



MEDIA CONTACT

Alex English | Director of Outreach & Training

alexe@vashti.org | (229) 226-4634

Vashti Center Secures \$100K Grant from Healthcare Georgia Foundation to Increase Awareness and Training Programs for African-American and Latinx Youth

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THOMASVILLE, GA (December 15, 2022) – Healthcare Georgia Foundation has announced the Vashti Center as a recipient of a \$100,000 behavioral and mental health grant designed to increase awareness and access to training programs for African-American and Latinx youth in Southwest Georgia.

During the one-year grant period, which begins December 30, the Vashti Center will increase preventative mental and behavioral health education for youth populations in Baker, Early, Mitchell, Grady, Brooks, Thomas, Decatur, and Colquitt counties.

The Foundation's support, coupled with funding from Resilient Georgia and the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Development Disabilities, will assist Vashti in specifically targeting African-American and Latinx youth with a three-fold strategy that includes training staff and volunteers in youth-serving organizations, training 10th-12th grade youth in Teen Mental Health First Aid, and hosting community awareness events across the region.

"Our community training programs are creating a common language and better understanding about adversity and resilience," says Vashti's training and development manager Alex English. "Through awareness building, promotion of best practices, professional development, and advocacy, we are becoming a highly recognized training provider in the behavioral and mental health space, and this grant will allow us to focus and expand that reach even further."

Although The Vashti Center serves a racially, ethnically, and economically diverse youth community, prior to this grant, the Center did not have a specific programmatic strategy for prevention efforts targeted specifically to African-American and Latinx populations.

“This funding will allow our team to heavily lean-in to these communities and establish relationships, as well as develop initial prevention, education, and awareness programs that could be expanded in future years,” says Vashti executive director Elijah Miranda. “We’re truly opening the door to new possibilities for Vashti and for marginalized and at-risk populations in rural Southwest Georgia, and we’re deeply grateful for the support of the Foundation.”

Healthcare Georgia Foundation is a statewide, charitable organization with a vision of health equity in Georgia where all people attain their fullest potential for health and well-being. Through strategic grantmaking, the Foundation’s mission is to enable, improve, and advance the health and well-being of all Georgians. For more information, visit healthcaregeorgia.org.

###

Located in Thomasville, Georgia, the Vashti Center has served as a safe-haven for children in crisis for nearly 120 years. Vashti’s immediate six-county service area is a rural region characterized by scarce mental and behavioral health resources and poor health outcomes. Youth ages 6-18 participate in our local community mental health therapy programs on campus and through the school systems. In addition, the Vashti Center offers a residential program, housing and treating up to 10 girls and 25 boys, ages 12-18 referred from all across the state of Georgia.