



NEWS RELEASE

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Aberdeen, Milbank and Rosebud Reservation receive 2021 Healthy HometownSM Powered by Wellmark Community Award

Good & Healthy South Dakota presents awards for community health improvement work

SIOUX FALLS, South Dakota (Oct. 13, 2021) — Three South Dakota communities — Aberdeen, Milbank and Rosebud Reservation — were each presented with a 2021 Healthy HometownSM Powered by Wellmark Community Award during the Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Promotion Annual Partners Meeting held virtually on Tuesday, Oct. 12. The award is recognition for their accomplishments in health improvement initiatives within their respective communities.

“We are pleased to present these communities with the 2021 Healthy HometownSM Powered by Wellmark Community Award,” said Laura Jackson, Wellmark’s chief health officer. “The work that has been done within these communities is to be celebrated. And because this work is so important, Aberdeen, Milbank and Rosebud Reservation will also each receive \$5,000 to continue improving the physical, social and emotional well-being of the community.”

Some noteworthy achievements in Aberdeen include:

- Establishing the Malchow Plaza, a space for visitors and community events that includes a public art installation and new office spaces for local nonprofits.
- Installing a high-visibility crosswalk with solar-powered LED lighting in a school zone to improve safety.
- Enhancing a crosswalk used by health care workers by adding signage, LED lighting and in-road stop bars.

“We have a small but mighty group of community stakeholders who have consistently and diligently worked to make Aberdeen a healthier place to live, work and play,” said Lisa Anderson, who’s with the Aberdeen

Chamber of Commerce. “We are grateful for the support we have received from Wellmark, and are excited to make improvements with these funds, as we are committed to continue the work for years to come.”

Some noteworthy achievements in Milbank include:

- Installing new sidewalks, bike lanes and bicycle parking areas to improve student safety.
- Moving and expanding a community garden as well as constructing a shed for shared equipment.
- Replacing streetlights on Main Street to improve pedestrian safety.
- Constructing a new elementary school playground and pickleball court and developing an agreement with the Unity Fitness Center that allows student use of the gym.

“Being named a winner of the 2021 Healthy Hometown award means a lot because we can continue our goal of improving our community of Milbank,” said Rhonda Preller, community volunteer. “Milbank is a great community and its leaders have always been progressive and proactive in the approach to make our community a better, safer, healthier place to live. Milbank continues to plan for the future.”

Some of Rosebud Reservation’s noteworthy achievements include:

- Expanding the mobile market that delivers fresh fruit and vegetables, including locally produced items, to tribal members and launched a Food Rx program.
- Adding bicycle parking, enhancing the playground flooring and refurbishing the waterfront at Eagle Feather Lake.
- Opening a second skatepark.

“SGU Tiwahe Glu Kini Pi ‘Bringing the Family Back to Life’, Rosebud Society of Care, is honored to be selected for a Healthy Hometown award,” said Marlies White Hat, director. “Our goal is to improve the lives of Sicangu Nation children and families on the Rosebud Reservation, working in relationship with our community partners and all of creation. Unci Maka (Mother Earth) is providing healthy foods and nutrition, safe recreation spaces and active transportation opportunities to improve both our physical and mental health. With gratitude and joy, we say Pilamaya (Thank you)!”

The Healthy Hometown Powered by Wellmark Community Award celebrates the successes achieved by these three communities to make South Dakota a healthier, more active place to live. To find out more information about this initiative, visit [Wellmark.com/HealthyHometown](https://www.wellmark.com/HealthyHometown).



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About the South Dakota Department of Health

Working together to promote, protect and improve health, the Department of Health uses its 2020-2025 strategic plan to guide future initiatives. Learn more at <http://doh.sd.gov/strategicplan>.

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