



Gateway Awarded \$468,000 Grant For Tobacco Prevention

Gateway to Prevention and Recovery has been notified by the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust of a \$468,000 award for six county coverage areas. The grant money funds Tobacco Prevention programs in Pottawatomie, Hughes, Okfuskee, McIntosh along with two new counties, Seminole and Lincoln. Each area is awarded prevention monies that reflect their population demographics, and are set by the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust.

The Pottawatomie Alliance Toward Community Health (PATCH) Coalition has received \$205,000 to continue the reduction of tobacco use in Pottawatomie County. This financial support will allow the program to hire an additional full time employee, along with expanding services into the more rural areas of the county.

The Tri-County Tobacco Prevention Program, consisting of Hughes, Okfuskee, and McIntosh counties, was awarded \$188,000 to continue the tobacco prevention efforts in those areas. There are currently two full time employees working in these three counties.

Seminole and Lincoln Counties are two new locales that will be added to the prevention work, beginning October 1. This new addition will provide an opportunity for a full time employee to begin working to provide coverage and resources in that vicinity. The first year of the grant, the counties, which will be one consortium, have been given \$75,000 to perform a needs assessment and develop a strategic plan process. After the first year, the grantors can issue up to \$213,000 a year to continue the work until 2015.

The mission of tobacco prevention is to improve the health and quality of life of all Oklahomans. Tobacco, is the only product that kills when used as directed, killing about 5,700 Oklahomans each year, which makes it Oklahoma's leading preventable cause of death. Corporate tobacco targets our youth as replacement tobacco users, to compensate for the loss of many current consumers.

The goal of the health coalition is to help create smoke-free public and work places, help schools adopt 24/7 tobacco-free policies and implement tobacco free curriculum through grass-roots youth activism. The funds also assist health care providers by referring tobacco users to cessation services or to the FREE Oklahoma Tobacco Quit Line—1-800-QUIT NOW.