

Mini-Grants Open New Doors to Recovery

Some of the most successful interventions to assist people in recovery from serious mental illness and/or substance use disorders come from people who are in recovery. The philosophy, *“helping others helps yourself”* is clearly evident in a highly successful Mini-grant Project begun in 1999. With a pilot grant from DMHAS, the Regional Consumer Advisory Council (RCAC) engaged a consultant to instruct their members in aspects and processes for grant funding. With that information in hand, the RCAC developed a proposal to provide mini-grants to adults in recovery. These mini-grants would fund recovery-enhancing projects that would help to develop skills and self-confidence. The North Central Regional Mental Health Board’s consumer planning council has continued to issue these highly popular grants for seven years.

Grants Awarded

- ✓ 75 mini-grants totaling \$119,000 funded to date
- ✓ \$17,000 in mini-grant funds released annually
- ✓ 56 mini-grants awarded to adults in recovery from psychiatric and/or substance use disorders
- ✓ 19 mini-grants awarded to adults in recovery from substance use disorders

What do the Mini-Grants Fund?

- 18 related to **creative expression**: writing, painting, dancing, acting
- 14 were **wellness-related**: peer support groups, relapse intervention committees, educative prevention forums, and research projects
- 12 were **technology-related**
- 11 were for **training and skill building**
- 8 were **work-related**: training or education to provide specific work skills
- 5 enhanced adults’ **social skills**: outings to cultural events, summer camp
- 4 provided **substance abuse prevention** forums
- 3 were **advocacy-related**



“This project helped us get our lives back on track.” Michelle P.

“Being accepted by the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors to exhibit nationally was a validation of our work.” Dawn I.

“These grants opened up possibilities where there were no possibilities.” Julie H.

“Some of us would never have had the chance to go to camp and learn boating and archery.” Mike D.

“Going to the Mark Twain Museum inspired me to read some of his books.” Kathy M.

“One of my peers shared with me that taking part in my project was one of the best weeks he had had in recovery all year long.” Rob P.

“Becoming a certified facilitator and establishing a local chapter of a nationally affiliated support group is a dream come true and a healing experience.” Selina N.

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