing issues of inequity of investment in our communities”, said Valentin. “The Program to Aid Citizen Enterprise (PACE) conducted a [regional nonprofit effectiveness study](#) that brought to light that communities of color are significantly less likely to have access to effective nonprofits, in part because organizations closest to communities with the greatest need receive less funding overall and less support for capacity-building. Therefore, it is important that in our grant-making we highlight the need to invest in our partners capacity, starting with an investment in the well-being of their employees,” added Valentin.

Grouped by grant-making priorities, the recipients of McAuley Ministries’ most recent grants are as follows.

Capacity Building

- **Poise Foundation:** \$2,850 to support Operation Amani’s attendance at the 2023 HomeBoy Conference.
- **Project Love Coalition:** \$25,500 for capacity building and operational support. Project Love Coalition (PLC) is taking steps to grow into the next level of existence to better serve those in need in the Hill District community. PLC is also planning to expand its farming workforce development program for veterans through the building of new workforce housing for veterans and veterans who are homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless.
- **Shepherd’s Heart Fellowship & Veteran’s Home:** \$163,000 for operating support for homeless ministries for the next three years, including Shepherd’s Heart Veteran’s Home, drop-in center, food pantry, resource center, and free shuttle service.
- **Sisters Lifting as We Climb Network:** \$45,000 to improve the realities of Black women. The network provides programming to address underlying trauma and provides safe spaces for Black women to obtain support and professional connections, such as sponsorship for coaching and professional development, promote businesses owned by Black women to showcase their expertise, and provide support to Black women-led organizations.

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McAuley Ministries awards 18 grants totaling over \$2.3 million to nonprofit organizations
Page 3 of 5

Disaster Response

- **FLM Haiti:** \$10,000 to support the continuation of the work of Functional Literacy Ministry which has provided direct service, education, and health care in Haiti for 40 years.

Education

- **ACH Clear Pathways:** \$102,000 for Igniting the Dream Out-of-School Time Initiative. ACH Clear Pathways' programming offers youth, primarily residing in the Hill District neighborhood of Pittsburgh, access to academic tutoring, music, dance, theater, martial arts, digital media, and visual arts classes.
- **Center That CARES:** \$173,400 for Igniting the Dream Out-of-School Time Initiative. The Center that CARES inspires children and youth from the Hill District to learn and achieve through quality afterschool programs that include unique learning opportunities, innovative programming, and cutting-edge science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education.
- **Hug Me Tight Childlife Centers Inc.:** \$45,000 for operational support for fiscal year 2024.
- **Learning Disabilities Association of Pennsylvania:** \$40,341 to expand early literacy intervention in the Hill District. With established connections in the Hill District, the Learning Disabilities Association of Pennsylvania offers free tutoring in reading and reading tutor training.
- **Ozanam Inc.:** \$61,200 for Igniting the Dream Out-of-School Time Initiative. The Hill District legacy project inspires children and youth through culturally specific frameworks, capitalizing to excel and achieve through innovative educational experiences that embrace STEM and digital literacy and prepare students with 21st century learning skills.
- **Reading is FUNdamental Pittsburgh:** \$382,500 over three years for children's literacy programming. Their mission is to provide more books, learning opportunities, and motivational relationships to help children develop a life-long love of reading and ultimately help tackle the literacy gap in underserved communities across Pittsburgh.
- **Schenley Heights Community Development Program:** \$102,000 for Igniting the Dream Out-of-School Time Initiative. This will support Schenley Heights Community Development Program's (SHCDP's) mission to nurture, support, and develop the community through wholesome year-round programming that address the academic, moral, cultural, health, and recreational needs of children, youth, and families in the Hill District and the City of Pittsburgh.
- **Venture Outdoors:** \$76,500 for continued support and expansion of their Outdoor Learning Lab. For a decade, Venture Outdoors has partnered with schools and out-of-school time sites in the Hill District to engage underrepresented youth in year-round outdoor experiences. Following a pilot in 2022, Venture Outdoors will expand its mentorship program to provide paid internships, job readiness skills, and a view into the growing outdoor recreation industry in Pennsylvania, which typically has not provided employment outreach into communities of color.

