

Application Cover Page

Mail your complete application to:

2009 Foster G. McGaw Prize
American Hospital Association
One North Franklin, Suite 2800
Chicago, IL 60606

Applications must be received in the Prize office by close of business on April 3, 2009.

Questions? Please contact AHA Member Relations at 312/422-3932, or visit the web site at www.aha.org/foster.

Heartland Health

Name of Health Delivery Organization

5325 Faraon Street

Mailing Address

St. Joseph MO 64506

City, State, Zip Code

Mrs. Marcy George

Media Coordinator

Name of Contact (Mr. Ms, Mrs.)

Title

(816) 271-7021

(816) 271-6076

marcy.george@heartland-health.com

Phone

Fax

E-mail

My health delivery organization is a (check one):

- Hospital Health System Integrated Network Community Partnership Other

Primary type of community:

- Urban Rural Suburban Mix

References

Please list three (3) individuals who can be contacted to provide reference information about (a) the commitment of the health delivery organization to community service and (b) the impact of the applicant's community service initiatives.

Melody Smith, Superintendent

School District of St. Joseph

Name of Reference, Title

Organization

St. Joseph, MO (816) 671-4000

Community Partner

City, State, Phone Number

Relationship to Health Care Org.

Ted Allison, President and CEO

St. Joseph Area Chamber of Commerce

Name of Reference, Title

Organization

St. Joseph, MO (816) 232-4485

Community Partner

City, State, Phone Number

Relationship to Health Care Org.

Stet Schanze, President

Gray Manufacturing Company, Inc.

Name of Reference, Title

Organization

St. Joseph, MO 64502 (816)233-6121

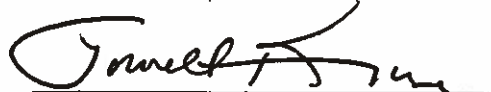
Heartland Foundation Board Chairman

City, State, Phone Number

Relationship to Health Care Org.

Signatures

In submitting this application, we give the American Hospital Association permission to use and disseminate the information contained herein except the audited financial statements.



Lowell C. Kruse

Chief Executive Officer

Type or Print Name



David Salanski



Type or Print Name

Robert Permut, MD

Chief Medical Officer

Type or Print Name



Marcy George

Application Contact Person

Type or Print Name

2. Executive Summary – Heartland Health

At Heartland Health, we believe that taking care of a community encompasses much more than providing medical services. Healthy Choices, Healthy Lives has been one of our guiding ideas over the past 25 years. Our mission, *to improve the health of individuals and communities located in the Heartland Health region and provide the right care, at the right time, in the right place, at the right cost with outcomes second to none*, is apparent in everything we do.

Our role is much more than a hospital. We are a fully engaged community partner in addressing the health and social issues in our region. We recognize that the major health problems of our community are based in human behaviors, which in turn have their root in basic human conditions. Our efforts address all levels of what we call this iceberg, the actual physical conditions forming only the tip.

We have programs in place to address a wide variety of human behaviors that influence health. Community outreach health improvement initiatives help those in our community change the human behaviors that put their health at risk. To reach the root causes, Heartland Foundation assumed a role different from many hospital foundations, to address the human conditions that affect health; in essence, to melt the bottom of that iceberg.

Heartland Health and Heartland Foundation have initiatives that deal with issues ranging from youth obesity to high school graduation rates, from health programs designed only for women to the annual Men's Tune Up prostate screening. We partner with many other organizations to provide mobile health services for children, help create economic development, foster early childhood education, reduce teen pregnancy, and provide dental care to children on Medicaid.

We recognize the needs of our community, and we, as people who live and work in this region, are committed to creating better, healthier more dynamic communities for the long term. Five of our community service programs will be presented in depth:

- 1) emPower Plant is a hands-on experience of civic education designed by the Heartland Foundation to be replicated across the country. Since the inception of emPower Plant, we have offered youth emPowerment programs to more than 90 schools, serving 8,856 students and 453 teachers.
- 2) Public Achievement, a partnership between the National Center for Democracy and Heartland Foundation, is a youth civic engagement initiative focused on educating young people on basic concepts of citizenship, democracy and public work.
- 3) JumpStarters is a program for students to take on real-life community challenges using what they learned in either the emPower Plant or Public Achievement programs. With the support of Learn & Serve America to date, 26 student-led service-learning projects have served 14 communities, 9 counties, and 3 states.
- 4) Project Fit is a result of Heartland Foundation's 10 year partnership with Project Fit America to help keep our kids fit. More than 10,800 students from 43 partner schools in 3 states now participate in the Foundation's Project Fit program.
- 5) Pound Plunge is a 12-week community weight loss program designed to provide constant support in helping adults to their weight loss goals. This is a fun event that brings the community together and promotes healthy lifestyles.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this application.

