Five organizations dedicated to improving health received grants totaling $217,000 from the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community recently.

The Association of American Indian Physicians (AAIP) was awarded a $100,000 matching grant by the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community to assist American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) students pursuing a healthcare career. The tribe's matching donation was contributed after AAIP raised the initial $100,000.

AAIP's Careers in Health for Native Students program was created to increase the number of tribal members in the health and wellness workforce. AAIP assists students in pursuing education, training, and career development goals.

"Encouraging Native students to pursue careers as physicians, health professionals, and biomedical researchers is one of our primary goals, and the gift from the Shakopee Tribe will allow us to continue this critical work," said AAIP Executive Director Margaret Knight.

Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community Chairman Charlie Vig said, "We support this program so that more youth are encouraged to study the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math fields with the ultimate goal of helping tribal youth become the leaders of tomorrow. Our people feel good when they see American Indian physicians and healthcare workers involved in their communities."

AAIP President Dr. Donna Galbreath echoed Chairman Vig's sentiments on the importance of seeing tribal members in healthcare roles locally. "Because Native American people suffer from chronic illnesses like diabetes, tuberculosis, pneumonia, and influenza at far higher rates than other racial populations, we need to groom our own citizens to be the physicians and prevention specialists," Galbreath said. "Indian people respond better when their healthcare needs are in the hands of Native physicians and other professionals who understand their culture and value both traditional and Western healing methods."

Mercy Hospital in Devil's Lake, North Dakota, received a matching grant from the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community for $25,000 to support the establishment of a diabetes education center. The 25-bed rural community hospital serves residents of Ramsey County as well as afterhours patients from the neighboring Spirit Lake Sioux Reservation. The facility plays a pivotal role for acute and rehabilitative care as well as treats an average of 1,000 emergency room patients per month. In conjunction with community agencies, hospital staff provide wellness and prevention care, much of it at no cost to consumers. Mercy provides inpatient, surgical, obstetric, outpatient, and laboratory services as well as cardiac rehabilitation and 24-hour emergency care to treat injuries and medical emergencies.

Southside Community Health Services, Inc. of Minneapolis, Minnesota, received a matching grant of $42,000 to replace outdated dental x-ray sensors for both adults and children. The clinic provides high quality, affordable, accessible, and comprehensive health care to patients in south Minneapolis, seeing more than 70 patients a day. Medical and dental services are available to people of all ages, income levels, and occupations with services provided by experienced, multi-lingual doctors, Nurse Practitioners, Registered Nurses, and Licensed

Nurses. Each year the dental staff provide about 18,000 clinic visits for nearly 5,000 patients. With the SMSC and matching funds, Southside can replace a total of 14 x-ray sensors.

“Efficiency, patient comfort, more accurate diagnostics, less radiation for the patients and up to date equipment gives us more credibility with the community we are trying to serve,” wrote Chief Development Officer for Southside Community Services, Dan J. Williams.

St. Mary's Health Clinic in Shakopee, Minnesota, run by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet of the St. Paul Province, received a donation of $25,000 from the SMSC for free health care for low-income patients without insurance or medical assistance. The Shakopee Clinic serves patients two days a week through patient visits to the clinic, lab tests, x-rays, diagnostic tests, and medications. There are currently eight clinic sites with 13 clinic sessions each week in St. Paul, Minneapolis, and other locations throughout the Twin Cities metro area serving people of all faiths and ethnic backgrounds. The clinics operate in locations where space has been donated by the host facility and are staffed by licensed physicians and nurses, as well as admissions personnel and interpreters, who volunteer their time to work in the clinics.

Specialty referrals are also available without charge. For a nearly two decades St. Mary’s Health Clinics, a ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph, has provided free primary health care to the uninsured in the seven county metropolitan area of St. Paul, Minneapolis, and their surrounding suburbs. In that time more than 92,000 visits have been recorded at the St. Mary’s Health Clinics. Each year the Shakopee clinic provides more than 890 free patient visits. The clinic serves 249 diabetic patients with nearly 1,000 no-cost medications shared in a year.

The **American Diabetes Association** received a grant for $25,000 from the SMSC to target diabetes treatment and prevention in Native Americans in Minnesota and for research. Diabetes is one of the leading causes of heart disease, heart attack, and stroke. Together these diseases represent some of the most critical health concerns among American Indians. ADA is the leading organization working to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes. They fund research to prevent, cure, and manage diabetes; deliver services to hundreds of communities; provide objective and credible information; and give voice to those denied their rights because of diabetes.