

Dear Community Partner:

Thank you for your open, clear feedback to year one of the Foundation for a Healthy St. Petersburg's grant making activities shared in our recent survey. We remain steadfast in our belief that the community has the wisdom and experience to transform and make equitable improved health outcomes for our population. Your participation in the survey advances our understanding of how to achieve improved outcomes. The response rate of 42%, or 76 participants out of 181 invited to participate, is greatly appreciated. Please know we are always listening to you.

We utilized an unbiased third-party evaluator to prepare the report and in the interest of full transparency your complete unedited narrative comments are also publicly posted. This email provides a summary of the survey responses and input you provided related to our grant making, our systems, and the staff's responsiveness.

### **How We Got Here**

The listening sessions held in the summer of 2015 (<http://healthystpete.foundation/resources/2015-listening-sessions/>) set forth our inaugural approach of how to launch the Foundation's first grant making. There were three sessions just for nonprofit entities for us to listen; we embodied the vast majority of what we heard in our year-one work. That information fueled a Community Engagement Half-Day meeting last November to share those results and outline our starting place.

"Where we start is not where we will finish." The process to launch this Foundation has been intentional; produce – listen – respond – produce again. We started sharing the quote at the beginning of this paragraph at the listening sessions last summer. We will adapt and change; that is why we've asked for your feedback. Grantmaking processes, qualitative experiences with the Foundation, and ideas for the future are all important components of information we drew from the questions we asked.

In order to fully listen we realize the ideas you submitted through the LOI process provided valuable tools for us. Our first round of ideas through the letters of interest are being codified and collected to demonstrate the community's collective wisdom and to support our convening work moving forward. We did hear you and our library will be filled with your ideas once this process is completed. Your submission will continue to help build and form the ultimate long-term responses to improve our community.

### **The Survey**

As you look at the survey results and the verbatim comments (the link is below) please remember this is where we begin. We've talked openly about this requiring a 20-year benchmark and that grantmaking alone cannot transform. Thus our approaches to communications, policy, and research are also a critical part of the effort not yet launched, therefore, not yet evaluated. We have lots more to do. But first, we want to be sure our rapport with the community takes off with the best possible outcome.

On page 4 of the report, there are three questions that have Strongly Agree/Agree for 55% - 58% of the respondents; the lowest positive response. Those three questions had to do with:

- Generation of sustained and measurable improvements to our community's health;
- Our process cultivates compelling solutions to our most important needs; and
- Improvements to the health and wellbeing of our community.

