



**The Partnership: For Mental Health Concludes After Investing \$2.4 Million in 49 Local Organizations**  
*Improved access to services and heightened awareness are among the positive results of the initiative*

Jacksonville, FL – March 9, 2022 – The Partnership: For Mental Health, an initiative of the Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Fund at The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida and Baptist Health, has concluded its three-year, \$2.4 million investment to improve access and strengthen the region’s mental and behavioral health care systems. Sixty grants ranging from \$1,200 to \$160,000 went to 49 local agencies in their pursuit of innovative ways to address mental health needs in our region.

Delores Barr Weaver called for ‘new levels of ingenuity in providing a fully responsive mental health ecosystem’ when she originally envisioned The Partnership in 2018. She was joined by Baptist Health to begin funding opportunities to move this work forward. That challenge took on a new urgency in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic as the need for mental health support soared.

“The Partnership: For Mental Health created tremendous learning opportunities, not only for the funders, but for the organizations with whom we worked,” said Delores Barr Weaver. “The challenges in the field are widespread, and we learned that targeted investments in areas like direct service and stigma reduction could help move the needle in Northeast Florida. I am proud of the stimulus the grants created, and look forward to continuing to learn from the organizations doing this very important work.”

Approved grants went to respected, long-time providers such as Barnabas Center in Nassau County, Betty Griffin Center in Clay County and Jewish Family and Community Services in Duval County. But many smaller, newer providers also received funding that allowed them to assist clients in unique ways.

At the MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation, a grant from The Partnership: For Mental Health funded on-site mental health services for kids in the after-school program. Executive Director/CEO Terri Florio says the need was critical.

“What we could not have imagined was the depth of the trauma that many of our youth have been through—food insecurity, homelessness, violence, etc.,” Florio recalled. “The funding allowed us to have a part-time mental health counselor on board in the after-school hours to provide small group, ongoing and crisis counseling.”

The on-site counseling professionals have already made a difference for the kids served by MaliVai Washington Youth Foundation.

“We are seeing an immediate improvement in our small group behavioral counseling students—although the individual deep therapy sessions will take longer,” Florio continued. “We could easily keep two counselors busy in the afternoons. We are incredibly grateful for the funding we have received to support our youth and families with emotional support and counseling.”

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The Partnership: For Mental Health grants received by Inspire to Rise, a three-year-old local agency focused on helping individuals and families rebuild after struggling with substance abuse and mental health issues, allowed the nascent organization to add its first full-time employee, a Community Education Director, in 2019. As a result of this early grant, Inspire to Rise cites more than 10,000 individuals have been impacted by their services.

Another recipient was Stronger Than Stigma®, a relatively new nonprofit focused on millennials struggling with mental health issues. Founder and CEO Gabrielle Magid received a grant for ‘The Living Room,’ a series of 28 programs offered during National Mental Health Month. ‘The Living Room’ attracted 1,500 young people throughout its run.

“To a small (growing!) grassroots organization like Stronger Than Stigma, it means a lot to have the support of a prestigious grant-making entity,” Magid noted.

The Community Foundation’s Senior Program Director, Amy Crane, and Baptist Health’s Vice President of Community Investment and Impact, Melanie Patz, led the effort to review and consider grants across the mental health spectrum, including direct service, advocacy, awareness, training, and more.

“The creation, launch and culmination of The Partnership: For Mental Health required collaboration and new ways of thinking about how to approach this pressing community issue,” said Crane. “Over the course of the three years, we gained new perspective on the gaps in mental health access and services across our community, and were able to respond based on that deeper knowledge.”

Patz said Baptist Health was honored to be a part of The Partnership: For Mental Health.

“The grants funded during the three years the Fund was active have provided mental health services to vulnerable populations during a time when mental health has been challenged due to the pandemic. The grants provided organizations with dollars for training, advocacy and infrastructure support,” Patz noted.

“We appreciate all the organizations who are providing these life-saving services to Northeast Florida children, youth and adults in need.”

Click [here](#) for a full list of grantees that received funding from The Partnership: For Mental Health.

### **About the Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Fund**

The Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Fund at The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida was created by Delores Barr Weaver in 2015 as the natural evolution of the Delores Barr Weaver Fund, which has awarded more than \$86 million in grants since she created it in 2012. She also provides separate, annual support to 20 local, non-profit organizations for their annual fundraising events through the Delores Barr Weaver Forever Event Fund. Like the Delores Barr Weaver Fund, the Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Fund’s purpose is to provide grants to nonprofit organizations that do work she has supported over many years and to encourage others to do so as well. Mrs. Weaver has an extraordinary legacy of philanthropy, and she has provided transformative support to dozens of nonprofit organizations that uplift, enlighten and advance our community.

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## **About Baptist Health**

Baptist Health is a faith-based, mission-driven, locally governed system in Northeast Florida comprised of more than 200 points of care, including five Magnet-designated hospitals: Baptist Jacksonville; Baptist Beaches; Baptist Nassau; Baptist South; and [Wolfson Children's Hospital](#). Ranked as the community's most preferred healthcare provider, Baptist Health is the area's most comprehensive health system with numerous areas of distinction including the region's only children's hospital; a dedicated heart hospital; neurological institute; and [Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center](#), which is clinically integrated with the MD Anderson Cancer Center, the internationally renowned cancer treatment and research institution in Houston. For more details, visit [baptistjax.com](http://baptistjax.com).

## **About The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida**

The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida ([www.jaxcf.org](http://www.jaxcf.org)), Florida's oldest and largest community foundation, works to stimulate philanthropy to build a better community. The Foundation helps donors invest their philanthropic gifts wisely, helps nonprofits serve the region effectively, and helps people come together to make the community a better place. Now in its 58th year, the Foundation has more than \$627 million in total assets and has made nearly \$640 million in grants since 1964.

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