



**BlueCross BlueShield
Association**

An Association of Independent
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans

Investing in America's Health

2009 Report

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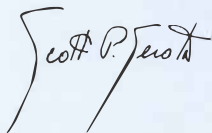
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Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies have a long and distinguished history of supporting the health and wellness of not only their members, but also their communities. Despite the recession and the nation's struggling economy, 2009 was no exception. As many worthwhile community organizations and causes were pushed to the extreme by greater demands for their services during the downturn, the Blues responded with stronger partnerships than ever to support their communities coast-to-coast.

In keeping with their collective view of a better healthcare system for the future, the 39 Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies — which collectively provide healthcare coverage for nearly 100 million people across all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico — collaborated with organizations large and small on innovative initiatives to raise healthcare quality and safety, increase access, maintain affordability and improve consumer health through healthier lifestyles and healthier communities. They contributed more than \$200 million to support these important initiatives, which go far to strengthen and improve our nation's care.

I am proud to share *Investing in America's Health*, which highlights some of the impressive programs supported by Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies in collaboration with our community partners across the country.

Yours in good health,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott P. Serota". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "S".

Scott P. Serota
President and CEO
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

What our community partners are saying...

"These metrics have allowed hospital leaders, physicians and other clinicians to implement clinical improvements, with Alabama healthcare consumers being the beneficiaries of this collective work."

– Glen C. Sisk, CEO, Coosa Valley Medical Center

"We are proud to partner with the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona team. Blue Cross is a pillar of philanthropy and social responsibility, and we share in the responsibility of investing in our community by creating and supporting sustainable programs that improve the lives of children and families in our state."

– Derrick Hall, president and CEO, Arizona Diamondbacks

"It was a wonderful experience to hear patients say, 'Thank you for helping me.'"

– Dr. Wendell D. Garrett Jr., DDS, Arkansas State Dental Association president

"We have heard from multiple funders that when they see 'Blue Shield of California Foundation' their eyes light up and ears perk to attention. Seeing that the clinic is the recipient of those kind of dollars is absolutely important."

– Clinic executive director

"The grant from BluePrints for the Community has made it possible for us to successfully reach and serve more members of the community."

– Brian Olson, CEO, La Red Health Center

"We are excited to expand the outreach efforts of our members through the community grants process of The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida. These funds and activities will go a long way in our ongoing efforts to reduce the childhood obesity rate and increase opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity."

– Karen Coleman, director, Healthy Jacksonville Coalition to Prevent Childhood Obesity

"The Healthy Conversations project has allowed The Governor's Prevention Partnership to offer much-needed advanced training to mentors throughout Connecticut. The mentoring relationship presents an ideal opportunity to communicate and model health-promoting behaviors."

– Jill Spinetti, president and CEO, The Governor's Prevention Partnership

"The HMSA Foundation and HICORE partnership sharpens the focus on childhood obesity and is a huge step forward in developing productive collaborations with health providers, researchers and the community to improve the health and wellness of Hawaii's families."

– Dr. Raul Rudoy, chair, University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics

"Color Me Healthy is a great program! I look forward to continuing the partnership with the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health and reaching more preschools in Idaho."

– Kaylene Craig, Nutrition and Physical Activity program coordinator, Eastern Idaho Public Health District

"New Mexico Blue Cross and Blue Shield is a vital partner in our work in ending hunger in New Mexico. Their diligent volunteer work ensures we can continue to distribute more than 20 million pounds of food every year to the increasing number of hungry people in our communities across the state."

– Melody Wattenbarger, president and CEO, Roadrunner Food Bank, Albuquerque, New Mexico

"Exercise has been shown to improve attention span and focus, lower anxiety and depression levels, and result in fewer discipline incidents — all factors that impact learning. After students exercise they are less impulsive, their motivation to learn is increased, and they have less desire to get out of their chairs and move around. We are committed to aggressive efforts focused on better nutrition and physical education for kids."

– Anne Flannery, president and CEO, PE4life

"We are pleased to partner with the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Foundation for the new mobile screening unit. Obtaining regular screenings is an important part of identifying potential health problems, for instance the blood sugar screening helps detect diabetes, the number one cause of new blindness. Thanks to the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Foundation, we are proud to be able to fill these screening needs for Kansans at no cost."

– Joyce DeVore, president, Kansas Lions Sight Foundation

"I would like to thank you for all that was done to make our organization known throughout the state and [for making] a donation [toward] the continued growth and success in our quest for further development of patient outreach and pilot recruitment."

– Philip Thomas, 2009 Angel, president, Pilots for Patients

"We believe the power of partnership and community can make an incredible difference in women's and children's lives. Text4baby brings Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies' mission to life and, with the help of our partners, we believe we can be a strong catalyst for change."

– Judy Meehan, executive director, National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition

"Funding has allowed [us] to restructure our Urgent Care services to better meet the needs of uninsured individuals and families by connecting them to health benefits, primary care and social services during the walk-in healthcare visit, and by providing access to a medical home."

– Frances M. Anthes, president and CEO, Family Health Center of Worcester, Inc.

"This rotation has strengthened my interest in practicing rural medicine. I really enjoyed the scope and breadth of practice in rural areas, where I feel family doctors fill a more important role."

– Student, Wayne State University

"Thanks to the efforts of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Foundation and others, recognition that housing is a key social determinant of health has been woven into the bricks and mortar of housing rehab, education, public learning, training and policy changes that give us all hope that our world can and will be made better."

– David Jacobs, PhD, CIH, director of research, National Center for Healthy Housing

"We're extremely grateful that the Menorah Legacy Foundation and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City have joined with us in our quest to make quality, daily physical education a reality for every student in the United States. We applaud their commitment to the health and well-being of our youth."

– Anne Flannery, president and CEO, PE4life

"The Caring Foundation of Montana's contribution, along with the CMS matching grant and expanded eligibility of the Healthy Montana Kids program, significantly impacts our ability to provide essential dental services to over 19,000 Montana children."

– Anna Whiting Sorrell, director, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services

"[Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska] are involved at every end of this state, not only at providing good health information, but also they are a tremendous public servant and very charitable to the state of Nebraska. Thank you so much to you and the company for doing this."

– Doug Kristensen, chancellor, University of Nebraska at Kearney

"As a direct result of The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey's Health Center Initiative, the Center for Healthy Women has rapidly emerged as one of the region's primary conduits to comprehensive and continuous prenatal care. Together, we will continue to work for healthier babies, healthier women, and healthier communities."

– Alan Goldsmith, PhD, president, Jewish Renaissance Medical Center, Jewish Renaissance Foundation

"Lead poisoning is 100 percent preventable, and in our partnership with BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York our Wipe Out Lead campaign has had significant results: Tens of thousands of individuals were reached with lead poisoning prevention information, 1,000 kids at risk for lead poisoning were tested and treated and 100 homes were made lead safe."

– Clotilde Perez-Bode Dedecker, president and CEO, Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo

"Thanks to Excellus BlueCross BlueShield's support of Care Fusion's MedMined Data Mining Surveillance Services, I can data mine microbiology culture information; query and aggregate that information; print reports, graphs and charts; and trend information over time without leaving my desk."

– Karen L. Davis, RN, BSN, CIC, infection prevention coordinator, Arnot Ogden Medical Center

"The Fit Together program provided a catalyst to enable us to no longer rely on volunteers and help from the neighboring city to provide physical activity opportunities in our own county."

– Dan Porter, Fit Together project director and Camden County planning director

"The program has been very helpful, allowing me, as a single parent, to get health, dental and vision care with no burden to me and my daughter. I truly appreciate this program."

– Parent, North Dakota

"The Caring Foundation enrolled our son, and he soon had an appointment to see a dentist. He received needed treatment and now he is without any infection and is eating like a boy should. I am grateful beyond words for the Caring Foundation's help."

– Bianca Meza, mother

"Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania's Nursing Scholarship Program has been a great source of encouragement and financial assistance to many of our students. At times, it has added just enough to a student's resources to enable him or her to continue in the program"

– Sharon Auker, RN, PhD, director of nursing, Pennsylvania College of Technology

"One-third of all Pennsylvania children are overweight or obese, putting them at risk of a lifetime of health problems. Thanks to the support of the Capital BlueCross Active Schools Program, local schools are making the health of children a top priority by combating childhood obesity through increased physical activity and improved nutrition for their students."

– Everette James, secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Health

"Thanks to Highmark's leadership in handling the logistics, the Walk for a Healthy Community provides DePaul School for Hearing and Speech with an additional fundraising event that has become a stable source of annual funds at a minimum cost. We are so grateful to be a part of the event, which has helped DePaul raise funds, generate greater awareness in the community and provide a forum for the entire DePaul school community to come together for a fun day that promotes a healthy lifestyle."

– John Krysinaky, marketing and special events manager, DePaul School for Hearing and Speech

"The IBC Charitable Medical Care Grant Program has greatly increased the ability of St. Catherine's to provide healthcare to the uninsured. The funding from the grant initially saved our clinic from closure and currently serves as an integral part of our financial backbone."

– Dr. Sheila Davis, clinic director, St. Catherine Labouré Medical Clinic

"We have had a wonderful partnership with Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island for the last four years. During this time we have grown our wellness program from fewer than 2,000 people per year to over 15,000, and our participants have lost an average of one full BMI point (over 7 lbs.)."

– Colin Murphy, RN, MBA, executive director, Shape UpRI

"Harvest Hope could not fulfill its humanitarian outreach and mission to feed the hungry in South Carolina without the compassionate assistance of community partners like BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina. I want to express our deepest thanks for the time, diligence and continued support shown by their staff in their partnership with Harvest Hope."

– Denise Holland, executive director, Harvest Hope Food Bank

"This partnership will provide a valid database for quality improvements that surgeons and hospitals can utilize, and improve care. We also expect this partnership to carry over into other relationships and future projects with physicians."

– Craig A. Becker, president, Tennessee Hospital Association

"Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont has been an essential part of Girls on the Run Vermont's (GOTRVT) ability to reach more than 10,000 girls statewide over the past seven years. This ongoing partnership with GOTRVT has extended from coaching, through providing volunteers for our 5K events, taking videos and photos at the events, and advertising about our program, to offering substantial financial support."

