



*"Building healthy communities by fostering charitable support for the Osceola Medical Center and the health related needs of the people in the upper St. Croix Valley."*

For Immediate Release

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Osceola Schools get \$83,000 donation

Mental health programming in the Osceola School district got a boost from an \$83,000 donation from the Osceola Community Health Foundation.

"With these funds, previously unfunded programs will become sustainable efforts that will enhance the lives of our current and future students," said Jenifer Frank, school district Business Manager.

The foundation and school district have been working on addressing mental health for our community's youth for months, according to Sue Gerlach, foundation director. These months of work culminated in December with the foundation's Holiday Gala, where \$83,014 was raised to support mental health programming in the district.

"We were cautious going into this event because mental health has previously been a taboo subject. In the end, we were overwhelmed by the outcome," said Gerlach. "The community came together to support change through record breaking numbers of sponsorships, auction donations and in attendance."

Students and staff members will benefit from these funds through the implementation of the district's Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports program. The program includes behavioral expectations instruction, targeted group interventions, individualized counseling, community suicide prevention presentations, and data collection to more effectively implement PBIS practices. The district is excited for the additional support program to help students become successful citizens.

Based on county and school information, the foundation created a strategic plan to focus funding on: depression and suicide prevention, obesity, and drug and alcohol abuse prevention. This year's Holiday Gala, presented by Central Bank, Knutson Construction and St. Croix Orthopaedics, was the first foundation event of the year to support these targeted focus areas.

OCHF is a regional non-profit organization that has given more than \$11.9 million to Osceola Medical Center and other community non-profit organizations. The foundation's mission is building healthy communities by fostering charitable support for OMC and the health related needs of the people in the upper St. Croix Valley. For more information about OCHF, the Holiday Gala or other activities, go to [MyOCHF.org](http://MyOCHF.org).

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