

HEALTH & WELL-BEING @Issue

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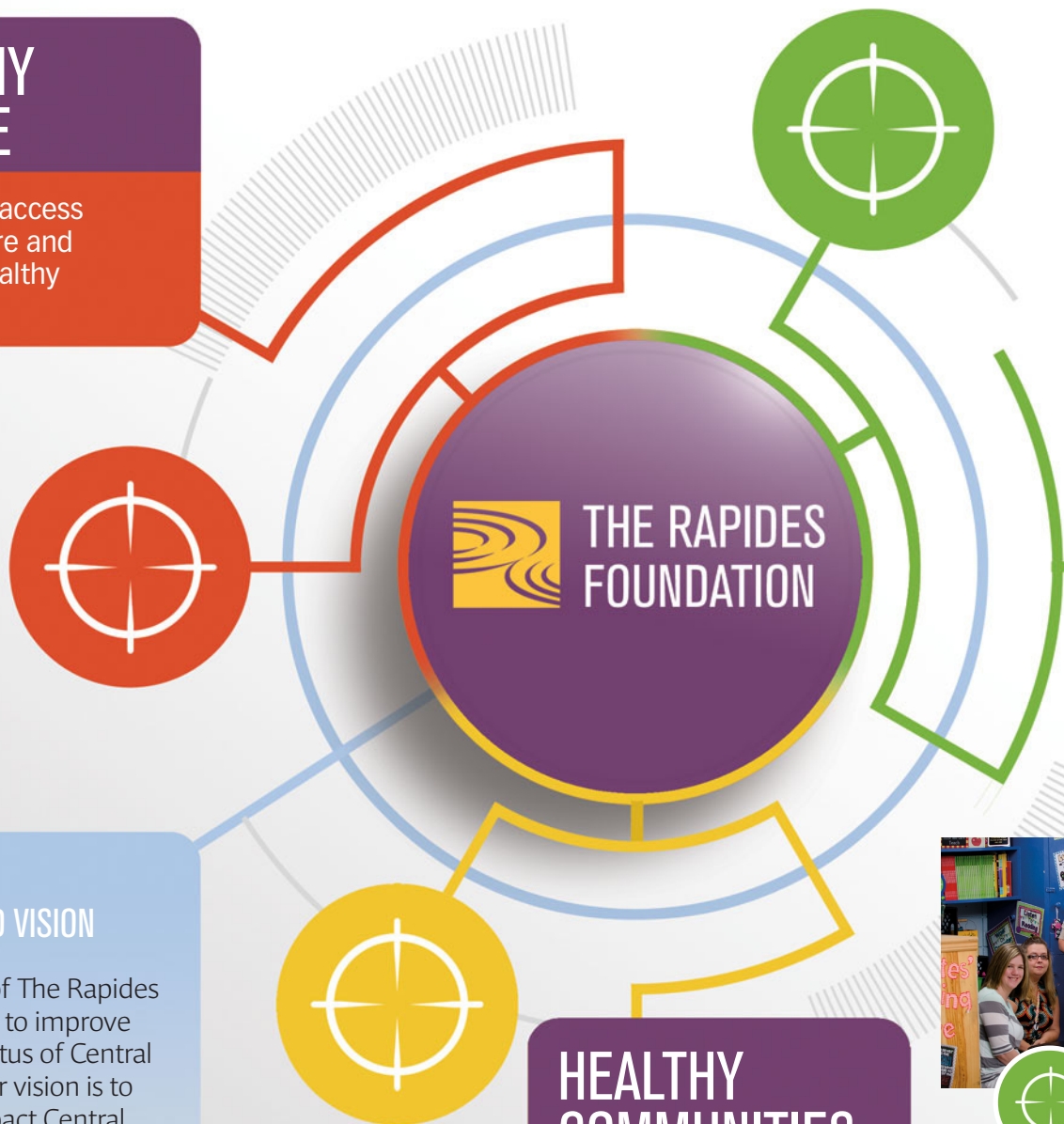


FOUNDATION CONTINUES STRATEGIES

Offers New Funding Opportunities

HEALTHY PEOPLE

To improve access to healthcare and promote healthy behaviors.



FOUNDATION MISSION AND VISION

The mission of The Rapides Foundation is to improve the health status of Central Louisiana. Our vision is to positively impact Central Louisiana by deploying resources to improve key factors of health status.

EDUCATION

To increase education and access to the primary care workforce, improve social...