– Nancy Heydinger, executive director, Girls on the Run Vermont

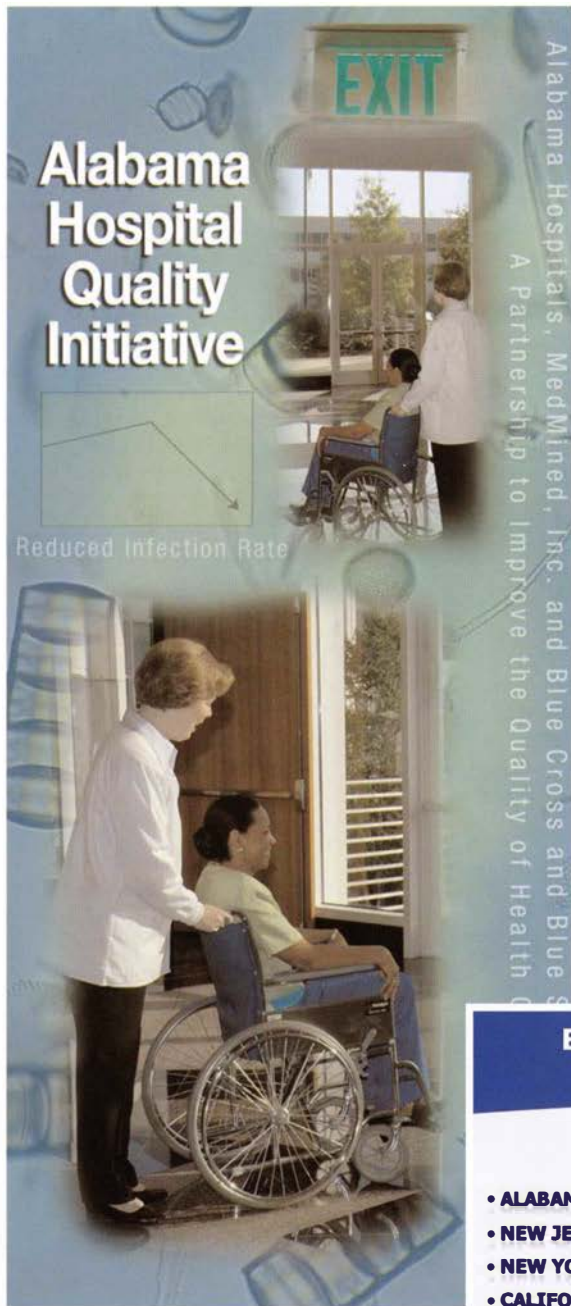
"The American Diabetes Association's Winning at Work program helps employers to detect, prevent and manage diabetes in the workplace. Thanks to the continued support of Premera Blue Cross, this program has reached more than 5,000 employees in Western Washington."

– Linda Henderson, executive director, American Diabetes Association, Washington State

"You just approved my mammogram assistance. I just want to say thank you so much, because without you, I would not be able to afford this procedure. It is especially important to me as I lost my sister one and a half years ago to breast cancer. You are a blessing."

– Robin Winters, Wyoming

Alabama Hospital Quality Initiative (AHQI)



“These metrics have allowed hospital leaders, physicians and other clinicians to implement clinical improvements, with Alabama healthcare consumers being the beneficiaries of this collective work.”

– Glen C. Sisk, CEO, Coosa Valley Medical Center

Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans Lead the Way

- ALABAMA
- NEW JERSEY
- NEW YORK
- CALIFORNIA
- TEXAS
- PENNSYLVANIA
- ILLINOIS

■ CareFusion™ MedMined client states
★ State initiatives

The complex block features a title 'Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans Lead the Way' at the top. Below the title is a list of seven states: ALABAMA, NEW JERSEY, NEW YORK, CALIFORNIA, TEXAS, PENNSYLVANIA, and ILLINOIS. To the right of the list is a map of the United States where the listed states are highlighted in red. A legend at the bottom right of the map indicates that red shading represents 'CareFusion™ MedMined client states' and blue stars represent 'State initiatives'. A stethoscope is visible in the top right corner of the block.

Hospital-acquired infections account for 50 percent of all hospital complications and cause approximately 88,000 deaths nationwide every year. This leads to a mortality rate larger than AIDS-related deaths and auto accident fatalities.

Treatment for nosocomial infections is expensive, costing approximately \$14,000 per case. The high rate of infection, coupled with the cost per case, leads to higher healthcare costs. Traditional tracking of infections is difficult, time intensive and, most often, too late to change the actions that caused an infectious outbreak.

In 2002, **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama**, through a partnership with CareFusion™ MedMined Services, the Alabama Hospital Association and Alabama hospitals, embarked on a campaign to fight hospital-acquired infections. The *Alabama Hospital Quality Initiative* (AHQI) employs unique real-time data mining technology and offers ongoing clinical services. It enables a team-oriented, hospital-wide approach to minimize the incidence and effects of hospital-acquired infections as well as promote efficacious antibiotic therapy. Sixty-four hospitals, representing 93 percent of all Alabama admissions, currently have this automated service.

In 2009, a benchmarking tool was developed using an evidence-based, risk-adjusted model. The benchmarking tool allows for objective comparison of hospital-acquired infections between hospitals. Hospitals are identified as "excellent," "good" or "fair" in preventing hospital-acquired infections based on a national statistical analysis. Alabama hospitals rated as 'excellent' are recognized on Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama's Doctor Finder tool on its Web site.

Additionally, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama provides online targeted educational programs for the smallest of Alabama hospitals. This outreach program has supplied much-needed resources within these hospitals and contributed to the campaign to reduce infections.

Quarterly Best Practice Meetings are held with representatives from all partners, input from national experts and, most importantly, best practices from Alabama hospitals. Open dialogue allows many improvements that standardize and enhance care on a statewide basis.

This collaborative effort helps save patients' lives, allows patients to go home well and on time, lowers hospital costs and shortens hospital stays. AHQI has reduced hospital-acquired infections by more than 33 percent since 2004, and has proven to be a "win-win" situation for all by reducing the human and financial harm of infections. Clinicians are armed with real-time, hospital-wide, objective, measurable and reproducible information that pinpoints actionable opportunities for proactive interventions.

The AHQI model currently is being adopted in five other states – New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Texas and California. ■



"We are proud to partner with the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona team. Blue Cross is a pillar of philanthropy and social responsibility, and we share in the responsibility of investing in our community by creating and supporting sustainable programs that improve the lives of children and families in our state."

– Derrick Hall, president and CEO, Arizona Diamondbacks



For the last five years, **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona** (BCBSAZ) has offered a free, fun and educational fitness program to schools across Arizona. The program, the *Walk On! Challenge*, promotes 60 minutes of exercise per day for the entire month of February. This year's program was implemented in more than 280 schools with more than 30,000 fifth-graders. The end result is increased awareness among participants and their families about the importance and benefits of exercise and hopefully new habits for a lifetime.

With experts estimating that nearly one-third of our children are either overweight or obese, programs such as the *Walk On! Challenge* are a line of defense against the epidemic.

In addition to long-term programs, BCBSAZ is always looking for new ways to make a difference in the Arizona community. This year BCBSAZ is excited to partner with the Arizona Diamondbacks to launch *Kids Change the World*, a community initiative that

encourages children and families to get involved in their local communities and lend a helping hand to other children. Supported by in-stadium promotion and a public relations campaign, children and families will be encouraged to contribute any amount into change containers located around the Diamondbacks stadium. The funds will be donated to local charities offering services and support for children, including one charity selected by Arizona children and fans. The charity will be selected through an online voting poll on the official Diamondbacks Web site.

In addition, teachers, parents and friends will have an opportunity to nominate outstanding kids who are making a difference in their community.

Community relations are a pillar of BCBSAZ's success. With programs such as *Walk On!* and *Kids Change the World*, the company is investing in the community by creating and supporting sustainable programs that improve the lives of children and families in Arizona. ■

Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield

Arkansas Mission of Mercy



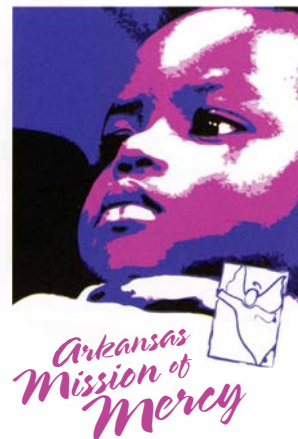
Almost 2,000 patients received needed dental care over a two-day period.



More than 900 volunteers contributed to the success of the event.

"It was incredible to see so many dentists and auxiliary staff donating their time and working together to help people in need. It was an event where you could actually see people's needs being met."

– Dr. Derek Marks, DDS



Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield COO Mike Brown (left) and CEO Mark White helped keep the lines moving smoothly.



There is a dramatic need for dental care in the state of Arkansas. For many, it is an affordability issue. Currently, 18 percent of Arkansans live below the federal poverty level. With a median income of \$38,000, many families cannot afford proper healthcare, including oral care. For others, access to care is the problem. Because Arkansas is largely a rural state, there is an uneven distribution of dentists among the population, making it difficult for some to seek care in their communities.

To help address this lack of affordability and access, the Arkansas State Dental Association created an annual, two-day event called the *Arkansas Mission of Mercy*. Open to anyone who needs dental fillings or extractions, the free event brings together volunteer dentists and technicians, community volunteers and corporate supporters to provide dental care that is desperately needed but unattainable for many.

The Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas, which is funded by Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield to support health improvement programs in Arkansas, served as one of the 2009 event's financial supporters. The Blue & You Foundation provided support enabling the project to buy additional dental instruments so they could serve more people. Instruments must be sterilized between patients, which takes time. By having more instruments on hand, the turnaround time between patients was shortened, allowing more Arkansans to be helped during the two-day period.

The 2009 event was held in the northwest Arkansas city of Springdale, an area that is home to many Latinos and emigrants from the Marshall Islands. People lined up for blocks and braved the rainy weather, some sleeping overnight for the much-needed chance to see a dentist. Without this care, they would have been forced to visit hospital emergency rooms or silently continued their lives in pain. Instead, parents who received treatment were able to return to work and provide for their families, and children were able to return to school and focus on their studies rather than be distracted by dental discomfort.

The two-day event produced the following results:

- 1,970 patients were relieved of dental pain and infection
- 1,480 teeth were filled
- 3,015 teeth were extracted
- 175 dentists participated at no cost
- 90 other volunteers participated, including 85 dental hygienists, 228 dental assistants, 12 pharmacists, 40 nurses and 425 support staff

Beyond the numbers, the *Arkansas Mission of Mercy* helped to restore a smile, replenish dignity and return some joy to the simple act of eating for many who were suffering. The Blue & You Foundation already has provided funding to support the 2010 event, this time to be held in southern Arkansas. ■

Strengthening California's safety net organizations



Wall mural at grantee Rainbow Services of Los Angeles County, which provides assistance for women and children dealing with family violence.