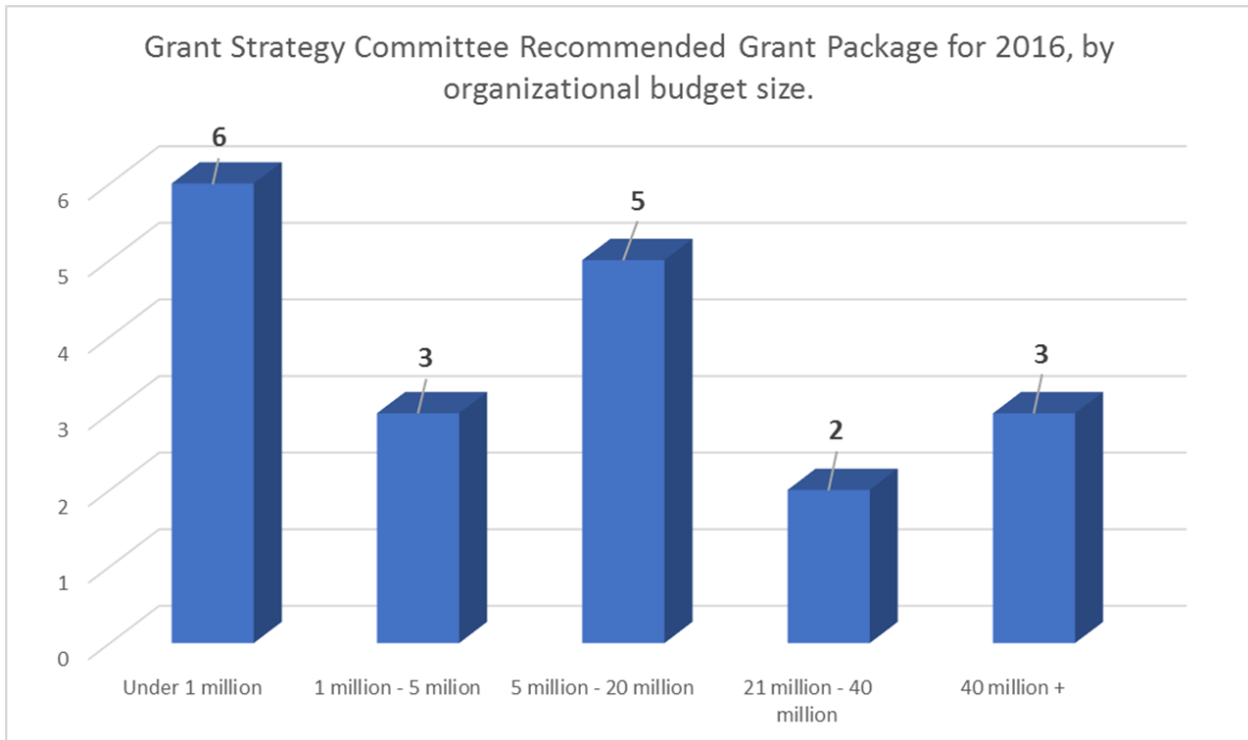
These are long-term questions and our funding was short-term – however we will always measure our work by the mission and intention, even when our first step is to launch and begin a relationship with the community. We remain focused in our belief in this mission, in our commitment to the community to build a strong working trust and rapport, and in our day-to-day work to change policies and processes that will improve our community’s health. We will need longer-term grants and more time to accomplish this weighty goal. **We heard you – longer-term grants are needed for transformative purposes.**

There were many optimistic and supportive comments. Those positive comments are very helpful as they validate the direction and/or approach we are using. Many comments also lauded the staff for their supportive follow through. Thank you for your support and enthusiasm.

Several comments expressed concern that the inaugural year funded partners reflected funds targeting only organization’s with large budgets. I have included the funding chart below of the 19 projects funded in year one and the budget size of the organizations funded. You will note that 6 are organizations below \$1 million in budget size, and nearly half are smaller than \$5 million in budget size. We do have a commitment to entities that can reach audiences others cannot and to projects of systemic change that can be transformative all the same.

We were delighted our external reviewers (none of whom reside in the State of Florida or work for any governmental entity) saw the wisdom in the approaches of these successful applications, including the focus on organizational scale in a balanced way.

**We hear you - smaller organizations should not have to compete outside of their capacities with larger entities.** When the 2017 grantmaking plans are outlined, your input will directly influence how we achieve a range of organizational sizes receiving funds.



## **What's Next**

As the Fall continues and our inaugural year of grant making winds down (we started December 1, 2015) you will hear about our 2017 plans that will definitely circle back and point to what we heard from you.

Better does not happen without action. Our community cannot be improved without our partnership which we all have to experience. Thank you for helping us be better through your survey participation and know that we count on you to guide us moving forward.

Working together there are many ways we can model how diversity of thought can truly transform. That also means we will find ways to hear one another's diverse point of view. The goal is not agreement together. The goal is to improve our population's health with health equity as the cornerstone. Hearing one another with an openness that allows for diversity of thought is necessary to achieve collective positive improvement.

We pledge to keep you informed and updated on our next steps as soon as they are finalized. Thank you for your commitment to serve those in need to better our community.

With great admiration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Randall H. Russell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Randall" being more prominent than the last name "Russell".

Randall H. Russell, ACSW  
President & CEO