3. Heartland Health Overview

Heartland Health is an integrated health delivery system, which includes a medical center, physician practices, foundation and a health plan. Heartland Health was developed in 1984 from a merger of two prominent, long-standing St. Joseph hospitals, giving it deep roots in the community. Heartland seeks to improve the health of area individuals and communities and to provide the right care, at the right time, in the right place, at the right cost with outcomes second to none. We provide health care in a 21-county area of northwest Missouri, northeast Kansas and southeast Nebraska. With a strong commitment to meet the health care needs of the region, Heartland provides medical services at every level of care, including acute care services and specialty centers and is the largest employer in the region with more than 3,100 employees.

Heartland Foundation is a part of Heartland Health, with a purpose unique among hospital foundations. Heartland Foundation's vision is healthier, more livable communities. The Foundation exists to empower all children and adults to continuously improve their health and quality of life. Using the Think Ahead model of foresight, innovation and creativity, the Foundation is committed to finding longer-term solutions for better health in the 30-county region it serves in northwest Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska and Iowa.

4. St. Joseph, Missouri Community Profile

The City of St. Joseph is the county seat of Buchanan County and with a population of 71,846, the sixth largest city in Missouri. St. Joseph is the central service provider for a six county area of northwest Missouri and northeast Kansas with a combined population of over 150,300. The city's population represents 48 percent of that total and is largely Caucasian, at 93 percent.

Heartland Health is the largest employer in St. Joseph, with more than 3,100 employees. Other major employers range from education to animal pharmaceutical production, aerial work platform manufacturing to riverboat gambling. In St. Joseph median household income is \$38,727, per capita income is \$20,069.

St. Joseph presents unique health and social challenges. In our city, 26.2 percent of the residents are smokers, 8.6 percent have diabetes, 26.3 percent have a body mass index greater than 30. In the St. Joseph School District, 56 percent of students receive free or reduced-cost lunch. Data for 2007 indicated that 17.8 percent of residents live below the national poverty level, and 14.8 percent are uninsured.

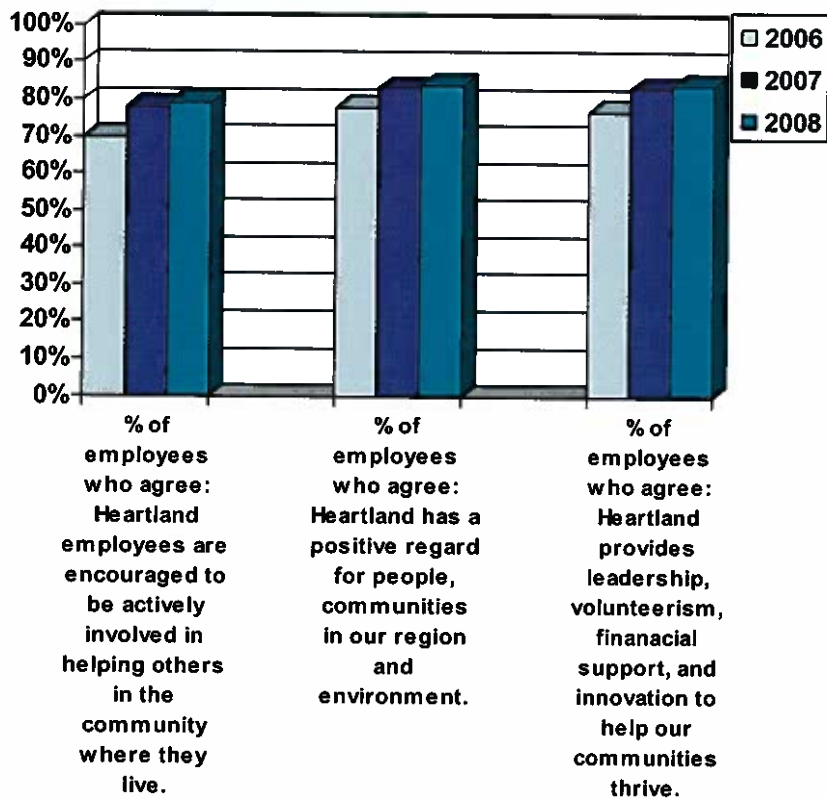
5. The Heartland Health Story — Celebrating 25 years of actively working to improve the health of our community