"We have heard from multiple funders that when they see 'Blue Shield of California Foundation' their eyes light up and ears perk to attention. Seeing that the clinic is the recipient of those kind of dollars is absolutely important."

– Clinic executive director



Doctor and patient at The Saban Free Clinic that services the Los Angeles area.



The waiting room of Lifelong Medical Care in Oakland.



Door sign at grantee, Catalyst Domestic Violence Services in Chico, which aims to prevent and reduce violence through crisis intervention and community education.

The searing effects of the recession and deep budget cuts have left many California safety net organizations struggling to meet growing demand with less funding. Community health clinics are seeing more of the sick, needy and unemployed, while domestic violence shelters are reporting more demand for beds even as they struggle to keep their doors open. Supporting the organizations on the front lines matters now more than ever, which is why **Blue Shield of California Foundation** continues to work to strengthen California's safety net.

Blue Shield of California Foundation provides core support funding to safety net organizations to use wherever it's needed most. These grants are part of the Foundation's commitment to protect and expand the safety net providers that operate within the thinnest of margins.

Each year, the Foundation awards funding to community health clinics through its *Community Clinic Core Support Initiative*. Every two years, the Foundation awards funding to domestic violence service providers through the *Blue Shield Against Violence Shelter Core Support Initiative*.

A recent evaluation found that the *Community Clinic Core Support Initiative's* biggest impact was improving clinics' ability to deliver services by covering operating expenses, stabilizing their finances, sustaining current levels of service and covering uncompensated care costs.

As part of its annual initiative, in 2009, Blue Shield of California Foundation awarded funding to 193 community health clinics with more than 600 clinic sites throughout California. As part of a new initiative, the Foundation also awarded funds to help regional clinic consortia train and assist their member clinics on how to manage in difficult financial times.

In 2008, as part of its two-year *Shelter Core Support Initiative*, the Foundation awarded funding to provide general operating support to more than 100 domestic violence service providers. In 2009, the Foundation also responded to immediate need by awarding funds to provide customized "Tough Times Consulting" to equip grantees with skills to help them responsibly implement decisions in response to budget cuts and help strengthen their financial condition.

Joelle Gomez, executive director of the Women's Center of San Joaquin County, describes the impact that general operating support has made on her organization: "With the challenges facing our community in this difficult time, and domestic violence on the rise, the *Blue Shield Against Violence* operating support has helped our organization ensure that no victim of domestic violence is ever turned away and no family is denied safety." ■



American Academy of Pediatrics: Use of a new screening tool provides an opportunity for parents and pediatricians to work together to detect developmental and behavioral problems in children.

“The grant from BluePrints for the Community has made it possible for us to successfully reach and serve more members of the community.”

– **Brian Olson, CEO, La Red Health Center**

To address issues faced by Delaware’s uninsured and underserved populations, as well as healthcare disparities throughout the state, **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Delaware (BCBSD)** created *BluePrints for the Community*. The donor-advised fund was established in late 2007, and awarded its first grants to a variety of deserving community partners in November 2008.

During 2009, *BluePrints for the Community* funded seven initiatives, impacting Delaware’s three counties – Kent, Sussex and New Castle.



Nemours Partnership for Children’s Health: Dr. Inga, head of the dental surgery program at Nemours, shows a young patient her new and improved smile.



Hope Medical Clinic

Free Medical and Dental Care for the Uninsured in Delaware

BCBSD's support allowed the Hope Medical Clinic to serve approximately 2,630 low-income, uninsured patients, including 580 new patients — a 28-percent increase in patients from the previous year.

La Red Health Center

Prenatal Program Expansion

BCBSD's support allowed the La Red Health Center to provide prenatal care to more than 400 individual patients, while 230 babies born to these patients became new patients at the Center; hire additional medical staff to support the increased patient load; and hire promotoras (community outreach workers), who provided education to nearly 520 women in the community; purchase a patient-transport van that provided 741 rides for patients without access to transportation.

Nemours Partnership for Children's Health

Garrett B. Lyons Sr., DDS Children's Dental Program

BCBSD's support helped establish an endowed fund for a Fellowship in Dentistry for Children with Special Needs at Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children. The *Garrett B. Lyons Sr., DDS Children's Dental Program* will enhance and support education opportunities for dental professionals, expand the facilities and purchase new technology and equipment to support delivery of care.

Westside Family Healthcare

Diabetes Management Program

BCBSD's support provided *Diabetes Management Program* access to more than 1,200 underserved and uninsured patients in Wilmington and Newark, including 80 new patients with diabetes. The program earned a "best practice" distinction from the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease in 2009.

American Academy of Pediatrics – Delaware Chapter

Delaware Developmental Comprehensive Screening Project

BCBSD's funding supported the organization's mission to help ensure that all children have comprehensive screenings at 9, 18, 24 and 30 months of age, consistent with the policies of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). AAP-DE also seeks to develop a statewide data report on child development screening. As a result of the grant, the AAP-DE has established pilot sites at four pediatric practices throughout Delaware and plans a statewide conference on developmental screening this year.

Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing

Homeless Shelter for Men

As a result of BCBSD's support, the Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing has provided shelter and assistance for more than 200 men, has expanded the shelter into a year-round program and is in the process of securing and renovating a permanent site. The organization has: helped 70 men find transitional, public or private housing; enabled 69 men to obtain full- or part-time employment; provided access to medical care, addiction counseling and mental health care for all shelter clients; and opened a bicycle repair shop where clients can acquire job skills, earn funding for the shelter and provide services to the public.

Henrietta Johnson Medical Center

Prenatal Program Enhancement and Expansion

BCBSD's support expanded the availability of on-site prenatal, postpartum and pediatric medical services, expanded community outreach and maximized productivity in daily patient care. As a result of the grant, the medical center has hired a family practice doctor, bilingual social worker and medical assistant, enrolled 151 new prenatal patients and contracted with an outreach worker to provide education, transportation and resources for high-risk patients. ■

Florida Health Literacy Grants Program



2009 Recipients of the Florida Health Literacy Grants Program.

“Working in collaboration with local programs, this initiative will help adult learners to better navigate the medical system and make informed choices about their health and nutrition. The information and skills that they will acquire may very well be life changing.”

– **Greg Smith, executive director, Florida Literacy Coalition**



Students participating in the Plant a Thousand Gardens Collaborative Nutrition Initiative.

Healthcare providers and adult educators around the country increasingly recognize that limited English language and literacy skills can have a significant impact on health. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 14 percent of American adults have below-average health literacy skills. Low health literacy costs an estimated \$73 billion annually in the form of longer hospital stays, unnecessary emergency room visits, increased doctor visits and increased medication.

In response to this problem, **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida** awarded a three-year grant in 2009 to the Florida Literacy Coalition, to establish the *Florida Health Literacy Grants Program*. The program aims to improve the health literacy level of Florida residents by assisting literacy programs through financial and technical support. As part of the initiative, the Florida Literacy Coalition will provide grantees with training opportunities, resource sharing forums and inter-agency collaboration facilitation to build upon the strengths of each individual program.



The cornerstone of the statewide initiative is a mini-grants program that will provide financial support to cutting-edge, community-based literacy centers to develop or expand literacy services to ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) families through the use of health-oriented materials and curricula.

A total of 46 health literacy grants will be provided: 10 in 2009, 16 in 2010 and 20 in 2011. Staggering the number of grants awarded each year will allow the program to grow in a controlled manner and allow exceptional grantees to be funded in subsequent years. By the end of the third year, approximately 2,000 families/households will have increased health literacy skills and overall literacy rates.

Regular training opportunities also will be available for teachers, tutors and administrators about how to incorporate health information and topics into their curricula. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida also sponsored the first-ever health literacy track at the annual Florida Literacy Conference in May 2009.

The first 10 grants were made in May 2009 to organizations located across Florida. Information and data from mid-year and year-end progress reports will be synthesized into an annual program report. Promising practices and outstanding classroom projects will be documented and shared on the health literacy section of the Florida Literacy Coalition's Web site. ■

The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida

Embrace a Healthy Florida addressing childhood obesity

Childhood obesity is a growing problem throughout Florida. **The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida** hopes to impact this epidemic through a range of community-based efforts addressing several factors that contribute to this problem.

Since the launch of *Embrace a Healthy Florida* in summer 2008, approximately 40 grants have been made to organizations across Florida.

Jacksonville

Jacksonville is the first city in which *Embrace a Healthy Florida* was launched. With funding from The Blue Foundation, the Healthy Jacksonville Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition, in partnership with the Duval County Health Department and the Health Planning Council of Northeast Florida, released *2009 Healthy Kids, Healthy Jacksonville: A Community Call to Action*, to define priority actions and steps that can be taken to reduce and ultimately reverse the childhood obesity epidemic in Jacksonville. The publication was developed following a nine-month period of information collection, community meetings and research.

In response to the *Call to Action*, the Coalition collected proposals from organizations that would implement the priority actions and steps. At the end of 2009, 17 organizations were selected as recipients of *Healthy Kids, Healthy Jacksonville* Community Grants.

Miami-Dade County

The Education Fund is a nonprofit organization supporting innovations in public schools in Miami-Dade County. Its groundbreaking program, *Plant a Thousand Gardens Collaborative Nutrition Initiative*, addresses the alarming rate of childhood obesity, diabetes and other harmful medical conditions due to poor nutritional choices.

The student-centered, seed-to-table curriculum program was piloted in five elementary schools in 2007-08 and has expanded to 25 schools for the 2009-2010 school year, reaching more than 9,000 children.

The initiative aims to change eating patterns in elementary school children and their families through hands-on nutrition legacy, and to identify and engage teachers and school leadership in a collaborative-action research activity that empowers them to become advocates for nutritional legacy.

Initial results have been very promising. Three schools have changed menus as a result of student requests for healthier foods. Families report preparing healthier foods and children report eating fewer unhealthy foods.



“The Healthy Conversations project has allowed The Governor’s Prevention Partnership to offer much-needed advanced training to mentors throughout Connecticut. The mentoring relationship presents an ideal opportunity to communicate and model health-promoting behaviors.”

– **Jill Spinetti, president and CEO, The Governor’s Prevention Partnership**

Nearly one in three children and teens in the United States is overweight or obese. Overweight children and teens are more likely to develop serious health problems such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, asthma, sleep apnea, and certain types of cancer.

In response, the **Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation, LLC** provides support to the Governor's Partnership to Protect Connecticut's Workforce, Inc.'s *Healthy Conversations Pilot*. This pilot program in Connecticut reflects Anthem's national commitment to help reduce childhood obesity rates.