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McAuley Ministries awards 18 grants totaling over \$2.3 million to nonprofit organizations
Page 4 of 5

- **Young Black Motivated Kings & Queens (YBMKQ):** \$25,500 for YBMKQ University which provides participants with a safe learning environment that addresses the educational needs of participants by providing interest-driven, culturally relevant weekly learning activities to help youth stay connected to learning in ways that support their social and emotional well-being.

Environmental Care

- **Grounded Strategies:** \$204,000 over two years for CommunityCare Hill District. Grounded Strategies will refocus the efforts of the community advocates to address systematized disparities in resources, access, and allocation for vacant property maintenance.

Essential Needs & Social Services

- **Ebenezer Outreach Ministries:** \$306,000 over three years to support community outreach services, workforce programs, and basic needs center. Ebenezer Outreach Ministries will cover tuition, basic needs, and administrative fees to run pharmacy technician, culinary, and youth career readiness workforce programs for training students over the next year.
- **Neighbor to Neighbor Aid:** Awarded to Macedonia Family and Community Enrichment (FACE) and Neighborhood Resilience Project, each organization will receive \$76,500 to address emergent and critical needs of residents in the Hill District, Uptown, and West Oakland that when supported, may prevent families from falling into crisis.
- **Vision Enterprises Judicial Assistance Serving Our Neighborhood (JASON) Project:** \$306,000 over three years for operational support. The JASON Project serves as a non-legal support to those who find themselves requiring use of a public defender to confront a criminal charge or family court issue to prevent the cascading legal implications in which a disenfranchised and legally inexperienced individual needlessly suffers.

Whole-Person Health

- **Blind and Vision Rehabilitation Services of Pittsburgh:** \$102,000 for advanced services for individuals who are blind or vision impaired. Through scholarship support, individuals will have access to services and programs that lead to independence. The grant will also support the purchase of non-invasive optical imaging equipment that can help diagnose many eye conditions that ultimately impact seniors and others who have vision loss, such as glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, and age-related macular degeneration.

About McAuley Ministries

Named in honor of [Catherine McAuley](#), founder of the [Sisters of Mercy](#), [McAuley Ministries](#) is the grant-making foundation of [Pittsburgh Mercy](#). McAuley Ministries, which is celebrating 15 years of grant-making, serves as a catalyst for change, committing resources and working collaboratively to promote healthy, safe, and vibrant communities. Grant-making priorities include capacity building, education, empowerment, environmental care, essential needs and social services, peacemaking, and whole-person health initiatives for nonprofit organizations which focus on the Hill District, Uptown, and West

McAuley Ministries awards 18 grants totaling over \$2.3 million to nonprofit organizations
Page 5 of 5

Oakland, the three Pittsburgh communities historically served by the Sisters of Mercy. McAuley Ministries also provides support to organizations in Southwestern Pennsylvania that are sponsored by the Sisters.

Since its founding by the Sisters of Mercy in 2008, McAuley Ministries has awarded 951 grants and community support totaling over \$55 million. It awards on average \$3.5 million in grants annually, making it one of the largest philanthropic foundations in Southwestern Pennsylvania. To learn more about McAuley Ministries and the initiatives it supports, visit www.mcauleyministries.org. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

About Pittsburgh Mercy

[Pittsburgh Mercy](#) is one of the largest community health and social service providers and employers in Southwestern Pennsylvania. We offer help – and hope – to our community’s most vulnerable:

- People who have complex behavioral and physical health challenges. We are the only [Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic](#) (CCBHC) and Integrated Community Wellness Center (ICWC) in Western Pennsylvania.
- People who have intellectual and developmental disabilities
- People who are experiencing homelessness
- People who need wrap-around services to live safe, healthy, and well in the community.

We serve more than 18,000 people annually in 60+ locations.

Pittsburgh Mercy is a member of [Trinity Health](#), serving in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy. Our mission is to be a compassionate and transforming, healing presence within our communities.

To learn more about Pittsburgh Mercy or to make a donation in support of its important work in the community, please visit www.pittsburghmercy.org.

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