



HIF helps AKF continue to provide financial safety nets for Montgomery County residents living with kidney disease

In 1971, a small group of neighbors came together to help a friend struggling with kidney disease. In that first year, the American Kidney Fund (AKF) saved the lives of 79 people with kidney failure. But these friends quickly realized they had the power to do so much more. A mission was born and has been at the heart of our activities every day since.

One of those activities is providing direct financial assistance to people with kidney disease nationwide through our safety net grants. Gaps in healthcare coverage leave tens of thousands of low-income patients unable to afford life-saving treatment. Our safety net program addresses those gaps, helping to cover critical needs which directly impact someone's health status. These critical needs include transportation to and from medical appointments, over-the-counter medicines, and co-pays, mobility aids, home hemodialysis, medical supplies, and food.

As an organization headquartered in Montgomery County, AKF is grateful to have received a \$20,000 grant from the Health Initiative Foundation (HIF) as part of its FY22 Capacity Building investment cycle to provide safety net grants for the next year to people with kidney disease who reside in under-invested areas of our local community.

Since 2019, AKF has provided \$26,550 in safety-net assistance to Montgomery County residents with kidney disease. Of the recipients in Montgomery County, 76% are people of color, 70% are age 50 or older and 76% are living on an average monthly income of \$1,535.

As an organization headquartered in Montgomery County, we are grateful to have received this grant so we can further support the people who live with kidney disease in our local community.

Through the safety net program, AKF has provided direct financial assistance to over 500,000 people over the years, ensuring no family has to choose between their health and financial ruin. In Montgomery County, we have provided \$26,550 in safety-net assistance since 2019. Of the recipients in Montgomery County, 76% are people of color, 70% are age 50 or older and 76% are living on an average monthly income of \$1,535. The safety net grant program is just one of the financial assistance programs AKF offers. Others include our [Health Insurance Premium Program \(HIPP\)](#), which provides grants for people who cannot afford their monthly insurance premiums, and the [Disaster Relief](#)



[Program](#), which provides emergency grants to those living with kidney failure or a kidney transplant affected by a natural disaster like a tornado, flooding or a hurricane.

But AKF offers so much more than just financial assistance to the kidney community.

We also provide numerous educational resources that help people navigate kidney disease at any stage – from prevention to post-transplant. This includes programs like our [Know Your Kidneys™](#) campaign, the goal of which is to empower individuals to fulfill life's possibilities by preventing or slowing the progression of kidney disease, or our [Kidney Kitchen®](#), a site dedicated to resources, guides, and recipes to help people with kidney disease follow their kidney-friendly eating plans – an essential component to managing the disease. Additionally, AKF has resources to help our audiences understand the connection between kidney disease and other health concerns, like [diabetes](#), [heart disease](#), and [gout](#).

AKF is also dedicated to fighting kidney disease through its wide-ranging advocacy efforts. Along with our network of over 17,000 [AKF Ambassadors](#), we also are working at the state and federal levels to advocate for legislation and policy changes that will address the needs of those living with or at risk for kidney disease. These include laws that [protect living organ donors](#), [address gaps in insurance coverage](#) for people with kidney disease and [create a national action plan and fund research and interventions](#) for causes of kidney disease.

AKF appreciates HIF's support as we continue to help the residents of Montgomery County – our county – fight kidney disease on all fronts.