The *Healthy Conversations Pilot* program targets middle school-aged children and their adult mentor partners, encouraging them to incorporate health-based educational material into their conversations. The program aims to increase physical activity and healthy nutrition among youth.

Anthem's support has enabled the Governor's Partnership to create *Healthy Conversations* toolkits, which offer age-appropriate strategies for improved lifestyle, including avoidance of tobacco use. The toolkits — tailored for mentor coordinators and mentors themselves — are set for distribution into 2010, through collaborations with key community organizations including local Big Brothers Big Sisters chapters and other service organizations.

In the future, the *Healthy Conversations Pilot* program hopes to incorporate toolkit materials into Connecticut's middle-school curriculums. ■

Franklin Health Access – RX Program

A high percentage of the 6,000 uninsured and 4,000 underinsured living in rural Greater Franklin County, Maine, have limited access to medication cost information and have difficulty discussing medical cost options with their physicians. Many of these individuals also have difficulty understanding or complying with medication instructions, in part due to widespread lower literacy levels.

In response to this problem, the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation, LLC provided funding to support the Healthy Community Coalition's *Franklin Health Access – RX Program*.

In line with Anthem's Signature Healthy Generations commitment to reduce significant public health issues, the *Franklin Health Access – RX Program* seeks to support the Healthy Community Coalition's efforts to improve access to prescription medications, improve medication safety through education, improve medication compliance through the implementation of a community-wide electronic prescribing system, increase participation in prescription assistance programs and increase the knowledge of providers and patients on the value of cost-of-medication discussions.

Anthem's funding helped link individuals at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty level to a comprehensive range of donated health services and community resources offered to indigent, uninsured patients. The funding also supported full implementation of e-prescribing within the Franklin Community Health Network: This implementation is expected to increase community-improved safety outcomes by alerting providers of duplicative prescriptions of controlled substances, improve health outcomes due to better medication compliance and improve provider workflow efficiencies.



"The HMSA Foundation and HICORE partnership sharpens the focus on childhood obesity and is a huge step forward in developing productive collaborations with health providers, researchers and the community to improve the health and wellness of Hawaii's families."

— Dr. Raul Radoy, chair, University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics

**HMSA
Foundation**



The prevalence of obesity in Hawaii's young people continues to grow, with potentially devastating consequences for Hawaii's families, communities and healthcare system.

A study of 10,199 children entering kindergarten from 2002-2003 in Hawaii's public schools found that 28.5 percent of the children were overweight or obese.

Childhood obesity can cause serious physical and mental problems. It is estimated that two-thirds of obese 5- to 10-year-old children demonstrate at least one important cardiovascular risk factor, and that one-third of all U.S. children will develop diabetes. Obesity also is associated with social stigma and discrimination, which often result in low self-esteem.

The Hawaii Medical Service Association

Foundation, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, has a three-year commitment to support the establishment of the *Hawaii Initiative for Childhood Obesity Research and Education (HICORE)* within the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine.

The mission of *HICORE* is to provide collaborative and multi-disciplinary leadership in research and education targeting childhood and adolescent obesity in Hawaii to improve the health and wellness of Hawaii's families now and for future generations.

To meet its mission, *HICORE* will:

- Serve as a repository for child and adolescent obesity projects in Hawaii
- Serve as a center for the education of community members, students, residents and physicians in childhood and adolescent obesity in Hawaii
- Assist in the development of research strategies and priorities related to childhood obesity in Hawaii
- Provide guidance to local granting agencies regarding research in childhood obesity in Hawaii
- Conduct research on childhood and adolescent obesity relevant to people of Hawaii

The funds from the Hawaii Medical Service Association Foundation will be key in establishing *HICORE* and fulfilling its objectives. ■



Foundation
for Health, Inc.

An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association



*"Color Me Healthy is a great program!
I look forward to continuing the
partnership with the Blue Cross of
Idaho Foundation for Health and
reaching more preschools in Idaho."*

**– Kaylene Craig, nutrition and physical activity
program coordinator, Eastern Idaho Public
Health District**



During the past 30 years, the prevalence of overweight and obese individuals in the United States has increased among all age groups. Shockingly, overweight children between ages two and five years have increased in prevalence from 7 percent in 1992 to 16.4 percent in 2006. In Idaho, 12.4 percent of children between the ages of 2 and 5 are overweight.

To address this growing problem, the **Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health** uses the *Color Me Healthy* program, a nutrition and physical activity program developed for preschool-age children in childcare settings. Childcare settings often have been overlooked in the fight against childhood obesity, yet they provide an ideal setting to teach children healthy behaviors. The Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation provides *Color Me Healthy* to childcare centers throughout Idaho, predominately Head Start programs.

Color Me Healthy aims to introduce preschool-age children to nutritious foods and help them explore opportunities for physical activity, with hope that those who adopt a healthy lifestyle at an early age will make it a habit for life.

Recognizing that children learn well through colors, music and activities that use their imagination, the program engages them with fun and interactive tools and activities, including imaginary trips, songs, music and colorful picture cards and posters. *Color Me Healthy* lessons focus on fruits and vegetables, encouraging children to interact as they learn about the colors and shapes of fruits and vegetables and where they grow.

Teachers receive *Color Me Healthy* tool kits that include a teacher's guide, lesson plans, picture cards, classroom posters, a music CD, a hand stamp, reproducible take-home activities and newsletters.

During the 2009/2010 school year, the Foundation for Health has been working in collaboration with Nutrition and Physical Activity Coordinators in six Idaho Health Districts. The coordinators assist with providing *Color Me Healthy* to Head Start programs and childcare centers in their districts and play an active role implementing the *Color Me Healthy* curriculum in the classrooms. This new partnership with the Health Districts allows the program to expand its reach to approximately 2,300 children throughout Idaho.

The *Color Me Healthy* program has shown impressive results, demonstrating that children who take part in the program eat significantly more fruit and vegetable snacks than those who do not. From baseline to three months after completion of the program, children exposed to *Color Me Healthy* increased their fruit consumption by 20.8 percent and their vegetable consumption by 33.1 percent.

In follow-up surveys at the end of the school year, 98 percent of the teachers report that *Color Me Healthy* increases children's fruit and vegetable consumption, and 90 percent report that *Color Me Healthy* increases children's willingness to try fruits and vegetables. ■



BCBSIL employee volunteers help build a playground for children.

“New Mexico Blue Cross and Blue Shield is a vital partner in our work in ending hunger in New Mexico. Their diligent volunteer work ensures we can continue to distribute more than 20 million pounds of food every year to the increasing number of hungry people in our communities across the state.”

– Melody Wattenbarger, president and CEO, Roadrunner Food Bank, Albuquerque, New Mexico

One of **Health Care Service Corporation’s (HCSC)** defining characteristics is its community presence across the states it covers – Illinois, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. Working with local organizations to help those in the community is an important part of HCSC’s corporate citizenship, as well as an extension of the corporation’s commitment to build relationships with members and healthcare providers.

HCSC’s community involvement strategy has focused most significantly on health and wellness, access to healthcare and quality of life. In seeking to address critical community needs in those areas, HCSC takes an integrated, strategic approach that coordinates corporate contributions, community partnerships and employee volunteerism for maximum community impact.



BCBSOK’s Oklahoma City employees and Blaze the Dragon get ready to step out for American Heart Association Heart Walk.



Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico employee volunteers sort school supplies for the annual Operation Back to School drive.



HCSC developed the *Blue Corps Employee Volunteer Program* to promote and encourage volunteerism among employees of its four Plans – Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas. *Blue Corps* makes it easy for employees to track and report their volunteer time and earn matching grants for their organizations based on the number of hours they volunteer.

The success of the program is due to the many employees who volunteer their personal time supporting a number of important causes. *Blue Corps* recognizes individual volunteer contributions, as well as corporate volunteer activities.

In 2008, more than 300 employees volunteered more than 4,900 hours to nearly 80 organizations. In 2009, with the launch of *Blue Corps 2.0*, these numbers rose dramatically: 1,285 employees volunteered 16,832 hours to 222 organizations. *Blue Corps 2.0* succeeded in its aim to increase employee volunteerism by creating a more engaging, user-friendly volunteer program.

HCSC supports volunteer outreach for approved Community Partner organizations by providing matching grants per verified volunteer hour up to an annual cap per organization. *Blue Corps 2.0* expanded criteria for participation, increasing the number of organizations eligible for the *Blue Corps Matching Grants* program. In 2009, HCSC nearly tripled its matching grants over the previous year.

Examples of volunteer efforts at each of HCSC's Plans include:

- Every year in New Mexico, **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico** sponsors and coordinates *Operation Back to School*, an employee-driven fundraiser to collect school supplies for needy students. Through fundraisers and their own donations, employees buy pencils, crayons, glue, paper, notebooks and scissors for students. Many employees volunteer their time to deliver the supplies to schools statewide. The 2010 campaign will be the 20th anniversary of this major employee-run community campaign.
 - **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma** and its employees actively support the American Heart Association (AHA) with a number of activities throughout the year and with executive leadership serving on the Board of Directors and on various AHA committees. In 2009, the annual Heart Walks in both Tulsa and Oklahoma City were particularly successful in both raising money for the AHA and in engaging significant numbers of employees as both volunteers and as walkers.
 - **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas** is a major sponsor of *Marathon Kids*®, a free, six-month running/walking and nutrition program that helps kids who are most vulnerable to childhood obesity (K-5th graders) increase their physical activity with walking/running a total of 26.2 miles in small increments in a six month period and make healthy choices for a lifetime. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas volunteers appear as Blue Bear at the kick-off ceremony and final-mile celebration, and distribute coloring books and healthy portion placemats to the participants. In addition, executives volunteer on the organization's Board of Directors. ■
- **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois** worked in partnership with KaBOOM!® in 2009 to build a playground in Chicago's Rogers Park neighborhood. KaBOOM! unites funders like Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois with neighborhood-based organizations and residents to build parks, mostly in areas where children don't have access to safe play areas. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois and KaBOOM! plan to build several more parks during 2010.



BCBSTX volunteers participate in the Marathon Kids Final Mile Run in Dallas.

"Exercise has been shown to improve attention span and focus, lower anxiety and depression levels, and result in fewer discipline incidents — all factors that impact learning. After students exercise they are less impulsive, their motivation to learn is increased, and they have less desire to get out of their chairs and move around. We are committed to aggressive efforts focused on better nutrition and physical education for kids."

