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JUST IN: AWARE President Jolie Humphrey Reveals 13 Grant Recipients For 2019-2020

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AWARE President Jolie Humphrey just announced the Dallas and Collin County grant recipients for 2019-2020. Some are new; some are vets of AWARE's support of organizations "on the frontlines in the fight against Alzheimer's disease."

And the recipients and their programs are:

- Baylor Healthcare System: Continued salary support for the Baylor AT&T Memory Center to provide a trained care and support specialist onsite at the Baylor AT&T Memory Center. By placing this valuable service at the point of care, patients and their families in early diagnosis can receive disease education, caregiver skill training and support groups, elder law



JOLIE HUMPHREY (FILE PHOTO)

and financial planning and a 24/7 helpline freeing up physicians' time to focus on the medical issues surrounding the disease.

- Casa de Vida: Continued support for the Casa de Vida program at NorthPark Presbyterian Church. At the church this program provides respite relief to families and caregivers by providing trained volunteer one-on-one care to individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias with programs involving art, music, games. Supported by past funding from AWARE Casa de Vida has more than doubled its program capacity with the addition of a second day of respite care allowing the caregiver more time for rest or to tend to work and/or personal needs. Also the addition of summer programming will begin this summer. The program has 58 volunteers (several from AWARE) benefitting 32 families and also provides a support group for caregivers of Casa participants. They have a waiting list. Funding from AWARE will also help replicate Casa de Vida in other parts of the Dallas community.
- Center for Brain Health Mosaic of Meaningful Messages: Support to produce a series of short video testimonials from 8 to 10 couples who were participants in the Center for Brain Health Discovery Group a CBH program previously funded by AWARE. They will collect personal insights, experiences and advice from those who are

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living with Alzheimer's Disease, as well as, friends, family members and the community at large giving a voice to those with the disease and underscoring their value and purpose in the community. Paired with another series of videos documenting more formal educational content about the impact of an Alzheimer's diagnosis these videos will be available to the general public via the CBH website and the CBH YouTube channel. These are estimated to reach approximately 100,000 people by the end of the one-year grant.

- **Center for Vital Longevity Optimizing Neuro-cognitive Functions in Healthy Living:** Support for funding of a postdoctoral fellow to conduct research with Dr. Chandramallika Basak on the differences in neuro-cognitive functions between younger adults and healthy aging adults and how these functions can be enhanced for healthy aging adults through a study of the role of physical fitness and cognitive training as potential neuroprotective factors against cognitive decline in aging adults. Data will be collected from 85 Dallas area adults to compare brain functions across high and low fit adults and younger adults to provide information about fitness as a protective factor. Training-related changes in older adults' brain functions will inform whether altered brain function itself can be a useful biomarker of cognitive plasticity.
- **Dallas Museum of Art Meaningful Moments Program:** Continued support for Meaningful Moments a DMA program designed to provide participants with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and their families or caregivers with ways to engage in art providing a continuing cultural opportunity to everyone regardless of their ability. In its 10th year of successful programming for visitors with dementia Meaningful Moments will now offer the educational experience both on and off-site for approximately 8 local care residences throughout each month. These will include Belmont Village, Christian Care Center, The Village at Mapleshade, Tradition Senior Living, Presbyterian Village North, Brookdale at White Rock, Villages of Lake Highlands and MacArthur Hills.
- **For Love and Art:** The mission for Love and Art is to bring the art experience to people with limited mobility to stimulate art appreciation while empowering caregivers to love people in creative and transformative ways. Digital images obtained through partnerships with the community outreach programs of 26 fine museums worldwide are showcased to groups on big-screen televisions or to individuals bedside using Virtual Museum ArtBooks. The trained volunteer Art Angels from For Love and Art will offer their presentations in 62 facilities in the Dallas area over the coming year. AWARE will provide funding for the hire of an administrative assistant to facilitate the scheduling, coordination and back office work in support of Love and Art "Celebrating the Arts" presentations.
- **Jewish Family Service Older Adults Program:** Continued salary support of the Older Adults Program staff to provide in-home mental health counseling, care management and daily living support services to 50 older adults with Alzheimer's disease and 20 family members and caregivers allowing them to remain independent and living in their own home.
- **Juliette Fowler Communities:** Support for Juliette Fowler Communities to spearhead collaboration with other city organizations to secure Dementia Friendly certification for the city of Dallas. The Dementia Friendly America initiative is a multi-sector, national collaboration of over 35 leading organizations that are catalyzing a movement and set of best practices to foster "dementia friendly" communities across the United States to improve opportunities and outcomes for a growing number of people with dementia, their families and care partners. A dementia friendly community 1) raises awareness of and develops respect and inclusion for people with dementia, 2) has services and resources embedded in all areas of community life to ensure meaningful access to community and to promote quality of life, 3) supports and educates people with dementia, their families and care partners from diagnosis through disease progression and 4) promotes meaningful engagement in community life.
- **The Senior Source:** Support for the Senior Companions program matching trained volunteers with individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and their families needing assistance with meals, errands, light housekeeping providing caregivers with respite and/or time to work outside the home. Senior Companions supports 89 volunteers providing 81,000 hours of caregiving and caregiver respite serving 131 clients and their families in Dallas.
- **Stomping Ground Comedy:** Support of funds needed to implement Improv for Caregivers, a therapeutic and psycho-educational workshop that is free for up to 30 family caregivers per month in the Dallas community. Improv for Alzheimer's/Dementia Caregivers is a fun interactive program that uses improvisational comedy techniques to teach effective communication skills that are specific the needs of an Alzheimer's patient. Through these interactive games and activities caregiver participants will develop a new understanding and roadmap of how to effectively communicate with their loved ones. These tools will enable the caregiver to have more ease in their daily interactions which decreases frustration and stress on both the caregiver and the person they are caring for and increases the quality of care they are giving. The core principles encourage a new outlook of care, respect and dignity to the aging community.
- **Texas Winds Musical Outreach:** In its 34th year, Texas Winds expects to give 1,866 concerts for 125,000 isolated seniors, hospital patients, hospice clients, veterans and at-risk children. AWARE's continuing support for the Texas Winds Concerts for Seniors program will provide concerts by professional musicians in each of 95 nursing homes and adult day care facilities serving individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias responding to their need for human interaction and bringing inspiration, joy, relief from isolation and peace to individuals affected by memory loss.

