



For Immediate Release
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RivahFest selects Free Clinic for a Community Grant

Tappahannock, VA (April 20, 2009) – RivahFest Steering Committee is pleased to announce the fourth in a continuing series of grants in support of local community organizations. RivahFest has selected Free Clinic as the recipient for this fourth grant of \$500. The Free Clinic is a mostly volunteer run organization that serves patients who are uninsured and fall at or below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines. The Clinic is currently serving patients from Essex, King & Queen, King William, Middlesex, Gloucester, Lancaster, Northumberland, Westmoreland, Richmond, King George, and Caroline Counties.

The Tappahannock Free Clinic was opened in 2005 by Dr. James Ledwith and after leaving for a post in Massachusetts, volunteer doctors from throughout the community stepped in to take his place. Today the Clinic is open three days a week - on Mondays, from 3-5pm, the Clinic is open for financial screenings, on Tuesday mornings and Wednesday evenings the Clinic holds doctor's hours by appointments only.

From January to May 2009, the Clinic has served over 200 individual patients and held nearly 500 patient appointments. These number are up dramatically from this time last year and anticipated to continue rising. "With our current economic times more and more patients are coming to the Clinic for medical treatment," explains Tappahannock Free Clinic's Executive Director Blake Slusser. "We are seeing a lot of patients who have lost their jobs or had their work hours cut and are not longer able to provide for their own healthcare."

With the increase in patients there is also an increase in the need for funding and volunteers. "Soon we will need to expand our clinic hours again to meet our patient load," says Slusser. If anyone is interested in helping the Tappahannock Free Clinic, by donating either their

time or money, they may contact Blake Slusser at 804-443-9590 or at P.O. Box 2313, Tappahannock, VA 22560.

RivahFest was started to bring regional attention to our community and to our local businesses with the eventual hope that the event would be successful enough to allow us to be able to share that success financially with well-deserving programs in our area. RivahFest now in its seventh year, is able to fund several community grants. RivahFest Steering Committee member Joey Reinhardt commented "Tappahannock Free Clinic provides a desperately needed free service to many struggling families in our community. All of us on the RivahFest committees are very pleased and excited to now be able to support and encourage these initiatives that return benefits to the heart of our community. It gives meaning to our year long preparation efforts."

RivahFest 2009 is scheduled for Saturday, June 20 and is being co-chaired by Katherine Newman (EVB) and Libbie Franklin (Bank of Essex). The RivahFest steering committee for 2009 draws volunteers in many areas: Thomas Bradshaw (Entertainment), David Broad (Promotion & Website), Terry Brooks (Arts & Crafts), John Clickener (Treasurer), Ronnie Gill (Chamber representative), Jeff James (Planning & Liaison), Sharon James (Past Chair), Tyler Lowery (Past Chair & Maritime), Glenn Morse (Sponsorship) and Joey Reinhardt (Publications & Liaison).

The recipient of RivahFest Grants for 2009-10 will be announced in the Fall of 2009. For more information about Tappahannock-Essex RivahFest media or publicity contact David Broad at 804-443-1221. If you are interested in volunteering for RivahFest, either in the planning stages or on RivahFest Day June 20th, please contact us at 888-992-7772 or visit www.rivahfest.com/help

Tappahannock Free Clinic accepts a \$500 RivahFest Grant check. From left to right front row: David Broad (RivahFest Grants and Web), Blake Hite Slusser (Executive Director), Colin Smith (Chairman of the Free Clinic Board), Dr. Richard Lewis, Joey Reinhardt (RivahFest Steering and Publications).