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

To improve economic opportunity and family income, and enhance civic and community opportunities for more effective leaders and organizations.



The Rapides Foundation's Board of Trustees in 2013 gathered to determine how to reshape five-year strategic plans that were set in motion in 2008. This resulted in renewed strategies designed to strengthen existing projects and additional programs in some focus areas. These five-year strategic plans began in 2014, and new funding opportunities were offered earlier this year.

Available funding for these new grant opportunities is limited, though the goal is to fund the grants through 2018.

The Foundation continues to work in three strategic areas: **Healthy People**, to improve access to healthcare and promote healthy behaviors; **Education**, to increase the level of educational attainment and achievement as the primary path to improved economic, social and health status; and **Healthy Communities**, to improve economic opportunity and family income, and enhance civic and community opportunities for more effective leaders and organizations.

The board's work was intentional and outcome oriented as trustees considered expert advice and issue-specific information and research. "As we move forward, we will continue to be strategic in our grantmaking to improve the health of Central Louisiana residents," said Joe Rosier, President and CEO of the Foundation.

In the Healthy People strategic area, a funding opportunity for Federally Qualified Health Centers is intended to increase medical services in rural areas. A new funding opportunity in the Healthy Behaviors area seeks to prevent and reduce tobacco use, substance and alcohol abuse and obesity through strategic actions within Cenla communities.

In the area of Education, the Foundation is beginning a focus on school readiness to ensure

more Cenla children are ready for kindergarten. It will do this by enhancing and supporting training opportunities for the public schools in The Rapides Foundation's service area that are participating in the state of Louisiana's Community Network pilots.

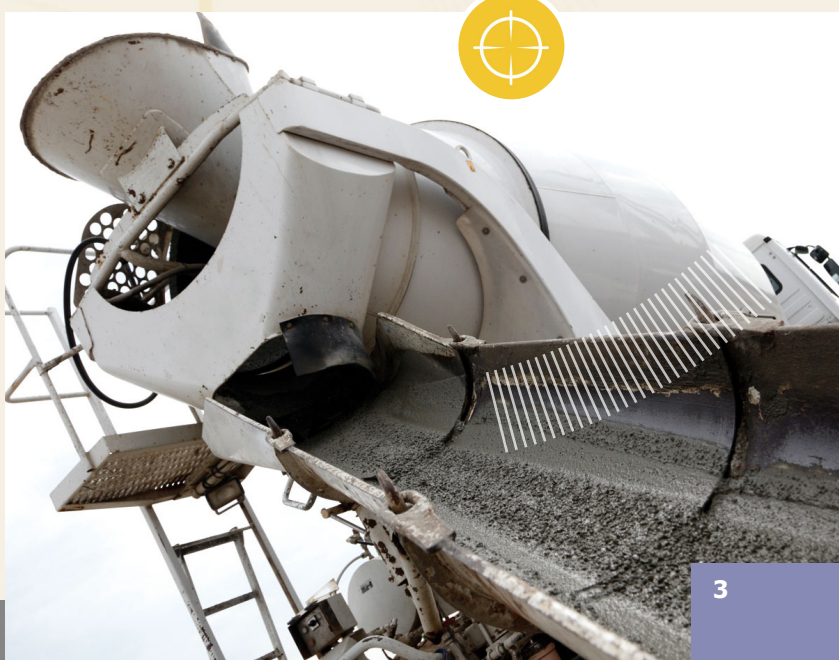
Under the Healthy Communities strategic area, the Foundation's new Workforce Opportunity Grant supports training and education for above-median income occupations for which there is demonstrated, unmet employer demand. The grant is designed to promote partnerships between Central Louisiana businesses and accredited public, nonprofit postsecondary institutions from throughout the state.

"As we have done in the past, we will continue to update our information and research, and make adjustments to our strategies as needed," Rosier said. "Our ultimate goal is to ensure the best results in Central Louisiana."



EDUCATION

Increase the level of educational attainment and achievement as the primary path to improved economic, social and health status.



NEW GRANT OPPORTUNITY

SEEKS TO PROVIDE
BETTER ACCESS
TO HEALTHCARE



Access to quality healthcare is important to reduce health disparities in a region and to improve the overall health of its residents. Studies show that people who can afford prescriptions and medical services, and who obtain consistent medical care and screenings are healthier than those who do not have access to these health services.

“With this new funding opportunity, we want to help make sure the services provided by community health centers are closer to where people live so they can get regular ongoing care.

