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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ALLEGANY FRANCISCAN MINISTRIES AWARDS 1.8 MILLION DOLLARS
IN GRANTS TO LOCAL NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

WEST PALM BEACH, FL – The Board of Trustees of Allegany Franciscan Ministries awarded grants totaling \$1,816,000 to 21 nonprofit community organizations in Florida. Eleven grants totaling \$604,000 were awarded to organizations in Palm Beach, Martin and St. Lucie Counties during Allegany Franciscan Ministries' recent grant cycle. Currently, there are 45 nonprofit organizations in the region receiving funding from Allegany Franciscan Ministries.

“Allegany Franciscan Ministries is dedicated to promoting culturally competent health care to reduce ethnic and racial disparities in economically poor and disinvested communities within Palm Beach, Martin and St. Lucie Counties,” said Allegany Franciscan Ministries' chairperson Marlene Weidenborner, OSF. Sr. Marlene added, “We are blessed to have this opportunity to support and partner with organizations working to improve the health and lives of those most in need in our communities.”

Organizations awarded funding include **Migrant Association of South Florida (Caridad Center)**, \$125,000, Caridad Dental Clinic, **Comprehensive AIDS Program of Palm Beach County**, \$111,000, Peer Advocate Team, **Inter-Cultural Family Health Education Center**, \$165,000, Kimbe Ayisyen an Sante

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Allegany Franciscan Ministries Grants -2

(Keep Haitians Healthy), and **Palm Beach County Medical Society Services**, \$168,000, Project Access.

In addition, grants of \$5,000 each were awarded for the following programs:

Big Heart Brigade, Annual Food Program; **Boynton Beach Planned Approach to Community Health (P.A.T.C.H)**, Neighborhood Health Promoters at Wellness Center; **Early Learning Coalition of Martin County**, Toothbrush Program; **Florida Community Health Center**, Health Disparities Diabetes Collaboration; **Healthy Alternatives & Body Image Tools**, Teaching Kids to Eat and Love Their Bodies Too!; **Legal Environmental Assistance Foundation**, Glades Public Water Supply Outreach; and **Northwood Baptist Church**, Feed the Hungry.

Ten community members serve on a regional commission charged with the task of reviewing grant applications and recommending grants to the Allegany Franciscan Ministries board of trustees. The regional commissioners worked throughout 2006 to identify the final award recipients.

About Allegany Franciscan Ministries, Inc.

Allegany Franciscan Ministries, Inc. is a non-profit Catholic organization focused on improving the overall health status of individuals through increasing access to health services and information. Guided by the tradition and vision of the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany, and a member of Catholic Health East, Allegany Franciscan Ministries provides grants to organizations in three regions of Florida: Miami-Dade County, Palm Beach, Martin and St. Lucie Counties, and the Tampa Bay area of Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties. Allegany Franciscan Ministries

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Allegany Franciscan Ministries Grants -3

strives to be a catalyst for systemic change, committing resources and working collaboratively to promote physical, mental, spiritual, societal and cultural health and well-being in these communities. For more information visit Allegany Franciscan Ministries' Web site at www.afmfl.org.

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Editor's Note: Additional information on local grants awarded is attached.

Palm Beach Region
Allegany Franciscan Ministries
Additional Grant Detail

\$125,000 **Migrant Association of South Florida, Inc. (Caridad Center)**
Boynton Beach, FL
Caridad Dental Clinic

The Caridad Health Clinic is the largest medical and dental care safety net provider for low-income and uninsured persons in Palm Beach County. The Caridad Dental Clinic provides free dental care to 1,600 unduplicated children and adults through 4,250 patient visits annually. Patients served are primarily Hispanic and Haitian, and have difficulty accessing dental care because of financial, language and cultural barriers. The funded program will focus on providing dental education and instruction to all new patients, providing more preventive care appointments to reduce the number of extractions, and improving the quality and number of services to dental patients. Partners in the program include Project Dentists Care volunteers, Nova Southeastern University's College of Dental Medicine, and Palm Beach Community College.

\$111,000 **Comprehensive AIDS Program of Palm Beach County, Inc.**
West Palm Beach, FL
Peer Advocate Team

Comprehensive AIDS Program of Palm Beach County, Inc. (CAP) is the oldest and largest minority-based community organization serving people living with HIV/AIDS in Palm Beach County. The Peer Advocate Team will actively recruit, train, and support people living with HIV/AIDS in Palm Beach County to assist others living with HIV/AIDS in identifying and accessing essential medical and social services. Peer Advocate Team members will conduct outreach activities in the community to educate people living with HIV/AIDS about the availability of services. They will also work in CAP's five service centers to provide face-to-face introductory sessions with newly diagnosed clients, conduct needs assessments and eligibility screenings, and provide emotional support. Peer Advocates will conduct follow-up services, assist clients in preparing documentation and applications for services, and encourage clients to access medical and social services.