Overview – Heartland Health is much more than just a hospital. Our mission, *to improve the health of individuals and communities located in the Heartland Health region and provide the right care, at the right time, in the right place, at the right cost with outcomes second to none*, is the goal that determines how programs and processes throughout the entire organization are formed. Our approach to health care goes much deeper than the treatment of illness or injury. We believe that the major illnesses resulting in death in the United States, heart disease, cancer, stroke, pulmonary diseases and diabetes are caused in large part by human behaviors, such as tobacco use, poor diet, inactivity, alcohol use and poor weight management. The root cause of these behaviors lie in human conditions, such as stress, anger, poverty, economics, education level, depression, unemployment, broken families, environmental factors, emptiness, loneliness, hopelessness and disconnectedness. Heartland Health’s plan for lasting community health impact involves treating the physical diseases, while also delving into the underlying behaviors and root causes. Community outreach initiatives such as the Pound Plunge, Diabetes Expo, Women’s Wellness Initiative, Colorectal Health Screening and Men’s Tune Up, help those in our community change the human behaviors that put their health at risk. To reach the root causes, Heartland Foundation made the commitment to find longer-term solutions aimed at creating better health for the region. With collaborative programs in place, Heartland Foundation leads community revitalization efforts to improve health and quality of life for those who live here. From this work came innovative programs like Healthy Communities and the emPower Plant. Both are unprecedented in this country for taking a systematic approach to give people and community groups the tools to make positive changes in their own lives and their communities.

Leadership – When Lowell C. Kruse first assumed his role as Chief Executive Officer of Heartland Health in 1984, the board of directors gave him three instructions: Create and sustain a health care system designed to meet the needs of people living in St. Joseph and the surrounding area, provide leadership and participate in the economic revitalization and long-term growth and prosperity of the region and “Do the right thing”. Throughout Lowell’s years of leadership, the instructions have always stayed the same. These directives have formed the path the organization has taken as a true community partner. Heartland has worked with the Greater St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce to promote employment and economic opportunities, with Missouri Western State University to promote higher learning, particularly in health care, with Success by Six, a partnership led by the United Way to form strong community-based involvement in issues impacting children under the age of six. Heartland also provides salary support for a social worker at the Social Welfare Board, the only remaining free clinic of its type in Missouri, capital support to Interfaith Community Services to help underwrite a homeless shelter and support for research and education activities of the American Red Cross.

Commitment – Local governance is one of the factors that makes Heartland unique in its commitment to the community. Four separate boards are responsible for each of the health system’s primary functions; Heartland Health Board, Heartland Regional Medical Center Board, Heartland Foundation Board and Community Health Plan Board All of these governing bodies are made up of people who work and live in St. Joseph and the region. They understand the challenges and the opportunities that exist in our community, and as residents, they have a keen interest in assuring a strong, healthy community for their children and grandchildren. Board members come from various occupations and demographic groups; however, as stated in the orientation manual for all board members, one of the primary duties of a board member is *to participate in those activities designed for the financing and promotion of the general health, rehabilitation, medical and social needs of the community*. The function of the Heartland Foundation Board within that structure is *to empower children and adults to build healthier communities*.

The majority of our officers, administrators, senior leadership and employees give back to the community in a variety of ways. We understand the importance of working together with the United Way of Greater St. Joseph and its agencies. Our 2008 contribution was \$462,054 and marked the largest corporate gift to the local United Way. Of this amount, employees pledged \$379,554, and Heartland Health contributed approximately \$82,500. According to the local United Way, Heartland ranks high among other Metro 3 hospitals nationally, with average employee gifts and per capita gifts of hospital employees in the 96th percentile. Our employees have also committed to supporting our local community organizations and good causes through volunteerism. The most recent employee impact survey indicated that those who responded volunteered 34,549 hours. According to the Independent Sector, this volunteer time at \$17.19 totals a contribution value of \$593,897. The graph below demonstrates employees' perceptions of Heartland Health's commitment to volunteerism and the regional community.