Joe Rosier, President and CEO of The Rapides Foundation

In 2015 as part of its Healthcare Access Initiative, The Rapides Foundation began accepting proposals to fund the efforts of Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) to reverse the cycle of poor health outcomes and lack of healthcare access.

“Primary care is important to health and longer life, but what we find in Central Louisiana is we have lower levels of access to ongoing primary care. With this new funding opportunity, we want to help make sure the services provided by community health centers are closer to where people live so they can get regular ongoing care,” said Joe Rosier, President and CEO of The Rapides Foundation.

“The opportunity we are offering to Federally Qualified Health Centers is to identify those gaps in care where there is not a site or where there are critical services they have not been able to institute,” Rosier said. “There are a number of different services that can be offered at an FQHC, such as oral or behavioral health. After the need is identified, we would provide that startup funding that helps them bring their program to sustainability.”

The Rapides Foundation’s 2013 Community Health Assessment showed 36.8 percent of Central Louisiana residents reported difficulty in accessing healthcare services. While this was an improvement over the 2010 assessment, the numbers were worse for people who live in low-income and very low-income homes.

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Factors that limit care include not having money to pay for services, not knowing what to do or where to go, shortages in healthcare professionals and

facilities, and physical barriers, such as not having transportation or enough time to get to medical appointments.

The Foundation’s Healthcare Access Initiative also includes components to address access to medications and early detection of cancer through cancer screenings. The Foundation’s Cenla Medication Access Program (CMAP) seeks to improve people’s access

to medications by offering free or reduced-cost prescriptions to eligible clients. The Cancer Screening Project continues to promote early screening for colorectal, cervical and breast cancers through funding of a mobile cancer screening van in partnership with LSU Health Shreveport’s Feist-Weiller Cancer Center. Efforts to promote early detection of cancer through promotion of cancer screenings also includes a partnership with the American Cancer Society to implement community-based lay health advisor programs

throughout Central Louisiana to educate residents about the importance of cancer screenings.



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

More information about funding opportunities available from The Rapides Foundation is located on the Foundation’s website, www.rapidesfoundation.org under the “Grants-Funding Opportunities” tab.

FOUNDATION WORKS WITH SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND COMMUNITIES ON HEALTHY BEHAVIORS GRANTS



The Rapides Foundation in 2015 offered communities and school districts grant opportunities that seek to improve healthy behaviors by preventing and reducing tobacco use, obesity and substance and alcohol abuse.

These funding opportunities – one for communities and the other focusing on schools – build upon work started in 2006 when the Foundation's board of trustees announced a focus on healthy behaviors to try to prevent illness before it occurs. The board at the time recognized

that it could make an impact by helping people change behaviors, particularly in

regard to tobacco use, poor diet and physical inactivity, which are all directly linked to premature death and disability.

In 2014, the board added substance and alcohol abuse prevention as another targeted health behavior. The Foundation's 2013 Community Health Assessment found that



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2.1 percent of adults acknowledge using an illicit drug in the past month, 5.4 percent of adults drink an average of two or more drinks of alcohol a day, and 13.9 percent are binge drinkers – consuming five or more drinks on a single occasion.

“In offering our three-year Healthy Behaviors Program Grants, we recognized that a vigorous community is vital to the promotion of tobacco-free, substance-free and alcohol-free activities and environments, as well as physical activity and healthy eating for its residents,” said Joe Rosier, President and CEO of The Rapides Foundation. “We want to impact as many Central Louisiana residents as possible with interventions that are based on best, promising or innovative practices.”

Through its Healthy Behaviors Initiative 2015-2016 School District Partnership Grant, the Foundation offers the nine school districts within its service area a group of activities to implement, which address all of the Foundation’s targeted health behaviors. The activities focus on tobacco prevention and control, diet and physical activity, and the recently added substance and alcohol abuse prevention education. There are a mix of required and optional activities designed to promote healthy behaviors among students including: participation in an annual Youth Summit on Healthy Behaviors; CATCH and SPARK physical education instruction; participation in the national tobacco prevention Kick Butts Day; Life Skills Training; and tracking Wellness Policies throughout the school district.

“We know that in order to impact health behaviors of our region, it is important to focus on young people. We have worked in Central Louisiana schools for some time now, and with much success,” Rosier said.

The Healthy Lifestyle Program, which is administered by CMAP, provides one-on-one nutrition and physical activity counseling to patients referred by their doctors. The Healthy Lifestyle Program is reaching out to employers to assist them in creating healthier workplaces by promoting and supporting the state of



Louisiana’s “Well-Ahead Louisiana” campaign and the American Heart Association’s “Fit Friendly Worksites” Recognition Program.

