

Grant Approval Memo



Grantee: BFIT & Well Annex
Request Amount: \$24,750.00
Project Title: Expanding Access to Brain and Body Health for Alaskans: Scholarships and Training for Evidence-Based Programs
Grant Term: 2/19/2026 to 2/18/2027
Fund Source: FY26 Partnerships/Designated Grants
Trust Staff: Kelda Barstad

Requested Motion:

The Program and Planning Committee recommends that the Board of Trustees approve a \$24,750 authority grant to BFIT & Well Annex for the Expanding Access to Brain and Body Health for Alaskans: Scholarships and Training for Evidence-Based Programs grant. These funds will come from the Partnerships/Designated Grants line of the FY26 budget.

Staff Analysis:

- What does this project do?
Trust funds will provide scholarships for Trust beneficiaries to access BFIT & Well Annex's evidence-based SAIL (Stay Active & Independent for Life) and BRITE (Brain Resilience, Integration, Training, and Exercise) programs.
- Who is receiving the funds?
BFIT & Well Annex is a nonprofit fitness studio in Anchorage for ages 55 and older. In addition to typical fitness classes and equipment, BFIT & Well Annex has implemented fitness programs designed to improve both body and mind to prevent or delay cognitive decline.
<https://www.bfitandwell.com/>
- Why is staff recommending this project?
This project enhances access to the evidence-based SAIL (Stay Active & Independent for Life) and BRITE (Brain Resilience, Integration, Training, and Exercise) programs, which directly serves individuals experiencing Alzheimer's Disease, Parkinson's Disease, mild cognitive decline, traumatic brain injury (TBI), and related conditions. These individuals are the primary beneficiaries of this project, as the program is specifically designed to address their unique physical and cognitive challenges. Regular exercise and improving balance has been shown to reduce falls which are the leading cause of brain injury in older adults.
- Will this be a multi-year project?
The term of this grant is one year and is not a multi-year project.

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Trust Five Year Funding History

Fiscal Year	Project Title	Amount	Status	Final Expended
FY25	Brain Health Fitness	\$40,000	Closed	\$35,000

Comp Plan Identification

Area of Focus	Objective	Comments
Area of Focus 7: Services in the Least Restrictive Environment	7.2 Increase access to effective and flexible, person-centered, long-term services and supports in urban and rural areas to avoid institutional placement where inappropriate	

Trust Focus Area Connection

Budget Area	Strategy	Comments
Housing & Home & Community Based Services	HHCBS - Beneficiaries access effective and flexible person-centered HCBS	

Project Description (from grant application)

To align with the Alaska Mental Health Trust's guidance and funding tier, we have revised our proposal to request \$24,750. The updated budget focuses exclusively on two priorities: (1) providing high-quality instructor training in evidence-informed brain and body health programs, and (2) offering scholarships to 15 Alaskans experiencing cognitive decline or mobility challenges. Each scholarship will support ten months of participation in BFit & Well Annex's specialized programs.

To stretch the impact of Trust funding, BFit & Well Annex will absorb the cost difference between our standard tuition (\$259/month) and the subsidized scholarship rate (\$156/month), or beneficiaries may choose to contribute the difference. This approach ensures access while maintaining program sustainability and participant engagement.

This proposal requests to expand access to BFit & Well Annex's evidence-based SAIL (Stay Active & Independent for Life) and BRITE (Brain Resilience, Integration, Training, and Exercise) programs through scholarships, limited instructor training, and targeted outreach.

Scholarships for Participants: Provide financial assistance to individuals diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease/dementia, Parkinson's Disease, mild cognitive impairment, or other neurological/physical challenges who cannot afford tuition. Scholarships will open access to both SAIL and BRITE classes—helping participants build strength, coordination, cognitive focus, and overall confidence.

Instructor Training & Implementation Support: Support certification and continuing education for instructors to maintain evidence-based program fidelity, including courses such as the Alzheimer's

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Brain Health/“4 Pillars of Alzheimer’s Prevention” (\$450 per instructor). BFit & Well Annex will match this investment by covering instructor stipends and additional in-house training time, ensuring sustainability beyond the grant period.

Program Support & Outreach: Provide outreach materials, class schedules, and tracking tools to connect with underserved older adults and document program outcomes.

Performance Measures

Proposed Performance Measures (Trust developed)

How much did you do?

- a. Number (#) of Trust beneficiary participants receiving scholarships to participate in SAIL and BRITE programs during the reporting period, broken down by primary Trust beneficiary category.
- b. Number (#) of instructors receiving scholarships to support certification, or continued education and training during the reporting period.
- c. Total number (#) of brain health/exercise classes offered during the reporting period.
- d. Average overall attendance rate of classes during the reporting period.

How well did you do it?

- a. Provide a narrative describing the timeline, activities, successes, challenges, and any lessons learned during the grant reporting period. Be sure to describe community outreach activities conducted during the reporting period. Additionally, please provide an electronic copy of any participant engagement materials designed or distributed for the project.
- b. Number (#) and percentage of participants completing at least 75% of the scheduled exercise/training sessions during the reporting period.
- c. Number (#) and percentage (%) of participants who felt supported and encouraged while participating in the program.
- d. Number (#) and percentage (%) of instructors who received their certification (Alzheimer’s Brain Health, 4 Pillars of Alzheimer’s Prevention, etc.) during the reporting period.
- e. Number (#) and percentage (%) of participants who were overall satisfied with the program.

