



For immediate release

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### **ST. DAVID'S COMMUNITY HEALTH FOUNDATION VOLUNTEER GROUP MAKES \$50,000 GRANT TO FAITH IN ACTION CAREGIVERS**

**AUSTIN (April 16, 2008)** — Sponsored by St. David's Community Health Foundation, Health's Angels, a volunteer group concerned with meeting the needs of the elderly and their caregivers, has awarded a \$50,000 grant to local aging-services provider Faith in Action Caregivers.

Eight area agencies applied for the grant, which went through a process of proposal review and site visits similar to that of the St. David's Community Health Foundation community grants given twice each year. Three finalists were named, with Austin Groups for the Elderly and the Samaritan Center joining Faith in Action Caregivers.

Following their participation in nearly two months of the review process, the Health's Angels membership heard presentations from the finalists on April 9, voting that afternoon to award the \$50,000 grant to Faith in Action Caregivers and to make special member-dues awards of \$4,650 to each of the two other finalists.

"We felt that the most effective way to impact our mission was through the grant process, generously donated and administered by St. David's Community Health Foundation," said Health's Angels co-chair Roseanne Palin. "We were thrilled with the quality and sensitivity of the organizations who responded, and only wished that we could have endowed each of them, as they are all so deserving."

Faith in Action Caregivers, a collaboration of eight nondenominational interfaith organizations, provides volunteer-based support services for Austin-area adults over the age of 60. These services include transportation, friendly visits, and minor home repairs. Recognizing that volunteer support is critical in allowing older adults to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible, Faith in Action Caregivers proposed the project "Volunteer Vitality," to recruit, recognize, and retain volunteers to provide services for senior citizens in the Austin area.

The short-term goals for the project include increasing volunteer numbers by 15 percent, expanding training and in-service opportunities, and increasing outreach opportunities in the community. Long-term goals include increasing the number of older adults receiving caregiver services from Faith in Action, expanding Faith in Action services to areas that are currently underserved, and increasing community awareness of the agency's services for older adults.

The Faith in Action application for the Health's Angels grant stated, "Volunteers are the heart and soul of Faith in Action Caregivers. . . . Volunteers become treasured friends and an important community resource. They recognize the needs of the older adult and are able to bring the community into the senior's home, as

well as getting the older adult out into the community.” In 2007, the agency’s 1,590 caregiver volunteers served more than 2,225 clients, providing approximately 65,000 volunteer hours worth more than \$1.2 million.

The next project for Health’s Angels is the launch of a community awareness campaign to spotlight the ever-increasing need for community volunteerism in service of the elderly and their family caregivers. The group has been working to help match members with volunteer opportunities with six area aging-services organizations, including Alzheimer’s Respite Programs, Austin Groups for the Elderly, Faith in Action Caregivers, Family Eldercare, Meals on Wheels and More, HAND (Helping the Aging, Needy, and Disabled), and the Silver Lining Program. Health’s Angels is a project of St. David’s Community Health Foundation, whose 2007 grantmaking of \$5.22 million included \$929,930 for support services for older adults.

The vision of St. David’s Community Health Foundation is to keep the promise of a better life by improving health and health care for all Central Texans. Our mission is to work with commitment, integrity, and respect to achieve our vision in our hospitals, programs, and community partnerships.

*For more information on Health’s Angels, visit [www.sdchf.org/angels](http://www.sdchf.org/angels)  
For more information on Faith in Action Caregivers, visit [www.faithinactioncaregivers.org](http://www.faithinactioncaregivers.org)  
For more information on St. David’s Community Health Foundation, visit [www.sdchf.org](http://www.sdchf.org)*