The Foundation’s Healthy Places program is a process to connect community leaders to resources and expert technical assistance to create a community plan to support healthy lifestyles. Healthy Places provides technical assistance to community partners who want to make their communities healthy places to live, work and play.

The Foundation will work with a coalition of partners to place an additional emphasis on increasing the tobacco tax as studies clearly show that significant increases in the prices of tobacco products encourage current tobacco users to stop using the products, prevent potential users from taking up tobacco use, and reduce consumption among those that continue to use tobacco.

The Foundation will also seek partnerships to consider high-impact policy activities that address changes in the community supportive of healthy behaviors. Marketing efforts will be used to raise awareness in the areas of tobacco prevention and control, nutrition and physical activity, and alcohol and substance abuse prevention.



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FOUNDATION BEGINS EFFORT ON SCHOOL READINESS



The Rapides Foundation continues to build upon the long-standing work and relationships it has with the nine public school districts in Central Louisiana. In 2014 the Foundation added a new School Readiness component to its Education Initiative to ensure Central Louisiana children are prepared for kindergarten so they will have a better chance of success through high school. This component combines with the other grantmaking objectives of the initiative, which has the overall goal of increasing the level of educational attainment and achievement as the primary path to improving the region's health status.

"Only half of our children are ready for kindergarten, so we want to make investments that will significantly raise the level of readiness of our children," said Joe Rosier, President and CEO of The Rapides Foundation.



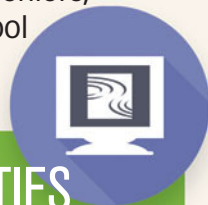
Studies show that children who attended some type of early childhood program before kindergarten are more likely to complete high school and go through their entire school careers without repeating a grade. "These children are also more likely to be employed and have higher earnings when they reach adulthood," Rosier said.

The Foundation is addressing school readiness by enhancing and supporting training opportunities for teachers and administrators from schools, Head-Start centers and child-care centers that are participating in the state of Louisiana's Community Network pilots. The Community Network pilot is part of Louisiana's efforts to develop a unified Early Childhood System of Local Networks as directed by Act 3 of

the 2012 Regular Legislative Session, which when fully implemented will expand access to high quality, publicly funded early childhood education programs and ensure more children are ready to enter kindergarten.

With the goal of supporting highly effective teachers and strong instructional leadership, the Foundation continues to provide the nine Central Louisiana school districts with grants for targeted coaching and mentoring of teachers, and leadership development for administrators. Foundation funding to the districts also allows them to participate in Institutes provided by The Orchard Foundation. These institutes consist of Kagan Training and leadership training from the University of Washington's Center for Educational Leadership.

