

Cigna Foundation Awards TCA Health \$162,250 World of Difference Grant to Improve the Health and Well-Being of Underserved Chicago Seniors

CHICAGO, September 15, 2015 - The Cigna Foundation has awarded a \$162,250 [World of Difference Grant](#) to [TCA Health](#) to help fund an expansion of the organization's Senior Fit Club. The expansion will give more than 300 medically underserved seniors in Chicago's south side communities and suburbs access to important health and wellness services, including health screenings and workshops and classes focused on fitness, healthy eating and community gardening.

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Because TCA Health is a community health center, the focus of the Senior Fit Club is on preventive health, healthy aging and healthy living. As the population ages, it's important seniors practice a healthy lifestyle. By doing so, health issues can be addressed early on and future medical problems can be prevented.

"Currently, TCA's health and wellness programs provide services to hundreds of families each month through our food pantry initiative, community youth gardens and family-oriented exercise programs. We are proud to be a recipient of Cigna's support. The World of Difference grant will greatly expand our capacity to provide seniors with health and wellness services that improve quality of life, promote social interaction and offer opportunities for employment and financial independence," said Veronica Clarke, president and CEO of TCA Health.

Local resident Leatha James, who suffers from a medical condition that requires diet regulation and frequent exercise, has seen an improvement in her health as a result of the Senior Fit Club. Every week, she travels to TCA to attend fitness and nutrition classes. "Since taking the classes I feel physically stronger, have more stamina and have not experienced any health issues," said James.

"For 17 years I have worked with TCA to improve the physical, mental and emotional health of children and families," said Dr. Peter McCauley Sr., M.D., regional medical executive for Cigna's Northeast region, which includes Chicago, and volunteer physician with TCA Health. "Seniors hold a central role in many families and TCA's programs give them the stability they need to lead healthier lives. I'm excited to see the great work that will be accomplished through the grant."

A portion of the grant will go toward the Senior Fit Club's Harvest Project, which arranges for seniors to work with children and teens to build and sustain community gardens. According to American Seniors Communities, gardening increases mobility, strength and endurance among seniors. To celebrate the World of Difference grant and kick off a new year of the Senior Fit Club, students from Chicago International Charter School Lloyd Bond will help seniors from Mercy Housing in Roseland plant vegetables in a new community garden. The gardening will take place during a special event today at 11 a.m. CST. This is the first of five gardens the Senior Fit Club will plant in the Chicago area this year.

"We believe in addressing health holistically - especially throughout the aging process," said David Figliuzzi, executive director of the Cigna Foundation. "We're pleased to award TCA this grant so that more seniors can have access to the resources they need to stay healthy during this next phase of life."

About TCA Health, Inc.

Established in 1970 as a privately owned clinic, TCA became a federally qualified health center in 1991. Today the health center provides continuous, comprehensive, high quality primary health care services and serves as a medical home for nearly 7,000 patients annually. At TCA's main clinic (adjacent to the Altgeld- Murray Public Housing Development), and its nearby school-based health center at Carver Military Academy, community residents have physical and financial access to culturally and linguistically appropriate health care. Encompassing prevention, early detection, treatment, and health education, TCA offers family medicine, internal medicine, dental, pediatrics, obstetrics & gynecology, mental health and alcohol/substance abuse treatment, clinical social work services, case management, prevention services, health education and outreach, employment services, nutritional counseling, breast feeding counseling, and immunizations. TCA also operates two freestanding Women, Infants, & Children (WIC) sites and is founder and lead agency of the Health and Wellness Collaborative of Chicago's far south communities and suburbs, established in 2012. To learn more about TCA Health visit www.tcahealth.org.

About the Cigna Foundation

The Cigna Foundation, founded in 1962, is a private foundation funded by contributions from Cigna Corporation (NYSE: CI) and its subsidiaries. The Cigna Foundation supports organizations sharing its commitment to enhancing the health of individuals and families, and the well-being of their communities, with a special focus on those communities where Cigna employees live and work.

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