Partnerships – Building a healthier community is not something any organization can or should do alone. Partnerships are vital to the success of the mission and vision of Heartland Health and the health and well-being of our community and region. Some of these partnerships include:

High Risk Care Management – provides support for the Medicaid population/Self Pay population in managing their health care with a focus on appropriate access, coordination among providers, adherence to the plan of care and identifying barriers or gaps in care for this population

Youth Health Partnership – a collaborative effort between the St. Joseph School District, Heartland Health and the United Way that develops initiatives to address the needs of children in St. Joseph and the region. Other partners include the Buchanan County Health Department and St. Joseph Youth Alliance.

Sisters on a Journey – an initiative started in March 2006 in the minority, low income Midtown community to improve the health of minority women in the neighborhood by providing education and encouraging physical activity.

Read from the Start – a partnership between Heartland Foundation and Missouri Humanities Council, Read from the Start is centered on the concept of parents as the first teachers. The program offers books appropriate for children from infancy to five years.

Healthy Partnerships – a partnership of Heartland Foundation, Heartland Health, and North Kansas City Hospital, this program offers matching grants for outcomes-based, collaborative plans that will improve critical health issues in the Northwest Missouri region. In the current call for proposals, partners are invited to propose innovative solutions to address the issues of *asthma, diabetes, heart disease and stress and youth*. The last was added because the Heartland Foundation's 2007 Youth Survey revealed that our kids are experiencing significant levels of stress in their lives.

Breadth and Depth of Initiatives – The initiatives of Heartland Health and Heartland Foundation were developed in partnership with other community groups and agencies to address the issues of most importance for our residents. Our programs reach all demographics. The Diabetes Expo and Pound Plunge seek to address the issue of adult obesity in our community, while Project Fit and Youth Health Partnership, including the mobile Health Express bus designed to take health care to children who need it, and Patee Market Youth Dental Clinic (solely for children on Medicaid) are dedicated to the health of children. Beyond addressing just physical health, Heartland Foundation has surveyed more than 13,000 young people of our region over the past 10 years, to find out what support they need. With the assistance of partners, Heartland Foundation has worked hard to address those needs, and has made a real, positive impact on the lives of our youth. In 2007, Heartland Foundation began to compare the region's results with those of the national initiative, America's Promise. The basis of this program is five promises: caring adults, safe places and constructive use of time, a healthy start and healthy development, effective education for marketable skills and lifelong learning, and opportunities to make a difference through helping others. Children who receive at least four of the five of these promises are much more likely to succeed academically, socially and civically. Receiving at least four of the five promises also appears to close gaps racially and economically. The programs at Heartland Foundation are making a difference. 73 percent of the young people of Northwest Missouri who have been involved in at least one Foundation program say that none of the five promises are missing in their lives, compared to 65 percent of those in Northwest Missouri who have not participated, and 40 percent of young people nationally.

Community Involvement – For the past two years, Heartland Health has surveyed our community to find out what they want most in their health-care provider. As sole community health care organization, it is imperative that we meet the needs of the people in our region. The statement *Heartland Health is actively engaged in improving lives in the community and lowering health care costs through community centered wellness programs such as the Pound Plunge, Women's Wellness Initiatives, the Heart Walk, the St. Joseph Parkway Run/Walk and the Diabetes EXPO*. produced a 73 percent favorable reaction to those surveyed. The Pound Plunge, now in its fourth year, has grown from 800 participants the first year to more than double that in the 12-week program concluding now. Weight loss in this program by these

participants at week eight of this program was 11,519.40 pounds, exceeding the total weight lost during the program in 2008. Attendance at Women's Wellness events has increased by 30 percent since the program's inception three years ago. The Heartland Foundation's emPower Plant has helped to change the lives of more than 9,000 students from 100 schools since the test lab's beginning.