– Anne Flannery, president and CEO, PE4life

BLUE CORNERSTONE FALL/WINTER 2009
supporting health improvement in our communities

The Wellmark Foundation Commits Significant Support to PE4life

"The program incorporates cardiovascular fitness, muscular and strength endurance, team building, and adventure education within a curriculum created for all children — not just those who are athletically inclined."

The Iowa Business Council (IBC) recently announced its launch of the PE4life Adopt-A-School Challenge. PE4life is a national non-profit organization committed to inspiring and promoting healthy lifestyles in all children across the country through regular access to quality physical education programs in schools. According to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey conducted in 2007 by the Center for Disease Control, 28.8 percent of Iowa students grades nine through 12 were deemed to be either overweight (15.8 percent) or obese (13 percent). The Challenge seeks to develop an enriched culture of active, healthy lifestyles in elementary and secondary school children throughout Iowa.

"Research shows that creating healthy habits in children at an early age leads to making healthier dietary and fitness choices for themselves as adults," said Mel Haught, President and CEO of Pella Corporation and current chair of the Iowa Business Council. "More immediately, healthy and active school children also perform better academically and have fewer behavioral issues. The objective of the PE4life Adopt-A-School Challenge is to help Iowa become the healthiest state in the country, and one way of doing so is to directly address the epidemic of overweight and obese children."

In early October, the Grocery Manufacturers Association and the Food Marketing Institute, both of which represent leading U.S. manufacturers, retailers, and wholesalers in the food and beverage industry, jointly announced that their Healthy Weight Commitment (www.healthyschoolscommit.org) is launching the Healthy Schools Partnership (HSP). Using a three-year pilot format, the HSP will introduce and sustain a curriculum for children ages six to 11 that combines physical education and nutrition education within four schools in each of three communities: Washington, D.C., Kansas City, and Des Moines. The HSP will also support a tribal community in Iowa and a school in Chicago. The Healthy Schools Partnership consists of the expertise of the American Dietetic Association Foundation, the American Council on Fitness and Nutrition, and PE4life.

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According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 28.8 percent of Iowa students grades nine through 12 are either overweight (15.8 percent) or obese (13 percent).

In late 2009, **The Wellmark Foundation** offered the largest level of grant support in its nearly 20-year history to support implementation of the *PE4life* program across multiple Iowa and South Dakota communities.

PE4life is a national nonprofit organization committed to inspiring and promoting healthy lifestyles in all children across the country through regular access to quality physical education programs in schools. The program's curriculum incorporates cardiovascular fitness, muscular and strength endurance, team building and adventure education.

In early October, the Iowa Business Council (IBC) announced its launch of the *PE4life* Adopt-A-School Challenge. The Challenge seeks to develop an enriched culture of active, healthy lifestyles in elementary and secondary school children throughout Iowa.

Iowa is the first state in the nation to offer *PE4life* statewide. The Iowa Business Council (members include top executives of the 20 largest businesses in the state, the three Regent university presidents, and the president and CEO of Iowa's largest banking association) is encouraging its member companies and institutions to collaborate with local school districts to develop *PE4life* programs in their own communities. The goal is to leverage resources so that *PE4life* programs are initiated in at least 50 Iowa elementary or secondary schools during a five-year timeframe.

The Wellmark Foundation plans to provide continued support to the *PE4life* initiative over the next five years, which will be utilized to encourage adoption of the *PE4life* approach in Iowa and to initially seed *PE4life* programs in South Dakota.

Collectively, the Wellmark Foundation's support should allow for 20-25 school settings to adopt the *PE4life* model during the next few years. The Iowa Business Council also will offer limited funding support for initial program implementation needs such as software, data collection and research costs.

Physical activity and improved nutrition both represent key factors in developing a proper energy balance in our youth, families and communities. Together with like-minded organizations and partners, we can and must exchange our national metabolic energy imbalance for a more sustainable future of health. The Wellmark Foundation feels that support of such efforts as the *PE4life* model is one way to achieve this vision of the future and is proud to help resource the spread of this approach in Iowa and South Dakota. ■

With input from *PE4life*, as well as the American Dietetic Association Foundation and the American Council on Fitness and Nutrition, the Grocery Manufacturers Association and the Food Marketing Institute jointly announced the launch in October of the *Healthy Schools Partnership* through their Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation.

Using a three-year pilot format, the *Healthy Schools Partnership* will introduce and sustain a curriculum for children ages 6 to 11 that combines physical education and nutrition education. The curriculum will be rolled out within select schools in Des Moines, Kansas City, Washington, D.C., and Chicago, as well as a tribal community in Iowa.

Kansas Lions Sight Foundation Mobile Screening Unit



"We are pleased to partner with the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Foundation for the new mobile screening unit. Obtaining regular screenings is an important part of identifying potential health problems, for instance the blood sugar screening helps detect diabetes, the number one cause of new blindness. Thanks to the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Foundation, we are proud to be able to fill these screening needs for Kansans at no cost."

– Joyce DeVore, president, Kansas Lions Sight Foundation



The Kansas Lions Sight Foundation Mobile Screening Unit.

Obtaining regular health screenings is an important part of identifying potential health problems. For example, blood sugar screening helps detect diabetes, the leading cause of blindness.

To increase the number of Kansans receiving health screenings, particularly Kansans who may not have a primary care physician or who lack health insurance, the **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Foundation** funded the purchase of new mobile screening unit for the *Kansas Lions Sight Foundation*. The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Foundation also will cover all expenses associated with the mobile screening unit for five years.

The *Kansas Lions Sight Foundation* previously was using a mobile screening unit they had acquired in 1996. They had been seeking a partner in this mobile screening effort for several years so that a new unit could be purchased.

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Foundation's partnership with the *Kansas Lions Sight Foundation* represents the Foundation's single largest gift since its incorporation. Staff worked closely for two years to make the unit a reality. The new mobile screening unit is a complete Kansas product — Kansas vendors were secured for the illustration of the unit's design, the building of the unit, and the printing and application of its graphics.

The new mobile screening unit was unveiled on Oct. 7, 2009, and is hitting the road in Kansas to administer five free screenings — visual acuity, field of vision, hearing, blood pressure and blood sugar. The Kansas Lions will schedule the Mobile Screening Unit's visits across the state.

Increased access to screening will have a statewide impact, and will support and promote health and wellness for all Kansans. ■



"I would like to thank you for all that was done to make our organization known throughout the state and [for making] a donation [toward] the continued growth and success in our quest for further development of patient outreach and pilot recruitment."

– Philip Thomas, 2009 Angel, president, Pilots for Patients

LOUISIANA 2 step

**The Program's Foundation:
Louisiana2Step.com**

- Goal-setting tools
- Weight-loss tools
- Motivational tools
- Educational tools
- Self-guided website
- News, recipes and health information

The screenshot shows a website interface with a 'JOIN NOW' button, a '1. EAT RIGHT' section, a '2. MOVE MORE' section, and a 'SWEET GIVEAWAY' section. The Louisiana 2 Step logo is visible in the top right and bottom right of the screenshot.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana (BCBSLA)

is committed to improving wellness in Louisiana communities. That means working with others to identify the top health issues in Louisiana and developing programs to address them.

One of Louisiana's most pressing issues is obesity, which significantly increases the risk of hypertension, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, gallbladder disease, osteoarthritis and various cancers. In fact, Louisiana is ranked fourth in the nation in adult obesity rates, and obesity-related diseases account for nearly half of Louisiana's healthcare budget.



2009 Angel Award recipients (left to right): Vicki Ellis, Lynn Hobbs, Janet Leslie, Jean McManus, Jill Rigby Garner, Minh Nguyen, Pinkie Windsor, Betsey Baldwin and Philip Thomas.





In response to this problem, BCBSLA worked in partnership with Pennington Biomedical Research Center to develop a fun, free, motivational program on nutrition and exercise. Called *Louisiana 2 Step*, the statewide public health campaign encourages Louisianans to take two small steps to better health: (1) eat right and (2) move more.

By educating residents about healthy lifestyles, *Louisiana 2 Step* aims to drive important results:

- Reduce the risk of obesity-related diseases
- Reduce the long-term cost of healthcare
- Improve Louisiana's health rankings

Participants learn how small changes in behavior can make a big difference in health. *Louisiana 2 Step's* interactive Web site provides resources to assist viewers in making positive lifestyle changes, including:

- Healthy recipes and menu plans
- Exercise suggestions
- Recommended restaurants offering healthy menu options
- Success stories
- Goal-setting tools
- Tracking tools and calculators
- Links to support organizations
- Virtual coaches and motivational e-mails
- A calendar of local fitness events

Because Louisiana's children are among the heaviest in the nation (one in three Louisiana school-aged children is overweight or obese), *Louisiana 2 Step* contains a youth component: *2 Step 4 Kids*. The program's interactive Web site, www.2step4kids.com, provides tools and tips for children ages five to 12, as well as for parents and teachers. These include:

- Interactive games about nutrition and exercise
- Fun fitness tips
- Healthy food ideas
- Simple food and activity logs
- Ideas and resources for parents and teachers ■

As Louisiana's largest health insurance provider — serving 1.1 million customers — **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana** enjoys being an active community partner.

Through its *Angel Award*, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana recognizes the Angels throughout the state who make a profound difference in the lives of Louisiana children through their volunteer efforts.

Each spring, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana issues a statewide call for *Angel Award* nominations, from customers, prospects, employees, policymakers, the media and the general public.

From among the nominations, a panel of past honorees — "WINGS" members — chooses eight new Louisiana Angels, based on their efforts to enhance a child's life — physically, mentally, emotionally or spiritually. The volunteer efforts may be through churches, civic organizations, schools or individual service work.

The Angels are honored at a ceremony each fall, during which each Angel is featured in a slideshow that promotes their cause and charity. Each Angel also receives a grant for their charity.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana conducts ongoing publicity around the Angel Award nominees and honorees, issuing press releases and public service announcements, securing television and radio talk show appearances and sharing information via the *Angel Award* Web site.

The First Lady of Louisiana, Supriya Jindal, works in partnership with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana to promote the Angel Awards, attending the award ceremony each fall and helping to garner valuable attention for the *Angel Awards*.