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\$165,000 **Inter-Cultural Family Health Education Center, Inc.**
West Palm Beach, FL
Kimbe Ayisyen an Sante (Keep Haitians Healthy)

Inter-cultural Family Health Education Center (IFHEC) primarily serves the Haitian communities in Palm Beach County. The agency uses a number of community based strategies such as parish nurse educators in churches, physicians who serve as health educators in community center settings and radio programming to educate Haitian communities about health care and access to healthcare. The funded project is a health care program for Haitian adults and families that will coordinate three levels of support for the uninsured: community outreach, health navigation and disease management. These three components will help people become more health literate, achieve greater self-sufficiency in obtaining healthcare, control their chronic disease and prevent long-term complications, address issues of cultural beliefs and values in healthcare encounters, obtain and take medications, and adopt a healthy lifestyle. IFHEC will partner with The Caridad Center and Samaritan Gardens Community Health Center.

\$168,000 **Palm Beach County Medical Society Services, Inc.**
West Palm Beach, FL
Project Access

Project Access is a coordinated system of volunteer physician care, hospital care, diagnostic services, and medication assistance to provide accessible healthcare to residents of Palm Beach County who have no private health insurance, who do not qualify for any federal, state or county health insurance program and whose income is below 200% of the federal poverty level. Project Access provides a key access component, *availability and acceptability of services*, for patients who have exhausted every other access avenue. This project will focus on minority individuals who are eligible for Project Access. Over 60% of the persons uninsured in Palm Beach County are reported to be categorized in a “minority population.” This program will improve acceptability of services by providing cultural competency continuing education to physicians, physicians’ workforce members and others that will enable them to interface more knowledgably and sensitively with patients whose background and world view may differ greatly from their own. Another key component of this program is to recruit and retain more minority physicians to participate in the Project Access network.

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The following programs each were awarded a grant of \$5,000

Big Heart Brigade, Annual Food Program (*Martin County*). To provide an annual distribution of food during the holiday season. Primarily serves Martin County residents. Families and individuals who may otherwise go hungry will be provided with hot meals including turkey and other foods.

Boynton Beach Planned Approach to Community Health (P.A.T.C.H), Neighborhood Health Promoters at Wellness Center (*Palm Beach County*). Serves low-income, uninsured, persons and families, mainly within the “Heart of Boynton” area. At the Wellness Center, health promoters provide education and information and a nurse practitioner does blood pressure checks, teaches about disease prevention, and refers to facilities for diagnosis and treatment as needed. Once a month, a mammogram van provides free mammograms.

Early Learning Coalition of Martin County, Toothbrush Program (*Martin County*). To promote good oral hygiene at an early age in order to ensure healthy teeth and gums. Without this program many of the underprivileged infants and children this program serves will not have access to proper oral hygiene techniques and tooth brushing supplies.

Florida Community Health Centers, Inc., Health Disparities Diabetes Collaboration (*St. Lucie and Martin Counties*). Provides regional coordination of services including health education, navigation and a coordinator will provide support to the clinical care rendered by the clinic providers. On-going education and counseling to diabetic patients in St. Lucie County's Ft. Pierce area and Martin County's Indiantown Centers will be provided.

Healthy Alternatives & Body Image Tools, Inc. (HABIT), Teaching Kids to Eat and Love Their Bodies Too! (*Martin and Palm Beach Counties*). Addresses childhood obesity and serves underprivileged boys and girls using the Healthy Body Image manual. HABIT teaches good body esteem as applied to health behaviors with respect to eating balanced wholesome foods combined with physical activity.

Legal Environmental Assistance Foundation (LEAF), Glades Public Water Supply Outreach, (*western Palm Beach County*). To develop and coordinate a public education and community organizing campaign to inform and mobilize pregnant women, their families and other Glades area residents to address this serious public health concern.

Northwood Baptist Church, Feed the Hungry (*Palm Beach County*). Feed The Hungry provides boxes of food to individuals and families in need; funds will be used to buy meat and canned vegetables and to help pay a driver to pick up 20 to 30 loads of fresh vegetables and other food to be distributed to multiple human and social agencies in Palm Beach County.