

Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
(Washington, DC)

Total Award: \$100,000 over 1 year

Leveraging Access to Quality Health Care for Low-Income Working Families

To support the Leveraging Access to Quality Health Care for Low-Income Working Families project and their efforts to protect children's rights under the Medicaid Act and to remedy discrepancies between policy and the implementation of the Act. In *Memisovski v. Maram*, the Shriver Center is representing children enrolled in Medicaid in Illinois in a class action suit demanding adequate health care coverage through the Medicaid Program. In August 2004, a federal judge issued an opinion in favor of the plaintiffs. This case sets precedent regarding the rights of plaintiffs to bring such suits, children's rights under the Medicaid Act, and the impact of rates paid to doctors on the availability of quality care. The decision also establishes that health information must be provided in basic language terms to communicate with the largest group of the target audience; this information must be relayed both orally and in written form. The Shriver Center is currently involved in devising specific ways and program ideas that may be instituted to rectify the system, preparing for a potential appeal, as well as communicating with advocates in three other states about similar cases. The project will nationally disseminate information about the litigation model and the policy and systemic improvements generated by the case.

Program Contribution Breakdown:

\$50,000 Health Program: *Objective I, Strategy 1*

\$50,000 Interprogram Initiatives for Social and Economic Justice: *Objectives I & II*