

# MEDIA RELEASE

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COUNTY OF ERIE  
OFFICE OF THE  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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## **Corry Blue Zones Project receives \$130,000 in funding from ECGRA and National Fuel**

ERIE, Pa. – County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper and the Erie County Department of Health in collaboration with Highmark Health, UPMC and Corry Memorial Hospital – an affiliate of LECOM Health –announced today that Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority (ECGRA) and National Fuel have provided funding to the Partnership for a Healthy Community to support the Corry Blue Zones Project.

ECGRA has granted \$100,000, and National Fuel has granted \$30,000 toward the Blue Zones Project.

The Blue Zones Project is designed to enable residents to live longer, happier lives with lower rates of chronic diseases and a higher quality of life.

“This is the first time ECGRA has provided funding to a healthcare-based economic development project,” said Perry Wood, executive director of Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority. “We believe it’s a worthy experiment based on the sound methods pioneered in other communities. Our support of the Corry Blue Zone recognizes that a healthy workforce is a competitive workforce. It’s an investment in people who are working to transform places.”

“National Fuel is proud to join with Erie County government, the City of Corry and its residents, area hospitals and other organizations to support the Blue Zones Project and its effort to build a healthier Corry community,” said Michael Colpoys, vice president of National Fuel.

Since its launch in Corry in 2019, Corry Blue Zones Project has accomplished several milestones, including:

- Kick-Off Celebration in June 2019
- Several Blue Zones Story Presentations, Walking Moais and Purpose Workshops have been scheduled within the community and within worksites
- Corry Memorial Hospital, Corry Counseling Services, YMCA, D&E Machining and Corry Area School District are currently some of the worksites working with Blue Zones Project to improve employee well-being
- Corry Area School District is currently working with Blue Zones Project to improve student well-being

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- Sander's Market and Gigi's Route 6 Diner are currently working with Blue Zones Project to improve well-being in the community
- Rails to Trails Kiosk was dedicated Oct. 4, in collaboration with the community and Blue Zones Project
- The city of Corry will soon be the recipient of a \$20,000 WalkWorks grant in partnership with the Corry Blue Zones Project

In October, Blue Zones Project Corry partnered with the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania and the Salvation Army to assist with the monthly Produce Express food distribution. This project helped 120 households in Corry, providing roughly 300 people with fresh fruits, vegetables, meat and other perishable items.

"The Partnership for a Healthy Community is thankful for the financial support from ECGRA and National Fuel Foundation to fund the success of the Corry Blue Zone Project," said Carrie Ennis, president of Partnership for a Healthy Community. "The funds will continue to support the Blue Zones Project community work in Corry that enhances community pride, connects people to purpose and enables healthy behavior choices such as walking and eating healthier."

Corry Blue Zones Project is currently working with Erie County Department of Health to schedule ongoing tobacco cessation classes in the Corry community.

"We here in county government, as well as in the Corry community, know that the transformation taking place in Corry is only possible through the generous support of our community," said County Executive Kathy Dahlkemper. "We are grateful for the support of ECGRA and National Fuel and their contribution to creating a more vibrant and healthy community."

Contact information:

- For questions about volunteering for the Corry Blue Zones Project, or to sign up for the Blue Zones Project Newsletter, contact Shannon Wohlford at 814-247-7040 or [Shannon.Wohlford@Sharecare.com](mailto:Shannon.Wohlford@Sharecare.com).
- To support future Produce Express distributions in the city of Corry, or to receive training to deliver the tobacco cessation curriculum, contact Ashley Lawson, policy lead for the Blue Zones Project, at 814-246-7987 or [Ashley.Lawson@sharecare.com](mailto:Ashley.Lawson@sharecare.com).
- Organizations passionate about improving well-being in the workplace and community should contact Jennifer Eberlein at 814-247-7022 or [Jennifer.Eberlein@sharecare.com](mailto:Jennifer.Eberlein@sharecare.com).

### **About Blue Zones Project**

Blue Zones Project® is a community-led well-being improvement initiative designed to make healthy choices easier through permanent changes to a city's environment, policy, and social networks. Established in 2010, Blue Zones Project is inspired by Dan Buettner, a National Geographic Fellow and New York Times best-selling author who identified five regions of the world — or Blue Zones® — with the highest concentration of people living to 100 years or older. Blue Zones Project incorporates Buettner's findings and works with cities to implement policies and programs that will move a community toward optimal health and well-being. Currently, 42 communities in nine states have joined Blue Zones Project, impacting more than 3 million Americans nationwide. The movement includes three beach cities in California; 15 cities in Iowa; Albert Lea, Minnesota; the city of Fort Worth; and communities in Southwest Florida, Hawaii, Oklahoma, Oregon and Wisconsin. For more information, visit [www.bluezonesproject.com](http://www.bluezonesproject.com).

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