UW-Partnership Grant Helps Expand First Breath Efforts to Fight Tobacco Addiction in Wisconsin

First Breath, which has been helping pregnant women successfully quit smoking since 2002, is expanding, thanks to a $1 million Community Impact Grant from the Wisconsin Partnership Program at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. First Breath is one of four community-based health projects chosen for the Community Impact Grant because of its large-scale, evidence-based work in tobacco cessation services and its potential to help improve health equity in Wisconsin. In partnership with Michael Fiore, MD, MPH, and Bruce Christiansen, PhD of the UW Center for Tobacco Research and Intervention (UW-CTRI), the grant will help First Breath significantly expand its efforts to bring tobacco cessation services to more people over the span of five years.

Families & Caregivers Need Cessation Support Too

Tobacco use during pregnancy remains one of Wisconsin’s leading causes of poor birth outcomes, including prematurity, low birth weight, and infant mortality. In response, the First Breath program has focused on helping pregnant women quit smoking – with 88% of First Breath participants abstaining, quitting, or cutting back on tobacco while pregnant. However, as you can imagine, it’s incredibly difficult to quit when you’re surrounded by other smokers. If we want mom and baby to be entirely smoke-free, we have to provide cessation support to other family members and caregivers as well. “Having [my boyfriend] to be there quitting with me was a huge help,” said one First Breath participant. “I couldn’t have done it without him I don’t think.”
2017 was such a big year with the celebration of our 20th Anniversary – how could we possibly top it? Yet, here we are in 2018, and already I’m amazed by the work that’s been done. It’s a challenge to keep up with the ever-changing landscape of women’s health, but with that comes a number of new and exciting opportunities for the Foundation. We are embarking on quite a few adventures in 2018, and I’m eager to share the developments with you. As our program reach and staff continue to grow, I think this may be our most exciting year yet!

In this newsletter, you’ll read about the expansion of our First Breath smoking cessation program, thanks to a million dollar grant from the UW Partnership Program. You’ll also get to know the WWHF Quit Coaches and the work they are doing statewide to assist women who smoke. We recognize our 2018 Champions in Women’s Health for their dedication to improving the lives of women in Wisconsin. And you can see how we will be addressing topics such as diabetes, dementia, and opioids at our annual events.

As always, we couldn’t do any of this without your generous support, and we thank you for your commitment to women’s health. On Saturday, May 19th, we are holding our Annual Spring Gala, an event which largely helps fund our work and allows us to serve over 7,000 women throughout Wisconsin each year. I personally invite you to attend, and I look forward to seeing you there!

Yours for a healthy Wisconsin,
about us

The Wisconsin Women’s Health Foundation (WWHF) is a nonprofit organization that provides health services and education for women and families. We have 5 statewide programs in all 72 Wisconsin counties, serving over 7,000 women each year. WWHF services and research initiatives are rooted in evidence-based prevention of the diseases and conditions that most effect Wisconsin women’s wellness. Our mission is to innovate, impact, and improve women’s health.

Our Programs

GrapeVine trains nurses to lead health education sessions in their communities.

“Wonderfully done program – good [health] info that needs to be spread.”
– GrapeVine participant

EveryWoman’s Journal teaches women to use journaling as a tool for stress reduction and self-care at workshops statewide.

“I can write whatever I feel like – and this relieves tension, anger, and whatever creeps into life. Journaling is a personal outlet ... I enjoy this writing every day.”
– Jo

The Susan G. Komen Wisconsin Breast Cancer Assistance Fund provides financial assistance for men and women in need of breast health services.

“Receiving these grants as a single woman with a limited support network and no financial resources to fall back on has helped me cover necessary expenses.”
– Laurie

Calling all book-lovers!

GrapeVine offers health education in the form of book club!

Learn about dementia risk factors and brain health with titles such as:

- Still Alice
- Before I Forget
- Where the Light Gets In
- My Two Elaines

To request a book club near you, visit: www.wwhf.org/grapevine

First Breath helps pregnant women and their family members to quit smoking.