Sustainability – Heartland Health community service initiatives are included in the Heartland Health budgeting process each year. Each program is evaluated and resources are allocated to continue this work. Those who facilitate these programs are expected to find new and innovative ways to accomplish the work of the initiative while being as cost-effective as possible. Heartland Foundation programs are funded by a combination of sources: local, state, and national grants, earnings from operating endowments, investor gifts, and program fees. The Foundation has in place 10-year strategic initiatives to ensure the overall viability and success of its work, which includes a fundraising goal to grow its operating endowments from \$7.5 million to \$15 million. Heartland Health has pledged an additional \$2.5 million match (.50 for every dollar raised).

6. Heartland Health Community Service Initiatives

1. emPower Plant

Overview – “It felt good to be listened to. I can stand in front of people and do something that makes a difference.” The comments from one middle school student about her experience at the emPower Plant speaks volumes. The emPower Plant is a hands-on experience of civic education involving students on the brink of adulthood — the age at when they begin to decide how engaged they will be with their neighbors and their communities in the future. They set out, working as a team, to address a genuine community challenge. Then, their resolution is put to the test by a panel of volunteer adult Council Members. The skills needed for this exercise are stretched and enhanced during the process. Students do research, discuss and formulate ideas, build presentations and take turns at public speaking.

The emPower Plant is a national model designed by the Heartland Foundation to be replicated across the country. With the opening of the emPowerU campus in August 2007, Heartland Foundation now has the capacity to reach 15,000 students a year.

St. Joseph School District Elementary Curriculum Coordinator Lorenna Anderson comments on the emPower Plant experience: “The emPower Plant provides an opportunity for students to have a first-hand experience at the civic process. Through Circuit One and Two at emPower U, students are able to experience how members of a community can have a voice. Through the work in the classrooms and the Community Challenge Project, students have the opportunity to be part of real-life community work.”

Impact – Since the inception of emPower Plant, we have offered youth emPowerment programs to more than 90 schools, serving 8,856 students and 453 teachers.

Referencing the Social Accountability Report (spring 2009), students that participated in a continuum of emPowerU programs (including emPower Plant, Public Achievement, and Jump Starters) showed a significant increase related to multiple service-learning competencies, including:

- 100% of youth reported they plan to graduate from high school
- 95% plan to further their education beyond high school
- 93% agreed that teamwork is important in solving problems
- 86% indicated that they have enhanced their skills for resolving problems
- 90% reported they have enhanced their skills for researching and gathering information to support an idea
- 90% indicated they have enhanced their skills for planning, organizing and decision-making.

After students successfully completed the emPower Plant curriculum:

- 92% believed they have strengthened their citizenship skills
- 89% felt they can make a difference in their community
- 87% indicated that they are willing to initiate community change/improvement projects
- 92% reported they have enhanced their skills to prepare them for the workplace
- 84% felt they can communicate clearly about issues facing their community
- 95% felt their project had a positive impact on their community

Lessons Learned – The emPower Plant on-site experience is completely student-driven and student-led, enhancing the effectiveness of the process. Continuation of the emPower Plant service-learning curriculum in the participating school district is vital to the success of the model.

Future Goals – emPower Plant will conduct EDUCATOR INSTITUTES for CIVIC-BASED SERVICE-LEARNING. A one day emPowerU immersion will be followed by hands-on sessions to explore lessons learned. The two day institute offers effective professional development and will bring together in-service, pre-service, and cadet teachers. Graduate and undergraduate credits will be awarded

to teachers who complete additional curriculum and compel their students to engage in Youth emPowerment service-learning activities. Partners to date include several regional universities.

This summer, emPower Plant will begin offering X-TREME COMMUNITY MAKEOVER. This program will offer a one-day emPowerU immersion that is followed by a 4-week experience using emPower Plant curriculum; it is designed to culminate in a civic-based, summer service-learning project. The projects will be showcased at the annual Jump Starters Summit.

A goal of emPower Plant is to serve 5,500+ participants in the upcoming fiscal year at our emPowerU facility, reaching a maximum capacity of 10,000+ students in the near future. We will accomplish these goals through aggressive outreach and marketing.