Is anyone better off?

- a. Number (#) and percentage (%) of participants who demonstrated an improvement in elements of their physical fitness (strength, balance, coordination, mobility) over the course of the grant reporting period.
- b. Number (#) and percentage (%) of participants who demonstrated an improvement in cognitive function (memory, processing, reaction time) over the course of the grant reporting period.

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- c. Number (#) and percentage (%) of participants reporting an improved sense of confidence, independence or quality of life as a result of their participation in the program.
- d. Three statements from participants (or their care givers) describing how participation in the program has impacted their quality of life, overall well-being, and/or mental health.

Sustainability (from grant application)

BFit & Well Annex is committed to sustaining its Brain and Body Health programming long after this grant period ends. Our nonprofit model combines member fees, targeted fundraising, and community partnerships to maintain ongoing operations and scholarship support.

Following the completion of this project, scholarships for participants in the SAIL and BRITE programs will continue to be supported through:

Member contributions and fundraising events, such as the annual Smart Brain Fundraiser and other community-based efforts.

Mini-grants from partner organizations including the Alzheimer's Resource Center and similar foundations supporting older adult wellness.

Fee-for-service revenue generated through ongoing membership, which offsets operational costs and allows us to dedicate external funds primarily to scholarships.

Volunteer and student involvement from our OT and PT university partners, which enhances program delivery at minimal added cost.

By investing in instructor training during this project, the Trust will also strengthen BFit & Well Annex's long-term capacity to deliver evidence-based programs without dependence on future grant funding. The certifications and curriculum developed through this initiative will remain active and self-sustaining through trained staff and internal mentorship.

In short, this project creates a lasting framework for access and inclusion—ensuring that older adults and individuals with neurological challenges continue to benefit from fall-prevention and brain-health programming well beyond the 2026–2027 grant year.

Who We Serve (from grant application)

This project directly serves Alaska Mental Health Trust beneficiaries, including individuals experiencing Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, traumatic brain injury (TBI), neurological or cognitive impairments. Participants in BFit & Well Annex's SAIL (Stay Active & Independent for Life) and BRITE (Brain Resilience, Integration, Training, and Exercise) programs often face physical, cognitive, and emotional challenges that increase their risk of falls, isolation, and decline in quality of life.

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Through scholarship-supported access to these evidence-based programs, beneficiaries will experience measurable improvements in balance, strength, and cognitive function. They will also gain renewed confidence, increased social engagement, and greater independence in daily living. By reducing fall risk, this project also helps prevent secondary injuries and traumatic brain injuries commonly caused by falls.

Ultimately, this project enhances both the physical and mental well-being of Trust beneficiaries—helping them remain active, connected, and empowered members of their communities.

Estimated Numbers of Beneficiaries Served Experiencing (from grant application)

Alzheimer's Disease & Related Dementias:	10
Traumatic Brain Injuries:	5
Secondary Beneficiaries (family members or caregivers providing support to primary beneficiaries):	13
Number of people to be trained	3

Project Budget (from grant application)

Personnel Services Costs	\$0.00
Personnel Services Costs (Other Sources)	\$0.00
Personnel Services Narrative	N/A

Travel Costs	\$0.00
Travel Costs (Other Sources)	\$0.00
Travel Costs Narrative	N/A

Space or Facilities Costs	\$0.00
Space or Facilities Costs (Other Sources)	\$0.00
Space or Facilities Narrative	N/A

Supplies Costs	\$3000.00
Supplies Costs (Other Sources)	\$3000.00
Supplies Narrative	Program Support & Outreach – \$3,000 Funds will cover community outreach and participant engagement materials, including printed flyers, program brochures, signage, and participant handouts for the SAIL and BRITE programs. This budget will also support basic office supplies and data tracking materials needed to document participation and outcomes. BFit & Well Annex will contribute an additional \$3,000 in matching funds to enhance outreach and promotion,

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	ensuring broad community awareness of scholarship opportunities for Trust beneficiaries.
Equipment Costs	\$0.00
Equipment Costs (Other Sources)	\$0.00
Equipment Narrative	N/A
Other Costs	\$21,750.00
Other Costs (Other Sources)	\$1350.00
Other Costs Narrative	<p>Instructor Training \$1350</p> <p>Funds will support instructor time and training related to certification, continuing education, and class implementation for the SAIL (Stay Active & Independent for Life) and BRITE (Brain Resilience, Integration, Training, and Exercise) programs. This includes participation in the Alzheimer's Brain Health/“4 Pillars of Alzheimer’s Prevention” course (\$450 per instructor) and preparation time to integrate new evidence-based practices into programming.</p> <p>BFit & Well Annex will provide an additional \$1350 in matching funds to cover instructor stipends and internal training support, ensuring project readiness and sustainability beyond the grant period.</p> <p>Scholarships \$20,400</p> <p>Provide financial assistance to individuals diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease/dementia, Parkinson's Disease, mild cognitive impairment, or other neurological/physical challenges who cannot afford tuition. Scholarships will open access to both SAIL and BRITE classes—helping participants build strength, coordination, cognitive focus, and overall confidence.</p>

Other Funding Sources (from grant application)

Bfit & Well Annex	\$4350.00
Total Leveraged Funds	\$4350.00