“There have been a lot of changes in my life in the past year. I’ve been enrolled in the program and they become part of your family—a part of your life.”
– Samantha

My Baby & Me helps women achieve alcohol-free pregnancies through screenings, education, phone counseling and text message support.

“It encourages you to make better decisions while pregnant and even after.”
– My Baby & Me participant
Get to Know the WWHF Quit Coaches

When taking on a challenge as difficult as quitting smoking, women want an experienced quit coach they know and trust – someone they can call when they have questions, who knows their situation, and who can help them create a personalized quit plan.

Our First Breath program employs regional Quit Coaches, who are Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialists trained on the unique challenges of the perinatal period. They provide services in all counties of Wisconsin, offering monthly contact via home visits, personal phone calls, and text message support to help thousands of pregnant and postpartum women through their individualized, quit smoking journeys.

“Supporting women to make a positive change in their tobacco use is incredibly rewarding. Working with women who have overcome major barriers and obstacles to give their children and themselves a better life is inspiring. I admire the women that I work with, they are so strong.” – Amanda Brenden

“I enjoy working as a Quit Coach because in doing so I get to witness program participants creating and working towards specific goals. Observing the sense of empowerment these women gain in making their own plan and achieving their own personal goals, often in spite of adversity, is very inspiring.” – Greer Nelson

“In addition to supporting pregnant and new Moms on their quit smoking journey, I also really love assisting them with other aspects of their life such as breastfeeding and connecting them with other valuable community resources.” – Caitlyn Szudy
Different Program Model, Same Great Benefits

To address the needs of our Wisconsin communities and to adapt to a changing healthcare landscape, the expanded First Breath program adopts a more streamlined Ask-Advise-Refer model. This helps statewide health agencies more easily and swiftly identify at-risk pregnant and postpartum women and their families, and connect them with evidence-based tobacco treatment services such as one-on-one counseling and text message support from local WWHF Quit Coaches.

“Our team is so passionate about this work and has years of experience helping pregnant and postpartum women quit smoking,” says WWHF Operations Director, Lisette Khalil. “By including other family members who also smoke, we have a significant impact on their success and increase the number of children who grow up in smoke-free homes. Thanks to the funding from the Wisconsin Partnership Program, our evidence based smoking cessation program will be able to expand and help more families throughout Wisconsin.”

“We’re looking forward to supporting WWHF in this important endeavor,” adds Dr. Bruce Christiansen. “Its value, in terms of ensuring mothers and babies are healthy, cannot be overstated.”

Learn more about First Breath and its services at: www.wwhf.org/first-breath
2018 Champions in Women’s Health Awards

The 2018 Champions in Women’s Health Award recognizes the remarkable work and achievement of talented health leaders in Wisconsin who have devoted themselves to improving the lives of women and their families. 2018’s awardees were celebrated by WWHF Founder & President, Sue Ann Thompson, and the community at an Awards Luncheon on Saturday, April 14th at the Park Hotel in Madison.

Deborah Ehrenthal, MD, MPH
Associate Professor, Director, Division of Reproductive and Population Health Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, UW School of Medicine and Public Health Madison, WI
Area of Health: Cardiovascular Disease/General Women’s Health

“Dr. Ehrenthal is a pioneering visionary in women’s health. She has consistently looked at data regarding the greatest health care needs of diverse populations of women, and then worked to see how systems of care could be directed or re-directed toward those needs.”

Jennifer Froh, BS
Community Health Educator
Juneau County Health Department
Mauston, WI
Area of Health: Cancer/Rural Women’s Health/General Women’s Health

“Jennifer’s lifelong experience and dedication in the field of Public Health, the power of her listening ear and ability to generate confidence and strength to women qualifies her as a Champion of Women’s Health in Wisconsin! ... Her dedication and commitment to the health and wellness of women in rural Wisconsin is impressive and steadfast.”

Jan Penn, NP-C
Nurse Practitioner
Essentia Health (Retired)
Ashland, WI
Area of Health: Rural Women’s Health

“Jan Penn as a nurse practitioner has assisted thousands of rural northern Wisconsin women and their families navigate through the healthcare system. She often sacrificed 60 and 70 hour work weeks and spent 40 years doing so and upon retirement had seen up to 5 generations!”