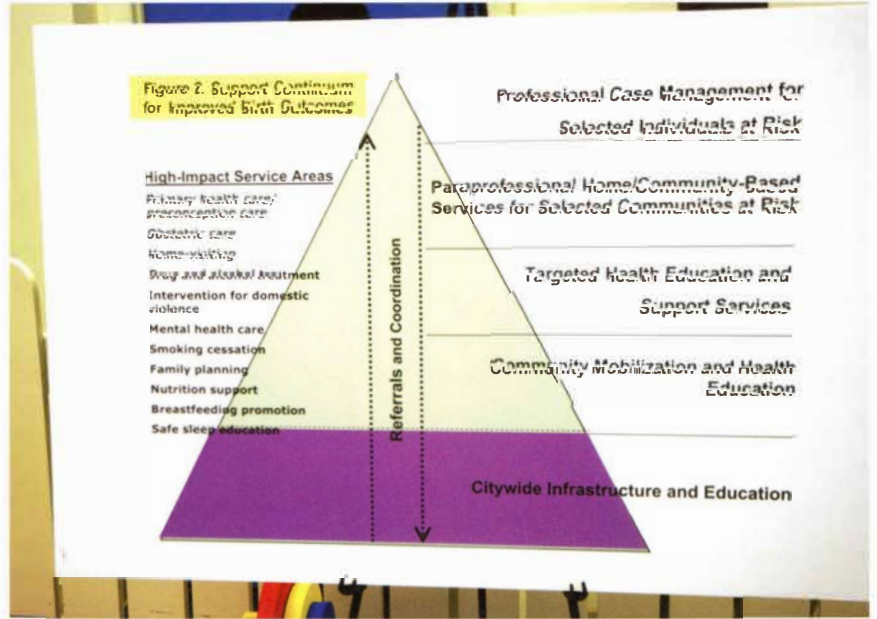
Over the past 15 years, the *Angel Award* has honored 118 volunteers. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana recognized eight community Angels in 2009, and added one more, the Blue Angel, recognizing an outstanding volunteer who also is an employee of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana. Previously, employees had been ineligible for the awards.

Healthy Moms. Healthy Babies.



"We believe the power of partnership and community can make an incredible difference in women's and children's lives. Text4baby brings Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies' mission to life and, with the help of our partners, we believe we can be a strong catalyst for change."

- Judy Meehan, executive director, National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition



Leading medical and policy experts point to maternal, infant and child health as a key indicator of the overall health of a community. In the United States, 28,000 infants die each year, at a rate of 6.26 deaths per 1,000 live births. At this rate, the U.S. falls below 28 other countries, including Cuba, Singapore and South Korea.

The rate of infant mortality is, alarmingly, even higher in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. The annual rate of infant mortality in the District is 12.2 deaths per 1,000 live births, or 97 infant deaths per year. In Maryland, 8.5 infants die for every 1,000 live births, which equates to 631 deaths per year. Virginia sees 7.4 deaths per 1,000 live births, or 764 infant deaths per year.

CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield, in 2009 and as part of a multi-year effort, targeted infant mortality as a public health crisis and committed major funding initiatives to community-based efforts throughout the region it serves.

To address the District of Columbia's infant mortality crisis, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield has developed public-private partnerships with the city government and local health centers. Through two separate CareFirst grants, the D.C. Department of Health has mentored 60 women to help them reduce the risk of infant mortality during pregnancy (*Healthy Start*) and provided 500 free cribs for Washington, D.C., families (*Safe Cribs*). A partnership with Providence Hospital has helped 75 pregnant teens gain access to counseling and resources to encourage healthy pregnancies and infant care.

In Maryland, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield is providing funding to "healthy mother, healthy baby" initiatives. In partnership with the Baltimore City Health Department, community-based programs are under way to reduce premature births and the incidence of low birth weight, both of which are key factors in lowering infant mortality, by 10 percent. CareFirst also is funding an effort to supply expecting mothers in Prince George's County with free cribs.

CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield is partnering with seven Northern Virginia organizations to improve maternal and infant health. These community-based programs include *Text4Baby*, a free, bilingual, mobile phone service to promote healthy birth outcomes for 5,000 women throughout Northern Virginia; Arlington Pediatric Center's implementation of electronic medical records, which will improve care for 2,500 children; and other programs throughout the area that will provide prenatal care case management, treat depression associated with pregnancy and parenting and promote safe sleeping for infants. There is a special focus on reducing ethnic and economic disparities in healthcare among women and their babies. ■

Trustee Engagement

“Funding has allowed [us] to restructure our Urgent Care services to better meet the needs of uninsured individuals and families by connecting them to health benefits, primary care and social services during the walk-in healthcare visit, and by providing access to a medical home.”

– Frances M. Anthes, president and CEO, Family Health Center of Worcester, Inc.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA)

is committed to ensuring its three million members receive high-quality, cost-effective care when they need it. Recognizing that the care delivered in hospitals is a natural area of focus for system-wide improvement, and that it is ultimately a hospital's trustees who are accountable for the quality and safety performance of their organizations, the *Trustee Engagement* initiative focuses on increasing hospital boards' engagement in, and commitment to, improving quality and patient safety in their organizations. Components include:

- **Quality Curriculum for Trustees** is a curriculum for hospital trustees that centers on the Board's role in improving the quality and patient safety. With the Massachusetts Hospital Association and Center for Healthcare Governance, BCBSMA created a six-hour interactive course that is designed to enhance Board members' ability to make the clear connections between their work in the boardroom, the performance of their organization and the well being of patients and the community. More than 40 acute care hospitals have participated in the *Quality Curriculum for Trustees* or a related board education program on quality.
- **Trustee Advantage** is a grant program that focuses on advancing and accelerating the capacity of hospital Boards to aggressively pursue quality and safety improvement in their institutions. The program includes a coaching experience, an in-depth practicum and participation in a professionally facilitated peer learning environment with other grant recipients. BCBSMA awarded grants to five hospitals in late 2008, funded the Learning Community for grantee hospitals in 2009 and is currently working to evaluate the program.
- **Trustee Insight** is an education series developed in partnership with the Massachusetts Hospital Association. The series features healthcare leaders who explore aspects of governance that are essential to quality improvement and have been successfully implemented in boardrooms in some of our nation's leading healthcare institutions. The sessions are open to Massachusetts trustees, CEOs and other senior administrative and clinical leaders.

Amélia guarda os medicamentos no armário dos medicamentos e uma cópia da lista actualizada na carteira.

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Alex Paulson is a retired fireman. A favorite uncle. And a great patient.

He asks questions about his treatment. Listens closely to the answers.

Better health care can be a simple matter of better communication and better understanding. Just ask Alex Paulson. He writes everything down—from symptoms he's having, to medication questions, to any other health concerns he has—before his doctor visit. He makes a quick note of what the doctors or nurses said, right after his visit. And if there's something he still doesn't understand, he calls the office to clarify it's not a good. He's an informed patient. Who knows that getting the health care he deserves is sometimes as simple as... just asking. And making a note of it. Visit our website for more tips about getting the best health care for you.

THE PARTNERSHIP FOR HEALTHCARE EXCELLENCE
www.partnershipforhealthcare.org



Public Engagement (Community Transformation Initiative)

BCBSMA, along with several partners, created the *Partnership for Healthcare Excellence* in 2007 to empower patients and their caregivers to play a greater role in improving the quality of their healthcare. The effort is based on the idea that having patients who are educated, active and engaged is one of the best ways to improve the safety, quality and effectiveness of care.

The *Partnership for Healthcare Excellence* recently carried out a statewide public education campaign to disseminate consumer information on medication errors, infection control and safety. It also initiated the Right Care campaign, which involved research and testing on the appropriate use of imaging and antibiotics, and messages and materials on antibiotic overuse.

The *Partnership for Healthcare Excellence* has established relationships with healthcare policy, medical, business leaders and others focused on empowering consumers so they can play a greater role in improving quality of care. The *Partnership's* Web site (www.partnershipforhealthcare.org) has become a credible source for consumers as well as other healthcare organizations involved in consumer engagement and empowerment efforts.

The *Partnership for Healthcare Excellence* is now a 501(c)3 organization and has an established board of directors and leadership council. BCBSMA holds a seat on the board of directors, which includes leaders from the medical, advocacy, public health and business communities. ■

Innovation Fund for the Uninsured

Although Massachusetts' efforts to provide health insurance coverage to nearly all its residents have been remarkably effective, a significant number of Massachusetts residents continue to lack health insurance or experience gaps in coverage. This lack of coverage is a continuing access barrier, causing many individuals to delay needed treatment and forcing them to obtain care episodically, with little continuity or coordination among providers. This can result in heightened costs and poorer health outcomes, as care often is delivered in more expensive and less efficient settings.

The *Innovation Fund for the Uninsured*, a grant program of the **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation**, provides grants for up to three years to help Massachusetts healthcare delivery organizations improve the organization, continuity and completeness of care for the uninsured or those at risk of losing their coverage. The program's ultimate goal is improved health outcomes and more cost-effective care through outreach and education, prevention and medical management.

The *Innovation Fund for the Uninsured* primarily funds community health centers, hospitals and other provider organizations. Seventeen grantees received funding in December 2009, including two new grants and 15 grants continuing into their second or third year. Grantee projects include integration of primary and mental healthcare, care coordination and care management programs, efforts to build or create patient-centered medical homes and efforts to better serve uninsured populations needing access to healthcare. Since 2001 the Foundation has made 117 grants through the *Innovation Fund for the Uninsured* program.

2009 *Innovation Fund for the Uninsured* grantees include:

- Boston Health Care for the Homeless
- Family Health Center of Worcester
- Great Brook Valley Health Center
- Greater New Bedford Community Health Center
- Holyoke Health Center
- Lowell Community Health Center
- Partners in Life
- Volunteers in Medicine, Berkshires

Promoting healthy lifestyles



The students at Martin Luther King, Jr. Academy are improving their physical fitness and learning about healthy lifestyles with the support of the Building Healthy Communities grant.

“Grand Rapids is fortunate to have such a strong champion for healthy lifestyles as Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and this initiative is sure to raise awareness of the importance of eating right and being active, some of the most important factors in decreasing mortality and preventing life-threatening illnesses such as cancer.”

– **Crystal Parish, community representative from the American Cancer Society**



Madison Niccolini (left), who designed BCBSM's float, and Marilyn Kluka, winner of The Biggest Loser: Detroit Edition, wave to spectators at America's Thanksgiving Parade.

Promoting healthy lifestyles drives the **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan's (BCBSMI)** social mission.

Over the past few years, BCBSMI has placed a special focus on stemming the tide of childhood obesity, which has become a national epidemic. According to *F as in Fat: How Obesity Policies Are Failing in American 2009*, about 30 percent of children ages 10-17 in Michigan are overweight or obese.

Several initiatives are helping Michigan residents get fit, one step at a time:

Building Healthy Communities – BCBSMI awards to schools across the state to launch selected physical activity and nutrition programs, involving parents and community partners to create greater impact. Since 2004, BCBSMI has provided funding to schools and community partners to help curb childhood obesity.