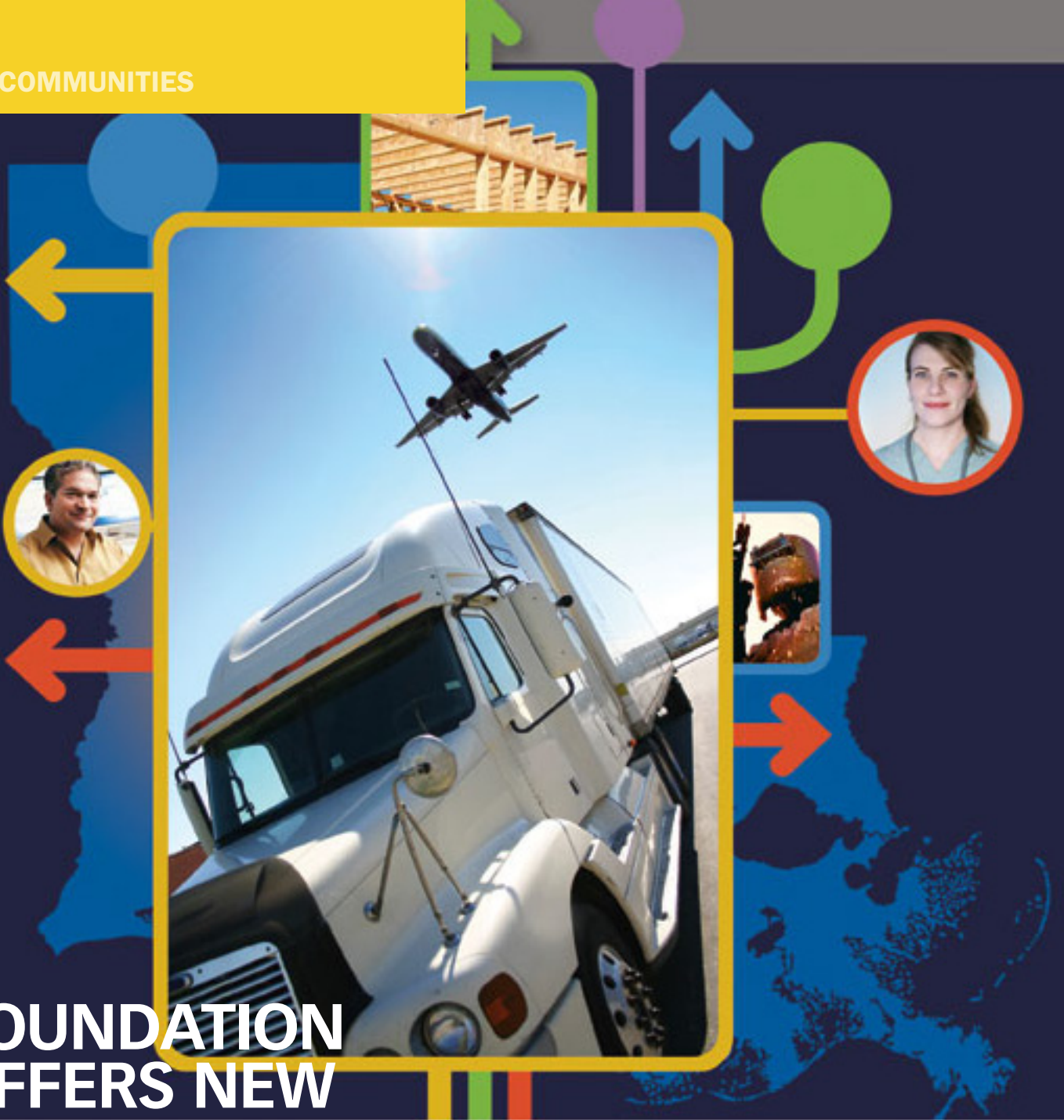
In the area of Career and Postsecondary Readiness, the Foundation continues its support of the Cenla Work Ready Network, a system designed to link education and workforce development efforts and align them with regional economic needs. The Cenla Work Ready Network provides high school students and under-employed or unemployed adults the chance to earn a nationally recognized certificate that demonstrates their work-ready skills to potential employers. Career counseling for Central Louisiana students will continue to be provided by Career Compass of Louisiana, a nonprofit education organization, which provides one-on-one career counseling for high school seniors, and group seminars for other high school students throughout the region.



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FOUNDATION OFFERS NEW

WORKFORCE OPPORTUNITY GRANT

The Foundation in 2015 offered a new funding opportunity intended to help institutions train and educate residents for above-median income occupations that Central Louisiana employers currently need to fill. The Workforce Opportunity Grant is a partnership between Central Louisiana businesses and postsecondary institutions.

It's a part of the Foundation's Economic Development Initiative, which makes the link

between healthy economies and healthy people. One component of the initiative is to improve the region's opportunities for workforce skills and development training, which led to the new funding opportunity.

"This funding will allow institutions to provide educational, training or certification support to qualified candidates for immediate high-wage job opportunities in Cenla," said Joe Rosier, President and CEO of The Rapides Foundation. The grant

“Healthy economies with low unemployment rates and higher wage jobs provide people with the means to purchase medical insurance, make better healthcare choices and live healthier lifestyles.”

Joe Rosier, President and CEO of The Rapides Foundation

opportunity encourages strong partnerships between postsecondary institutions, the workforce system, employers and industry groups, and allows them to transform the way they design and deliver courses through accelerated learning strategies, redesigned curricula, distance learning, work-based training, and innovative uses of technology to enhance learning activities.

Rosier said the grant opportunity supports the initiative’s overall goal of raising the median household income. “From an income and occupation standpoint, a big driver is in the area of workforce to prepare Central Louisiana residents for higher skilled, higher knowledge work. This provides great benefits to their employers and certainly enables them to have higher incomes and ultimately better health,” Rosier said. “Healthy economies with low unemployment rates and higher wage jobs provide people with the means to purchase medical insurance, make better healthcare choices and live healthier lifestyles.”

The Foundation’s latest five-year strategic plan continues other efforts under its Healthy Communities priority area, which includes Economic Environment and Social Environment.