Operating Expenses for Past Fiscal Year – \$358,670

Funding – Funding is provided by: Learn and Serve America, Foundation Campaign donors (local, state, and federal) and Endowment earnings (Heartland Health)

2. Public Achievement

Overview – For 10 years, Public Achievement, sponsored by the Heartland Foundation, has allowed youth to form groups, take on issues, practice citizenship and learn about the democratic process. In 2008, the Democracy Council was recognized by the International Research Conference on Service-Learning and Community Engagement for addressing the issue of poverty. High school student Emily Pierson along with her Public Achievement team shared their personal experiences in beginning to understand the critical issue of poverty. “Not only did we get to show the face of poverty, but we got to start the critical dialogue that was needed,” Emily said. “It was like seeing lightning bolts go off.” The students shared their personal experience and perceptions through a photo voice project, comprised of hundreds of photos of poverty in Northwest Missouri. The group continues to present their compelling story in order to educate and challenge communities in the region to take action. Four of the high school students represented the group and presented their research findings at Tulane University.

Impact – The Public Achievement program has produced more positive service-learning results during its existence:

- Transitioning the City of Maryville, MO to a smoke free public establishment policy
- Building a neighborhood park for children in St. Joseph, MO
- Establishing a safe-to-play skate park in Maryville, MO
- Delivering over 300 beanie babies to area Division of Family Services offices for distribution to abused children
- Changing highway signs in Nodaway County to reduce the number of accidents in a high-risk area

Studies have resulted in 98% customer satisfaction and 100% volunteer satisfaction. These results include in excess of 2,000 students, 14 schools and youth organizations, 240 trained volunteer coaches (including 24 area teachers), and 3 higher education institutions (Missouri Western State University, Northwest Missouri State University, and Conception Abbey). This past fiscal year Public Achievement was experienced by 160 students that conducted approximately 2,400 hours of community-based service-learning in their respective communities.

Lessons Learned – Throughout the years of providing Public Achievement in the northwest Missouri region, there have been many lessons learned. It is imperative to establish and maintain valuable partnerships to build capacity for civic responsibility and leadership in our youth. When faced with a civic responsibility initiative, it is important to research and dissect all aspects of the matter. This process allows the participants to take a stance based on their findings, resulting in a lasting impact on the Public Achievement initiative they work to accomplish. There will continue to be community concerns to address, and every issue is unique and significant.

Future Goals – Future goals include developing and nurturing new partnerships to provide an enhanced coaching pool within our businesses and community organizations in the region. Public Achievement will also be marketed and implemented in those counties within the region that have yet to participate by cultivating those opportunities.

Also, Youth Councils (comprised of previous Public Achievement participants) will be implemented to provide oversight, enhancing the quality of future Public Achievement projects in their area.

A new initiative to expand our Foundation's Youth emPowerment model is a LEARNING TO GIVE program that will provide area students an opportunity to contribute to the success of the region through philanthropy and community investment strategies. High school juniors and seniors will participate in special training to learn the philosophy and practice of philanthropy in solving community problems.

VOICES, a 4-week summer enrichment program in partnership with high school marketing departments, will engage juniors and seniors in promoting philanthropy and service-learning. By partnering with local schools and businesses, the program will provide hands-on job shadowing experiences to create marketing and social media tools. Students will participate in the emPowerU immersion and shadow other Youth Empowerment programs as well. Dual credit is planned to be awarded upon program completion.

Operating Expenses for Past Fiscal Year – \$41,325

Funding – Funding is provided by: Learn and Serve America, Healthy Communities Investors including Heartland Health and Foundation donors

3. Jump Starters

Overview – With the support of Learn & Serve America, JumpStarters is a program for students to take on real-life community challenges using what they learned in either the emPower Plant or Public Achievement programs. Over the past three years, student-led initiatives varied; examples of past projects include a group that formed and underage drinking campaign and another organized a citywide cleanup of the previous winter's ice storm. The students of Benjamin Banneker Charter Academy of Kansas City created an inner-city garden through the Jump Starters Program. The garden produced 500 pounds of produce in five months for the Harvesters Food Network. These students, 90 percent of whom are on subsidized lunches, spent their days last summer researching future harvests, and weeding and watering their current crop. Many spent hours on weekends during the school year. The Jump Starters Allocations Team of community volunteers and students has the responsibility of reviewing the proposals.

Impact – To date, 26 student-led service-learning projects have received Jump Starters funding of nearly \$175,000. These service-learning projects have served 14 communities, 9 counties, and 3 states.