FIT – BCBSMI and the Michigan State University College of Human Medicine joined forces to launch a health initiative called *FIT*. The program focuses on increasing physical activity and improving nutrition at four schools and surrounding neighborhoods in Grand Rapids. It takes a multi-faceted approach to reducing and preventing obesity by working with school staff, families and community organizations to establish a culture that embraces wellness.

The Biggest Loser – BCBSMI created a partnership with The Parade Company and WDIV-TV to launch *The Biggest Loser: Detroit Edition* contest. Six contestants from Metro Detroit were selected to compete in this 12-week weight-loss challenge. Each contestant worked with a health coach, who helped guide them through their weight-loss journey. The winner was named an honorary grand marshal and rode on a float during America's Thanksgiving Parade, televised live on WDIV Local 4.

Body and Soul – BCBSMI created a partnership with the American Cancer Society last fall to kick off the society's *Body and Soul* health and fitness challenge in Grand Rapids and Flint. As part of the program, churches in African-American communities challenged each other to improve the health of their members. And BCBSMI shared the *WalkingWorks*® program with the churches to help them track the physical activity of their congregations.

Get Moving U.P. Community Challenge – BCBSMI and the Wellness Council of the Upper Peninsula (U.P.) of Michigan encouraged residents in all counties in the U.P. to engage in an incentive-based fitness challenge during the winter months. Registered participants log their minutes of activity on the BCBSA *WalkingWorks*® Web site. All individuals who log 30 minutes of exercise a day, five days a week during the contest period will be eligible for prizes. ■

Foundation grants address childhood obesity

Additionally, the **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation** has developed an initiative to identify effective strategies for reducing obesity and encouraging wellness among children.

Following are some of the projects the BCBSMI Foundation funds in support of this initiative:

Healthy U – An interactive health and wellness educational program. Created by the YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids, *Healthy U* is addressing the health needs of children, youth, teens and families in the Grand Rapids community. Foundation funding is helping increase wellness at one Grand Rapids-area school by educating students about diet and nutrition, physical activity and improved fitness levels. It's also encouraging students to consume more whole grains, vegetables, fruits and calcium-rich foods.

A Lifestyle Approach to Public Health – Developed by Eastern Michigan University, this program is helping to reduce obesity in children and adults within the Ypsilanti Public School District. Students and school employees are encouraged to be active for at least an hour a day, limit TV time to fewer than two hours a day, and develop skills for sports and other activities that they can continue to enjoy throughout their lives.

Partners in Heart Health – This program, developed by a Michigan State University (MSU) multi-disciplinary faculty team, was designed to improve the health of fifth-grade students in the Lansing area. MSU students studying health and fitness work with small groups of elementary school students to teach and demonstrate the importance of good nutrition, exercise and setting personal goals.

Growing Up Healthy: Kids and Communities



“Thanks to the efforts of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Foundation and others, recognition that housing is a key social determinant of health has been woven into the bricks and mortar of housing rehab, education, public learning, training and policy changes that give us all hope that our world can and will be made better.”

– **David Jacobs, PhD, CIH, director of research, National Center for Healthy Housing**



Children of Little Earth of United Tribes.

Good health in childhood leads to better health for a lifetime. That’s why the **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota (BCBSMN) Foundation** established *Growing Up Healthy: Kids and Communities*, a statewide grant making initiative that addresses key determinants of child health, including early care and learning, safe and affordable housing, and the environment.

Children’s rapid growth and smaller size make them more vulnerable to indoor and outdoor environmental threats. Pound for pound, kids breathe more air, drink more fluids and eat more food than adults. Their behavior — from crawling on the floor to putting fingers and toys in their mouths — puts them more at risk for ingesting harmful toxins.

Children also need high-quality early learning opportunities that prepare them for school. Research has shown that there is a 16:1 return on community investment in early childhood education. Better education also contributes to better life long health, by reducing risk factors for cardiovascular disease and stroke, hypertension, diabetes, obesity, smoking, drug use and depression.

In addition, children need safe, affordable housing. Healthy housing helps protect children from many health conditions, including asthma, anemia, lead poisoning, mold allergies and respiratory infections.



Ojullu family at Viking Terrace — post renovation.



Growing Up Healthy: Kids and Communities was launched in 2006 to help communities work together across sectors to create an environment that nurtures the healthy growth and development of children under the age of 5. The BCBSMN Foundation has invested to support 15 community partnerships around Minnesota in support of this goal. Collectively, these partnerships represent more than 130 individual organizations in the following areas:

- **Housing.** Seven grantees are focused on increasing the supply of housing units that are safe, healthy and affordable.
- **The built and natural environment.** Eleven grantees are working to reduce children's exposure to unsafe conditions, including environmental and indoor health hazards.
- **Child development.** Four grantees are focused on increasing access to, and participation in, quality early childhood learning opportunities.
- **Public policy and systems change.** Fourteen grantees are focused on awareness building, changing expectations and broadening advocacy as it relates to policy and systems change, that support the healthy growth and development of young children.

In 2010, *Growing Up Healthy: Kids and Communities* will move to its second phase, incorporating best practices and recommendations from the evaluation of the first phase, focusing on broader geographic areas and incorporating a community-based participatory leadership program.

The BCBSMN Foundation is the state's largest foundation to dedicate its assets exclusively to improving health in Minnesota. ■

Making Minnesota Healthier by Addressing Housing

Abang Ojullu knows firsthand what it's like to have healthier children as a result of a healthy home. She and her family now live in a "green," affordable apartment complex, Viking Terrace, in Worthington, Minnesota. Before moving to Viking Terrace, all six of Abang's children experienced severe asthma attacks, causing them to miss school and Abang to miss work. Her eldest daughter nearly died from an attack and had to be taken by air ambulance to a hospital for treatment. After just six months at Viking Terrace, Abang's children's health has improved significantly and they no longer had asthma attacks.

Viking Terrace, originally built in 1978, was renovated in 2006 using green building principles. The **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Foundation** supported a study, conducted by the National Center for Healthy Housing, which documented significant health improvements as a result of the renovation.

Improving Health Through Policy Change

The **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Foundation** has provided funding to Little Earth of United Tribes, which has a housing complex in Minneapolis' Phillips neighborhood. The complex's 605 residents are primarily single-parent households, low-income and American Indian.

The Little Earth Residents Association recently developed the *Steps to a Healthier Minneapolis: Take it Outside* initiative, aimed at families with small children. The initiative encourages residents who smoke to do so outside to improve indoor air quality and lower asthma-related hospitalizations. Promotion of this initiative has led the Little Earth of United Tribes to adopt a Voluntary Smoke Free Policy at Little Earth, which has led to a smoke-free policy for its apartment units.

The Catalyst for Change



Project Fit America is helping kids get back to basics with physical activity by providing measurable results.

Oakdale School student enjoying new exercise equipment provided through Project Fit America.



Delta State University students participating in the Healthy Campus/Community Initiative.

The statistics are sobering when it comes to the state of Mississippi's health. In 2009, Mississippi became the first state with more than 30 percent of its adults considered obese. But where others see challenges, the **Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation** sees opportunities.

As the largest corporate foundation in the state, the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation focuses on improving the health and lives of Mississippians through funding health programs and initiatives in schools, grassroots initiatives and community-based programs. Children are learning the importance of leading active and healthy lives with an increased focus on physical education and health programs, and communities are developing wellness models to give their residents the resources and support to lead healthier lives.

In 2009, 64 schools joined a growing list of others in the state to receive *Project Fit America* exercise equipment, bringing the total to 129 schools with equipment funded by the Foundation. With the increasing rates of childhood obesity and sedentary lifestyles, *Project Fit America* is helping kids get back to the basics with physical activity by providing measurable results. The equipment is designed to help improve physical and cardiovascular strength in kids, while classroom-based curriculum teaches healthy choices and promotes self-esteem. The program has been embraced by educators. Schools benefiting from the program are reporting significant increases in students' fitness levels. Some schools have reported as much as a 159-percent increase in students' cardiovascular fitness and a 92-percent increase in upper body strength.

Communities also are taking advantage of their leadership role by supporting programs conducive to improving the health of their citizens. Delta State University is aggressively working to change the health statistics in the Delta region through the *Healthy Campus/Community Initiative*, a community-based program funded by the Foundation, which has allowed Delta State University to become a wellness model. The program includes nutrition counseling, an outdoor walking track and recreation areas, health and fitness curriculum, and onsite health screenings. The program also is extending to local schools, providing health education at the elementary level, as well as *Project Fit America* equipment.

The Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation is investing in the state's future by providing the resources and leadership needed to continue in its commitment to a healthier Mississippi. ■

Generation XL – Keeping Kids Physically Active Throughout the School Day



"We're extremely grateful that the Menorah Legacy Foundation and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City have joined with us in our quest to make quality, daily physical education a reality for every student in the United States. We applaud their commitment to the health and well-being of our youth."

– Anne Flannery, president and CEO, PE4life



Kansas City area school district personnel participating in the TV production of a Generation XL segment with KCPT anchor and moderator, Nick Haines.



During the past year, **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City's (BCBSKC)** sponsorship has allowed Kansas City Public Television to continue working to tackle the growing problem of childhood obesity and sedentary lifestyles with educators, health experts, fitness gurus and policy makers.

The new season of the series *Generation XL* looks at how schools across the metro area are addressing the issues of physical activity among their students. From before- and after-school activities, to recess, to movement in the classroom, the metro area's schools are coming up with creative ways to squeeze in a much-needed physical activity boost into the day.

Through the *Generation XL* program, BCBSKC works collaboratively with schools and locally based community partners to address the prevalence of childhood obesity by increasing physical activity levels.

BCBSKC provides detailed information about keeping kids physically active throughout the school day via printed materials and video segments. *Generation XL* segments include:

- Rationale for Physical Activity Throughout the School Day
- Movement in the Classroom – presents opportunities in the classroom environment for children to be physically active with little preparation and low or no additional costs
- PE: Moving More Kids More of the Time – demonstrates the potential for promoting physical activity by engaging children in moderate to vigorous physical activities throughout the day
- Going Green – assists with identifying safe schools and communities where children can be active outside of school: parks, athletic fields, pools and recreation centers

- Getting More Out of Recess – engages children in moderate to vigorous physical activities during recess, as opposed to sedentary activities
- Before- and After-School Programs – suggests health-enhancing physical activity and opportunities to practice skills taught in physical education courses

Additional program collaborators include *KC Healthy Kids* and *PE4life*. Related Contributors include KC Bicycle Federation, KC Community Gardens, Walking School Bus, KU and Children's Mercy Hospitals Center for Physical Activity, Nutrition and Weight Management.