In addition to the Workforce Opportunity Grant opportunity, the Economic Development Initiative supports entrepreneurship through the

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Business Acceleration System. It will also continue its investment in the Central Louisiana Economic Development Alliance (CLEDA) as a means to improve the region’s business culture and environment and strengthen the Cenla workforce.

Also in the area of Workforce Skills and Development, the Foundation continues to build employer participation in the Cenla Work Ready Network, a system designed to link education and workforce development efforts and align them with regional economic needs.

In the area of Social Environment, the Foundation will continue working to strengthen our nonprofit sector and increase civic engagement. It does this through the Community Development Works program, which offers training and leadership programs, and provides people with the tools and resources they need to support citizen-led community development efforts through the CDW Learning Lab. CDW will continue to offer Cenla Boardbuilders, a program for emerging leaders to become active in their communities as members of nonprofit boards, and Cenla Execbuilders, which provides training opportunities for nonprofit executives.



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Discover Our New Interactive Map

www.rapidesfoundation.org

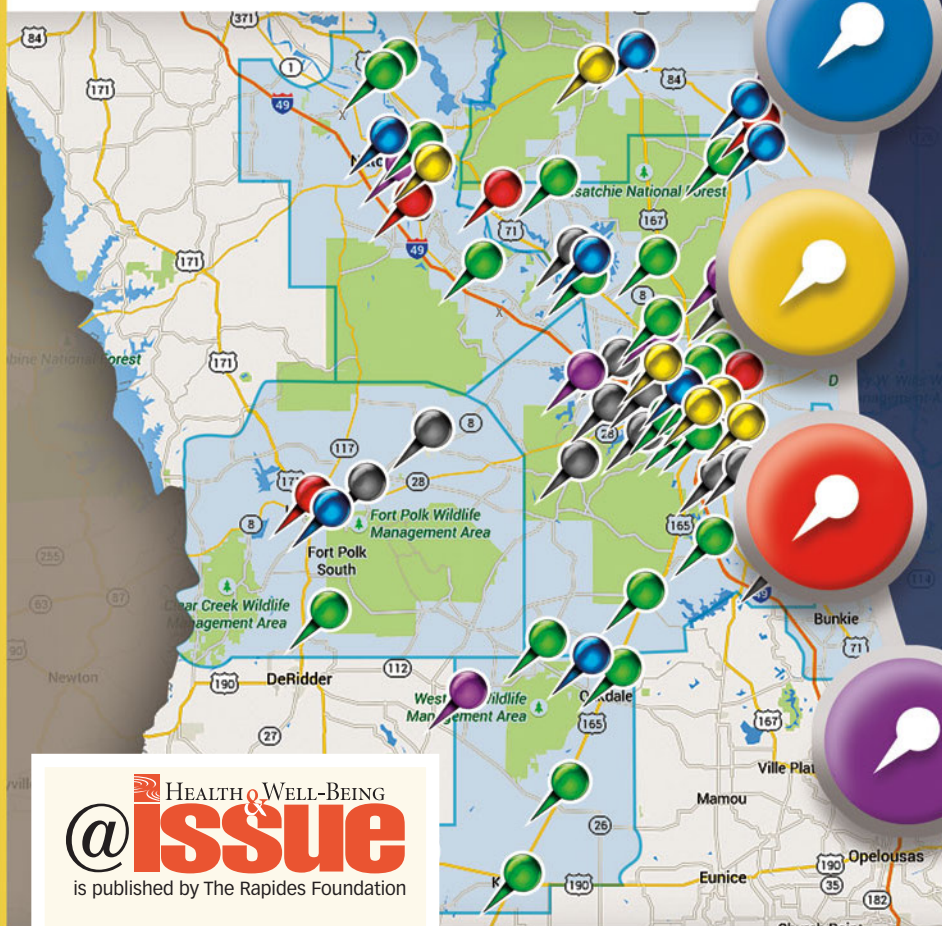
The Rapides Foundation has a new way for you and your family to discover opportunities throughout Central Louisiana to get healthy.

Our new interactive map offers information about walking trails, playgrounds, fitness stations, farmers markets and producers located throughout the nine parishes served by the Foundation. You can search by parish for the location nearest you, or by the type of location you're most interested in.

You can find the new interactive map on our website, www.rapidesfoundation.org.

If you know of a community asset that should be included on our interactive map, please email us at grantinfo@rapidesfoundation.org or call the Foundation at 800-994-3394.

 THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION



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