



**Healthy People
Healthy Carolinas**



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HEALTHY TRI-COUNTY SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DUKE ENDOWMENT'S HEALTHY PEOPLE, HEALTHY CAROLINAS INITIATIVE

Healthy Tri-County will receive \$450,000 to help improve health in Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties over three years. Ten S.C. communities were selected to participate in major initiative.

North Charleston, S.C. — Healthy Tri-County, powered by Trident United Way in partnership with core partners Roper St. Francis Healthcare and MUSC Health, has received a grant from The Duke Endowment to help improve health in Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties. Healthy Tri-County, a diverse group of more than 60 community organizations and 750 individual members, is now one of 20 coalitions across the Carolinas participating in The Duke Endowment's initiative, *Healthy People, Healthy Carolinas*.

The program promotes behavior changes that address chronic issues such as unhealthy weight, diabetes and heart disease by increasing physical behavior and nutrition. Local coalitions will involve leaders from a wide spectrum of community organizations in developing ways to engage residents in improving their health.

Healthy People, Healthy Carolinas is now active in 10 S.C. counties — Greenville, Kershaw, Fairfield, Orangeburg and the Chesterfield/Dillon/Marlboro area joined last year. The Berkeley/Charleston/Dorchester counties area, Spartanburg, York, Kershaw, Barnwell and Georgetown have just been added. The initiative began in early 2016 in North Carolina and the Endowment has plans for further expansion.

Research shows that South Carolina ranks 42nd among all states when it comes to the overall health of its residents, earning poor rankings for its obesity and physical inactivity rates. *Healthy People, Healthy Carolinas* recognizes that health and well-being are created and sustained not just through individual and clinical efforts, but through the cooperation and support of the extended local community.

"Where we live, where we go to school and work, how we spend our free time—even our ability to access fresh food and safely exercise near our homes—all contribute to our health and well-being," Trident United Way CEO & President Christopher Kerrigan said. "To truly improve health within our community, we have to expand how we think about what affects our health. It's more than just what we eat and how many calories we burn. It's how our community and its economy impact our health. If we can improve health for even a subset of our community, we will have learned a lot about how to increase quality of life for all people."

Roper St. Francis Healthcare, the region's non-profit community-based hospital system, took the lead in acting as grantee and fiscal agent for the Healthy Tri-County partnership.

"Our partnership with The Duke Endowment strengthens our community and helps us fulfill our mission of healing all people with compassion, faith and excellence," Roper St. Francis Healthcare President & CEO Lorraine Lutton. "Healthy People, Healthy Carolinas represents incredible unity throughout South Carolina and serves as a living witness of local organizations coming together to improve the health and wellness of residents in communities where we live, work and play."

Healthy People, Healthy Carolinas provides opportunities to bring together leaders from hospitals, health departments and other health-promoting organizations. A crucial first step—and one that is funded by The Duke Endowment's grant—is to

strengthen the infrastructure of the local coalitions that are coordinating the effort, so that they're well-positioned to identify and implement interventions that work.

"The health challenges facing the Carolinas have been decades in the making," Director of Health Care at The Duke Endowment Lin Hollowell said. "They cannot be effectively addressed overnight, though we're starting to see the roots of progress take hold in the first set of *Healthy People, Healthy Carolinas* communities. The health challenges also cannot be solved by individuals and organizations working alone. Through *Healthy People, Healthy Carolinas*, communities can work together to confront their problems and make the most progress in achieving solutions."

Representatives from the coalitions will participate in a learning collaborative with opportunities to share information with each other as they develop best practices for organizing, planning and implementing evidence-based programs known to improve health.

"The coalitions selected by the Endowment are intentionally diverse and unique," said Laura Cole of the South Carolina Hospital Association, which is providing expert assistance to each local coalition in the Palmetto State. "While there will be many opportunities for exchanging ideas, each community will receive support to pave its own path forward. The hope is that eventually the lessons of these coalitions can inform the work of others throughout the Carolinas."

Healthy People, Healthy Carolinas is an initiative of The Duke Endowment. The program promotes behavior change that address chronic issues such as unhealthy weight, diabetes and heart disease by increasing physical activity and nutrition. [Healthy Tri-County](#) has been selected to lead a coalition of leaders from a wide spectrum of community organizations in developing ways to engage residents in improving their health. Participating communities will continuously share and learn from each other as part of a unique learning collaborative.

Based in Charlotte, N.C., and established in 1924 by industrialist and philanthropist James B. Duke, [The Duke Endowment](#) is a private foundation that strengthens communities in North Carolina and South Carolina by nurturing children, promoting health, educating minds and enriching spirits. Since its founding, it has awarded more than \$3.5 billion in grants.