- University of Texas Southwestern Optical Coherence Tomography Angiography for Early Diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease: Support for development of a new diagnostic test to provide earlier and more accurate diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. Optical Coherence Tomography Angiography has been investigated in preliminary studies and shown potential for identifying retinal changes in people having Alzheimer's and those patients experiencing mild cognitive impairment. OCT-A will be evaluated as a sensitive marker in Alzheimer's patients pointing to changes in the brain and retinal microvasculature that may predate the development of clinical symptoms by several years and hopefully identify patients who are developing Alzheimer's disease even before the neuronal damage in the brain has reached an irreversible stage. Insights into microvascular changes hold promise to identify new targets for medication interventions.
- Wilshire Baptist Church: Support for the Wilshire Baptist Church Friendly Friday Program. The program is one year old and addresses the need for those who care for a dementia relative at home and who have little or no assistance for relieving them of the constant care and supervision of the loved one. The program meets on the second and fourth Friday of each month except for July and August and includes singing, crafts, therapy animals, musicians, subject matter experts and more. One-on-one care is provided to the participants by 27 trained volunteers. Wilshire Baptist provides generously provides free meeting place and free nutritious hot lunches prepared by the church chef. Friendly Friday is free to the participants. The program currently touches the lives of 40 families and has a waiting list.

These grants are made possible thanks to donations and proceeds from the Aware Affair that annually takes place in the spring.

Also supporting the battle against Alzheimer's are the following students, thanks to the 2019-2020 Myrna D. Schlegel Aware Scholarship Fund Grants:

- **Lauren Benefield**, a graduate of Texas A&M University with a degree in genetics and a minor in neuroscience. She is continuing her studies at Baylor University to earn her second bachelor's degree in nursing science.
- **Melissa George**, a graduate of University of Texas at Tyler with a degree in biology and Texas A&M nursing school graduating in 2010. She has been an operating room nurse at Baylor Heart and Vascular Center since 2011. She presently attends Texas Woman's University studying to become an Adult-Gerontological Nurse Practitioner.
- **Grace Penaranda** has worked as a registered nurse in the Philippines from 1997 to 2006, then working at Baylor Scott & White since 2006 as an RN bedside leader. She will graduate from Texas Woman's University in May 2020.
- **Alyssa Temple** is currently working at an Alzheimer's daycare facility. She will graduate from Baylor University in May 2020 with a degree in nursing.

* Graphic provided by Aware

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