



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

07/14/2016

[Hancock, MI] Portage Health Foundation and Finlandia University Announce New Partnership

The Portage Health Foundation (PHF) recently awarded Finlandia University \$235,000 for facility enhancements and scholarship programming in a partnership known as “Stronger Together – Together for Good.” The goal of this ongoing partnership is to identify and promote Finlandia University as a regional leader of health science education, and to assist the university in continuing its tradition through the College of Health Sciences of educating a workforce that is better equipped to meet rural healthcare needs.

“We recognize that a healthy and vibrant community has a well-trained workforce, which requires that individuals have access to post-secondary education opportunities,” said Kevin Store, Executive Director at PHF. PHF remains committed to ensuring that scholarships and quality learning environments are available to students, which is precisely what the “Stronger Together – Together for Good” partnership represents. The partnership is rooted in two of PHF’s Pillars of Giving: Health Education and Healthcare Leaders. These pillars focus on providing educational and learning opportunities that expand, develop, and educate students’ knowledge of health issues in order to improve an individual or a community’s health.

\$225,000 of the grant will support biology and chemistry laboratory renovations in Wargelin Hall. PHF understands that to support and promote Finlandia as a leading educational institution, enhanced facilities are required, which are conducive to learning and can attract and retain health science students and faculty. Updates to the laboratories include new countertops, cabinets, and student tables as well as new equipment including computers, centrifuges, and a mass spectrometer. The laboratory renovations also enable Finlandia to offer additional curriculum such as courses in organic chemistry.

“The renovated labs will provide a great atmosphere of learning for Finlandia’s students, who will have immediate access to incredible technology,” said Dr. Emily Geiger, who helped design the labs and is instructing the new organic chemistry course this fall. The investment in Wargelin Hall’s science labs is part of FinnU’s strategic vision, Plan 2021. This plan represents the university’s commitment to campus growth by updating, renovating, and building campus facilities, which best supports student success and absorbs enrollment and program growth.

The remaining \$10,000 of the grant will go toward student scholarships, which are critical support mechanisms for students to access financial aid. A prior scholarship agreement between PHF and Finlandia serves as the basis of this year’s scholarships; whereby financial awards will support three students who are seeking health science degrees and come from Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw, or Ontonagon County.

Future commitments to Finlandia from PHF as part of the “Stronger Together – Together for Good” partnership, including a large planned gift in 2017, will be directed toward the future College of Health Sciences building on Quincy Street in downtown Hancock.

About Portage Health Foundation

The Portage Health Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that receives and contributes charitable donations in order to support the health needs of the community through enhanced philanthropy and community collaboration in Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw, and Ontonagon counties.

About Finlandia University

Finlandia University is a private, not-for-profit, HLC accredited, co-educational liberal arts college affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The school is located in Michigan's northernmost city, Hancock, and was founded in 1896 by Finnish immigrants as Suomi College.

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