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Illinois DCFS Awards \$866,000 in Capital Improvement Grants to Residential Providers

Grants will increase beds and support youth with severe mental health and medically complex issues

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services today announced the award of \$866,000 in Residential Capital Improvement Grants to six residential and group home service providers across the state. Projects funded by the grants will enable providers to increase their bed capacity and improve physical facilities to support medically complex youth and youth with severe mental health issues.

“In recent years Illinois has lost more than 500 residential beds which served some of our most vulnerable youth, and rebuilding that capacity is imperative as the need for high-quality care for our children and young adults in care continues to grow,” said Illinois DCFS Acting Director Marc D. Smith. “We are committed to serving every child in our state who needs our help, and these grants will help ensure that more children can receive the best care possible.”

The Residential Capital Improvement Grants were recently funded by Governor JB Pritzker and the General Assembly. The grants are designed to increase the bed capacity in Illinois, increase the capacity of youth with challenging health conditions to receive treatment and to help ensure programs continue to serve vulnerable youth. This initial investment creates 31 new or converted beds within Illinois, which are critical to ensuring DCFS has the capacity to treat vulnerable youth.

The funds were awarded to:

- **Caritas, Belleville:** \$198,766 for renovation and 12-bed expansion of St. John Bosco Children’s Center to serve adolescent females
- **Children's Home Association of Illinois, Peoria:** \$74,392 for renovations to serve youth with severe mental health issues
- **Maryville Academy, Des Plaines:** \$200,000 for a six-bed expansion to serve adolescent females

- **One Hope United, Centralia:** \$111,250 for a nine-bed expansion to serve adolescent females with severe mental health or medically-complex issues
- **Little City (Birch House), Palatine:** \$81,607 to improve ability to transition youth with developmental disabilities to group homes within the community
- **Pavilion Behavioral Health System, Champaign:** \$200,000 for a four-bed expansion to serve adolescent males and females

“We are delighted and honored to be awarded this Residential Capital Improvement Grant from the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Our St. John Bosco Children’s Center is a place for healing, a place of safety and a place to begin anew for many youths. The Residential Capital Improvement Grant awarded by DCFS will help us with components of an overall capital project that will lead to the expansion of our center by 12 beds, increasing our overall capacity to serve a total of 48 youth at one time. The five projects within the capital project funded by this grant will help to ensure the safety of the youth and the staff needed to provide therapeutic care, the necessary infrastructure upgrades to accommodate additional staff and visitors and much needed outdoor storage to give the youth the most childlike experience as possible.”

Gary Huelsmann, CEO, Caritas Family Solutions

"The past eight months have been tough for so many people. The Residential Capital Improvement Grant is another positive initiative that DCFS has put forward in helping to taking care of all of the youth in our care. This grant is a morale builder for both youth and staff and we are proud to partner with DCFS in improving lives."

Matt George, CEO, Children's Home Association of Illinois

“We are deeply grateful to the department for standing together with Maryville as we expand our Casa Imani program by investing \$1.2 million at our new Berwyn location. The result in benefits to young mothers in care and their children will be great. The shared goals and vision between DCFS and Maryville for these young families will certainly create brighter futures.”

Nina C Aliprandi, Associate Executive Director, Maryville Academy

"The ability to provide specialized services and environments to children with high-intensive needs is crucial in helping them reach their full potential. This grant will allow Little City to transform their home into a truly dynamic environment where they will have all the tools they need to learn to regulate emotions, develop life skills and grow and learn together. We cannot thank DCFS enough for making this life-changing grant a reality and for continuing their commitment to supporting and empowering our most vulnerable children."

Jayne Drew, Chief Development Officer, Little City

“For the past 125 years, One Hope United has provided comprehensive and evidence-based child and family welfare services. This Residential Capital Improvement Grant from the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services increases our capacity to serve teenagers with severe mental health and/or medically-complex needs. We understand that investment into community-based interventions which support the development of infrastructure, capacity, resources and partnerships creates the

space for positive outcomes for children and youth. We are grateful for this investment into our organization.”

Dr. Charles A. Montorio–Archer, President and CEO, One Hope United

“We would like to express our appreciation to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) for awarding The Pavilion Behavioral Health System a Residential Capital Improvement Grant. These funds will support a four-bed expansion of The Pavilion’s 34-bed Residential Treatment Center. These beds are in high demand in Illinois, and we are honored to partner with DCFS to serve our community through this expansion. At the Pavilion, we provide a safe and nurturing environment for children, adolescents, adults and senior adults who are seeking behavioral healthcare and addiction treatment services.”

Steve Vanderpoel, CEO, The Pavilion Behavioral Health System

In many of the cases, the grants from DCFS do not cover the entire cost of the project but complement funds from the organizations and will allow projects to be started and completed quicker.

About the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Founded in 1964, DCFS is responsible for protecting children from abuse or neglect by responding to calls received on the Child Abuse Hotline, 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873). With the goal of keeping children safe, DCFS strengthens and supports families with a wide range of services. When keeping a child safe means removing them from the home, DCFS makes every effort to reunite them with their family. When the best interest of the child makes this impossible, DCFS is committed to pursuing adoption by loving families to provide children with a safe and permanent home. DCFS is also responsible for licensing and monitoring of all Illinois child welfare agencies.

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