



Money For Our Priorities

JEFFERSON CITY — Several projects will soon see the fruits of nearly two years of work to get the Lewis & Clark Discovery Initiative through the legislature. This higher education reform plan will mean much-needed infrastructure for not only colleges and universities in this state, but for several other vital services as well. I'm proud that I could help bring about passage of this legislation, and I would like to take this opportunity to tell you about just a couple of the programs and schools in our district that will benefit from that initiative.

One of the organizations getting funds from the Lewis & Clark Discovery Initiative is the Crider Health Center in Wentzville. This private, nonprofit mental health organization has been serving the mental health needs of the people of St. Charles, Lincoln, Warren, and Franklin Counties since it was opened in 1979. Its stated mission is "To build resilience and promote recovery through partnerships for health." The \$3 million this agency will receive will go toward converting it into a more-encompassing community health center. The people at Crider are expanding their facilities to include patient rooms with more complete examination capabilities. When finished, the \$3 million for this project will fill a void by having a community health center between Columbia, St. Louis, and Kirksville – the first one for the area. The Crider Health Center is applying for federally qualified health center status. I'm glad I was able to help secure this money as part of my commitment to helping the mentally challenged in our community and my concern for the overall issue of access to health care.

St. Charles Community College is another institution that will enjoy the benefits of passage of the Lewis & Clark Discovery Initiative. Two million dollars will go to the public, two-year school that offers students an accredited, affordable, and accessible learning environment. The money this college will receive will make important infrastructure improvements that will help it continue its mission of helping people continue their lifelong learning goals.

These are just a couple of examples of how your money will go to make the 2nd District a great place to live, work, and play in.

If you have comments or questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by phone at (866) 271-2844.

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