

Healing Lincoln

Foundation pumps health programs into parish



Since 2008, the Lincoln Health Foundation (LHF) has pumped \$866,531 into Lincoln Parish toward fulfilling its mission of improving health care and outcomes for local residents.

And a vast majority of the recipients of those health care services have been children.

"I think the best thing is that we've made a positive impact on the community," LHF Chair Shirley Reagan said. "Our goal is to help everyone with an emphasis on our children in need here in Lincoln Parish."

The LHF was born out of the sale of the former Lincoln General Hospital, now known as Northern Louisiana Medical Center. The formerly nonprofit hospital was bought by the for-profit Community Health Systems for \$36 million in

March 2007 from Lincoln Health System.

LHF owned almost 70 percent of the shares for Lincoln Health System and has since used the sale to make a big impact in the parish.



The LHF has funded 11 programs during that time, including expanding the existing immunization program by providing the Gardasil vaccine for the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) to underinsured women between the ages of 19-26. The LHF has provided \$84,000 in funding to help the Lincoln Parish Health Unit, including an HPV Gardasil vaccination

program and the installation of a women, infants and children's kitchen at the health unit.

LHF Chief Executive Officer Norman Hanes said the organization's focus is on three

primary areas: healthier beginnings, healthier living and healthier outcomes, or better access to health care.

"The healthier beginnings component are things like the Growing Great Kids program or the Mentoring of Moms program where we try to impact newborns or very young children," Hanes said. "Healthier living is things increasing opportunity for physical activity, increasing nutritional and exercise knowledge of our teachers and parents, increasing the use of healthier food in schools and reducing occurrences of teen pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

"Healthier outcomes means things like the Health Enterprise to Assist Lincoln's Students (HEALS) program and enabling access to health care for low-income employed people with no insurance."

Kay Bradford, a grant writer for Lincoln Parish Schools, said the LHF has been instrumental in providing increased health opportunities for children in parish schools.

"In three years, the HEALS program has changed many lives in the parish for the better,"