Lessons Learned – Students who participate are equipped with the tools now being recommended by national experts (The Conference Board, Wagner et al.) to promote: the ability to think critically and solve real life problems, leadership qualities, ability to work in teams, an appreciation for diversity, good decision-making, an understanding that young people can make a difference in building and sustaining communities, hands-on learning that is relevant to their lives and advancement of technology skills.

Future Goals – Heartland Foundation is currently completing an application for continued community-based support through Learn and Serve America.

Operating Expenses for Past Fiscal Year– \$383,655

Funding – Funding is provided by: Learn and Serve America and Foundation donors

4. Project Fit

Overview – Obesity is one of the most critical health problems impacting the health and well-being of the United States today. Child obesity rates have soared from 6.5 percent in 1980 to 16.3 percent today. Heartland Foundation’s 10 year partnership with Project Fit America enables us to keep our kids fit. Not only are schools showing a change in physical fitness measures; those students involved in Project Fit are more focused in the classroom, miss fewer days of school and are higher achievers in their school work. The emotional impact is evident in the comments of the students. Hannah, from Pershing Elementary School in St. Joseph, says: “Project Fit has helped me gain confidence in myself. I have improved my health overall by getting my heart pumping and blood flowing in the morning.”

Impact – More than 10,800 students from 43 partner schools in 3 states now participate in the Foundation’s Project Fit program.

Lessons Learned – Key findings of increased physical activity for children backed by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention translate into: higher test scores and better grades, better school attendance and improved attitudes.

Future Goals – Our goal is to partner with five new schools annually. The Foundation is also exploring a partnership with the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services to expand Project Fit beyond our region.

Operating Expenses for Past Fiscal Year – \$67,575

Funding – Funding is provided by: Heartland Health, Foundation donors, and a partial match from participating schools.

5. Pound Plunge

Overview – Obesity in adults in St. Joseph is a serious health issue. Heartland Health and the local radio station K-JO 105.5 have teamed up for the past four years to sponsor an event that is not only about losing weight, but also improving the health of the community. This is a fun event that brings the community together and promotes healthy lifestyles.

This 12-week weight-loss competition challenges teams of four to adopt a healthy lifestyle and shrink their waistlines in the process. Teams register online at www.takethepoundplunge.com and attend a Kick-Off event. Teams must weigh in each week and may only miss two weigh-ins to qualify. The weigh-ins are held at the local shopping mall, and weekly exercise sessions are offered. Recipes, exercise tips, weekly prize drawings and advice from physicians are also offered at the weigh-ins. Prizes are awarded at the end of the twelve weeks to the team who lost the largest percentage of weight overall.

Impact – This program has gained momentum and become extremely popular over the years. In 2006, 1,200 participants lost a total of 8,380 lbs, in 2007 more than 1,500 participants lost a total of 11,878 lbs. and in 2008, nearly 1,600 participants lost a total of 9,311 lbs. The 12-week session ended recently for 2009, and the program had the best turnout, with more than 1,700 participants losing 12,595.90 lbs. Over the four years, those participating in the Pound Plunge have lost nearly 30,000 lbs.

Lessons Learned – The most important lesson to come out of this program is that people really do want to have a positive impact on their own health. It just takes a program to get them motivated to take the first step. We have also learned that losing weight in teams helps people to encourage one another to reach their weight-loss goals. Another lesson is that in the middle of the process, participants tend to become discouraged because their weight loss is usually not as rapid. Introducing fun, motivating activities is especially important at this time.

Future Goals – Our goal is to involve a larger number of people in this program each year. We plan to do this by heavy promotion of the success stories of the preceding year, with real-life testimonials from participants about their success. Many people tell us that this program has changed their life.

Operating Expenses for Past Fiscal Year

Activity	Budget
Purchased URL www.takethepoundplunge.com	\$34
Create event signage –	\$3,000
Paid media to drive people to register and participate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KKJO = \$6,600 • KQ2 = \$3,000 • Cablevision = \$3,000 • News-Press = \$900 	\$ 13,500
East Hills Mall – new stage area Announce winners and award prizes	\$8,800
Total	\$25,334

Funding – The Pound Plunge is funded by Heartland Health as one of its community health improvement programs. The funds are dedicated in the budgeting process as an extension of the Cardio/Pulmonary/Vascular service line.