



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**PROJECT HOPE ALLIANCE RECEIVES GRANT FROM CALOPTIMA HEALTH TO SUPPORT STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS**

*Funding of \$2.12 million will strengthen Orange County’s ability to address student homelessness by building youth-centered, coordinated systems of care for youth and their families*

**[COSTA MESA], Calif. (JUNE 6, 2024)** — Project Hope Alliance has been awarded a three-year \$2.12 million grant from CalOptima to improve life outcomes of Orange County students experiencing homelessness. This funding is part of \$10.8 million in recent community grants awarded in April 2024 by the CalOptima Health Board of Directors to address homelessness in Orange County.

This grant funding will enable Project Hope Alliance to scale its proven model to support more youth experiencing homelessness in Orange County by partnering with school districts and the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) to increase awareness, resources, and best practices in identifying and serving homeless youth. This will be done through a comprehensive assessment of school district needs, creation of relevant and culturally responsive training, curriculum and practices, development of inclusive homeless identification forms, and assistance to school and districts to develop a truly youth-centered and coordinated system of care.

CalOptima Health’s grants are tied to participation in California’s Housing and Homelessness Incentive Program (HHIP), which allows the agency to fund permanent supportive housing, expanded community-based services, projects that support systems change and equity grants for organizations to build capacity. HHIP aims to prevent and address housing insecurity for Medi-Cal members by ensuring those experiencing homelessness have a clear path into housing and can access the services needed to remain housed.

“This grant for Project Hope Alliance will deliver life-changing resources for many individuals and families in Orange County who have struggled to navigate the complex system of homeless services and housing,” said Michael Hunn, CEO of CalOptima Health. “Simply put, housing is health. Stable housing is the very foundation for accessing medical and behavioral health services.”

Says Jennifer Friend, CEO of Project Hope Alliance, “Project Hope Alliance is grateful to CalOptima for recognizing student homelessness as the crisis it is. With strategic upstream intervention and coordinated support, our county can end generational homelessness for our kids. We are proud to work

alongside CalOptima and our county’s educational leaders and advocates to lift the invisibility of our kids and build integrated systems of support for them so they can thrive.”

**About Project Hope Alliance**

Project Hope Alliance’s mission is to end the cycle of homelessness, one child at a time. Through strategic partnerships with Orange County public and charter schools, Project Hope Alliance utilizes a long-term case management approach to eliminate barriers that impede a child’s ability to succeed academically. By building trusting relationships with students, families, and school administrators, Project Hope Alliance provides academic support, mentorship, and basic need resources. Project Hope Alliance supports children and youth from kindergarten through 24 years of age. [www.projecthopealliance.org](http://www.projecthopealliance.org)

**About CalOptima Health**

A county organized health system, CalOptima Health provides quality health care coverage for low-income children, adults, seniors and people with disabilities in Orange County, California. CalOptima Health’s mission is to serve member health with excellence and dignity, respecting the value and needs of each person. CalOptima Health serves more than 932,000 members with a network of 10,800 primary care doctors and specialists and 39 acute and rehab hospitals. [www.caloptima.org](http://www.caloptima.org)

**PROJECT HOPE ALLIANCE CONTACT**

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