Lucinda Prue, BA, RT (R) (M) (ARRT) (WI)
Mammography QA/QC Technologist UnityPoint Health Meriter Fitchburg, WI
Area of Health: Mammography/Breast Cancer

“Lucinda Prue has dedicated her life to breast cancer screening even before it was widely accepted as an important screening program ... She encouraged dialogue when this was not a standard practice in the mammography suite ... She has indeed helped many women.”

“Mickey” Helen Baetke Rizzi
Teacher, Friend and Advocate to the Deaf & Hearing Impaired Champion of the Americans With Disabilities Act Innovator and Role Model to the Deaf Community
Eau Claire, WI
Area of Health: Deaf & Hearing Impaired

“Mickey Rizzi is a mover and a shaker for the Hearing Impaired ... At the grand age of 92 years old, she is STILL a strong voice, advocate and support for women, children and families dealing with hearing impairments! Her dynamic contributions to the Deaf Community, spanning over fifty-seven years, have had a profound impact on families throughout the State of Wisconsin, the nation, and the world.”

Christine Ullstrup, LCSW, CSAC, ICS
Vice President of Clinical Services Meta House, Inc.
Milwaukee, WI
Area of Health: Addictions/Mental Illness

“Christine Ullstrup is a pioneer in integrating the treatment of tobacco dependence into a behavioral treatment program ... I know her to be a tireless, quietly fearsome, advocate for improving the health of some of Wisconsin’s most deserving yet forgotten and neglected women.”
Spring Gala – 5.19.18
The Wisconsin Women’s Health Foundation invites you to attend the Spring Gala, our annual fundraiser event. All proceeds go to our programs to support Wisconsin women and their families.

5:30 PM: Auction & Cocktail Reception Park Hotel
Come for complimentary beverages and appetizers, and bid on unique items during the silent and live auction.

8:00 PM – Midnight: Dining, Drinks, Dancing WI State Capitol
Gourmet food stations, appetizers and desserts are placed throughout the beautifully transformed Capitol. Enjoy live music, entertainment and dancing.

Ticket options to the most unique event in Madison!
- $1,500 Table for Ten
- $1,200 Table for Eight
- $125 General Admission

Buy your tickets today! wwhf.org/2018springgala

The Gathering – 9.20.18 Marshfield Clinic
Provides an opportunity for women to connect, view exhibits, and access the information and resources they need to be healthy. This year’s theme will center on dementia and brain health.

Annual Dialogue – 10.11.18 Edgewater Hotel, Madison
A moderated panel discussion with local and national leaders discussing issues related to the health of Wisconsin families. This year we will be addressing opioid misuse and substance exposed pregnancies.

Two-day training and appreciation event for 100+ nurse volunteers. Includes respected speakers, panel discussions, exhibits, and skill-building. 2018 topics include:
- Opioid misuse prevention
- Creating smoke-free spaces
- Diabetes prevention
- Bone health

Become a GrapeVine nurse, and attend the GrapeVine conference for free! wwhf.org/GVConference

-OR-
Support the GrapeVine Conference and women’s health outreach as a sponsor or exhibitor. Contact Allie Ruschell at aruschell@wwhf.org or 608-251-1675 x102.
Since 1997, the Wisconsin Women’s Health Foundation has aimed to innovate, impact and improve Women’s Health. Found in all 72 counties of Wisconsin, WWHF hopes to help every woman achieve their healthiest potential through our six statewide women’s health programs, free health education events and administering funds to women’s health researchers. Together, we can make a healthier Wisconsin.

WWHF Mission

In This Issue:

- Million Dollar Grant Expands First Breath
- Get to Know the WWHF Quit Coaches
- 2018 Champions in Women’s Health
- Upcoming Annual Events

YOU’RE INVITED!

2018 SPRING GALA SATURDAY, MAY 19TH

PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS!
WWHF.ORG/2018SPRINGGALA