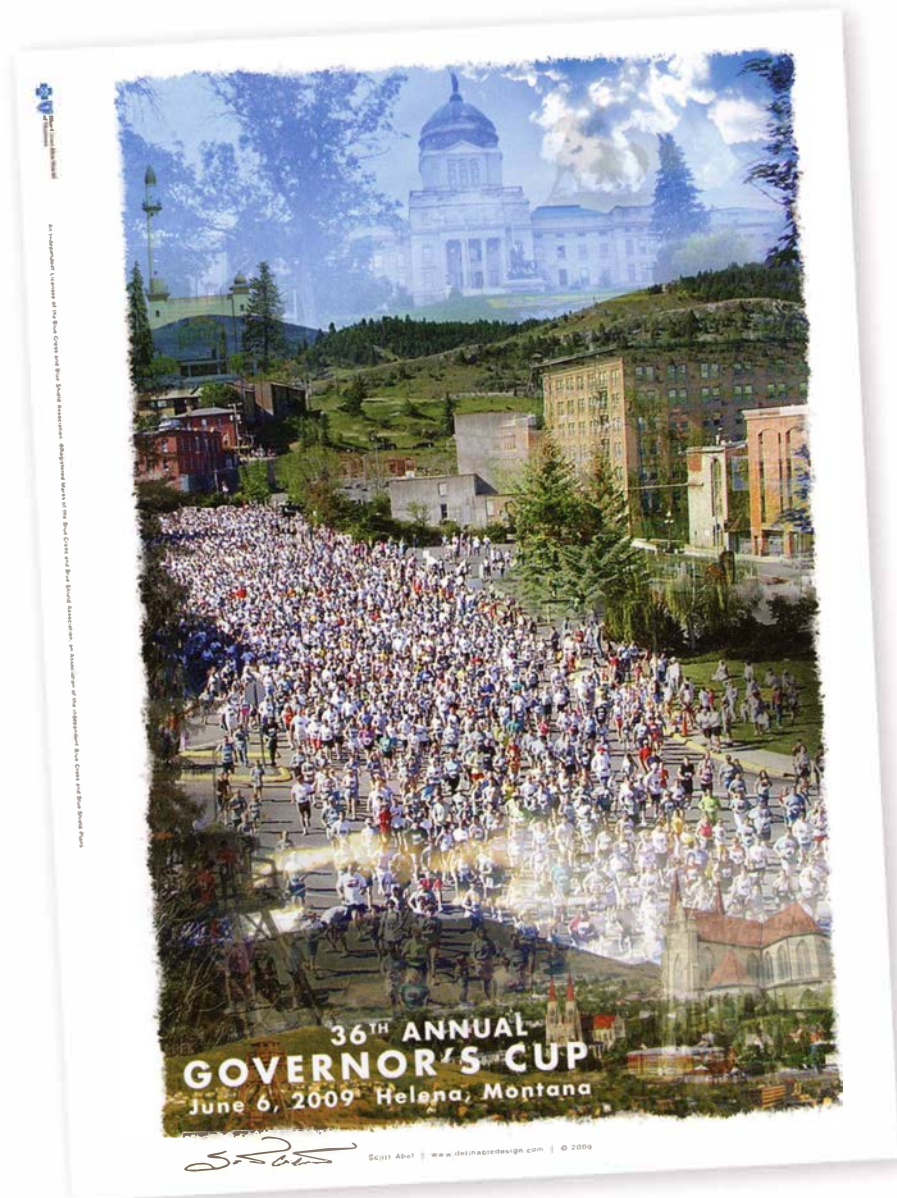
Generation XL has produced several positive results:

- Harmony Elementary School generates more daily physical activity by requiring the children to start moving as soon as they enter the gym. The kindergarten teacher uses movement exploration and physically active experiences throughout the day as academic lessons are delivered.
- The YMCA of Greater Kansas City is allowing selected after-school day care sites to implement an additional 30-40 minutes of physical activity into their daily program.
- Many schools in the Kansas City area have started "walking school buses" to increase their students' physical activity level.
- Kansas City Community Gardens' *Schoolyard Gardens* program is providing technical assistance to start gardens in schools. ■

Funding to national, statewide and local organizations

“The Caring Foundation of Montana’s contribution, along with the CMS matching grant and expanded eligibility of the Healthy Montana Kids program, significantly impacts our ability to provide essential dental services to over 19,000 Montana children.”

– **Anna Whiting Sorrell, director, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services**



Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana (BCBSMT)

provided funding in 2009 to more than 180 national, statewide and local organizations dedicated to health and wellness, civic and community events, human services, education, and arts and culture in Montana.

These organizations included the University of Montana Foundation Endowed Chair in Cardiovascular Sciences, Susan G. Komen Foundation, Big Sky State Games, Montana Professional Teaching Foundation, Montana hospital foundations and many other organizations around the state.

Additionally, BCBSMT employees gave more than 750 hours of volunteer time, raised more than 5,000 pounds of food for food banks around Montana and donated printing services to organizations across Montana.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana Foundation for Healthy Montanans

The mission of the **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana (BCBSMT) Foundation for Healthy Montanans** is to fund programs in the state that promote healthy lifestyles and improve the health of Montanans. In keeping with this mission, the Foundation awarded grants to various nonprofit Montana organizations, schools, universities and public health institutions in 2009.

The Foundation focused largely on programs aimed at reducing childhood obesity across the state, because the number of overweight Montana children and adolescents continues to increase.

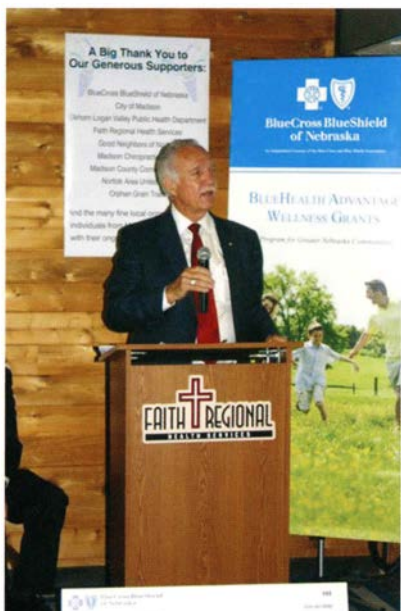
Other programs funded by the Foundation addressed issues including increasing children's access to physical activity, improving access to low-cost and no-cost healthcare programs and improving access to primary care and cancer screening.

The Caring Foundation of Montana

The Caring Foundation of Montana, established in 1992 by BCBSMT and Montana physicians and hospitals, identifies critical, unmet healthcare needs of disadvantaged children in Montana and provides financial support to provide access to quality care.

For example, the Caring Foundation provides funding for dental services for children enrolled in the *Healthy Montana Kids* program (formerly CHIP). It raises funds by hosting Montana's oldest marathon, the Governor's Cup, which also includes a 10k, 5k, and a one-mile fun run. Other fundraising activities include the Caring Classic golf tournament and a BCBSMT employees' payroll deduction program.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services approved a State Plan Amendment in 2009 allowing a federal funding match for the Caring Foundation's donation to the *Healthy Montana Kids* program. The federal matching rate is approximately 4:1, and the donation will allow the state of Montana to receive approximately \$507,000 in federal funds. About \$657,000 will be available to fund dental services for children enrolled in the program. ■



Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska Chairman of the Board Jack D. Mills at a BlueHealth Advantage Grant presentation event in Norfolk.

"[Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska] are involved at every end of this state, not only at providing good health information, but also they are a tremendous public servant and very charitable to the state of Nebraska. Thank you so much to you and the company for doing this."

– Doug Kristensen, chancellor, University of Nebraska at Kearney



Sixth-grade boy in Hastings works out with the CyBex Trazer, equipment purchased with a BHA Wellness Grant.



Kids work up a sweat in their Zumba classes, sponsored by the local hospital foundation—a BHA Grant winner.



To drive from one side of Nebraska to the other takes about seven hours — 500 miles from Iowa to Colorado. But, as in most Midwestern and Western states, you really have to exit the Interstate to experience the lifestyle that 1.75 million Nebraskans enjoy. The state is dotted with small to medium-sized towns flung across unexpected topography with surprisingly diverse populations. There are counties with as few as 500 residents, but rich in farmland and cattle ranches. The central areas of the state boast thriving economies, fierce community loyalties and traditional American homes, complete with baseball and apple pie. Then mid-way along the eastern border sit the Omaha-Lincoln metropolitan areas, with progressively more urban living and as much as half of the state's population.

As the leading provider of health insurance in the state, **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska (BCBSNE)** began looking for ways to bridge the gaps between this study in contrasts, especially as it related to wellness. BCBSNE set three primary goals: provide needed support to Nebraska communities beyond Omaha and Lincoln; personally communicate its wellness message to all members; and give a face to the company by underscoring its commitment to the entire state.

It all came together in the *BlueHealth Advantage (BHA) Wellness Grant* program, the "perfect storm" of wellness promotion, community support and public relations. BCBSNE selected nine wellness organizations to support during 2008, while in 2009, the company identified seven groups in six communities to receive funding. A BCBSNE team joins each of the selected organizations to hold a well-publicized media event

that highlights the great work being done by each organization with BCBSNE's support. Due to the program's success, funding for the rural wellness grants has doubled from 2008-2010.

The *BHA Wellness Grants* program looks for several key components in the organizations and programs it chooses to support: collaboration between community organizations, sustainability and measurable results. Several of the programs have had stunning success and impact. From bi-lingual walking and nutrition programs that serve largely Hispanic communities, to programs that add exercise equipment along walking trails, to fitness programs that embrace and encourage entire town populations, the innovation and creativity is inspiring. In Phelps County, where almost everyone is a farmer, the YMCA created the *Fit Farmers* program. In Hastings, Hispanic youth learn to Zumba® dance and, in the process, fight against the childhood obesity statistics that plague the state.

Within just two years, the *BHA Wellness Grants* program has generated considerable interest statewide. As BCBSNE continues its strategic outreach into greater Nebraska, the company is encouraged to see that its message is being understood and embraced. Says the Chancellor of the University of Nebraska at Kearney, "I hope you understand what a great company BCBSNE is. It is involved at every end of this state not only at providing good health information, but also it is a tremendous public servant and very charitable to the state of Nebraska." ■

Health Center Initiative

Is your Health Center
in need?
We can help.



“With Horizon, we
can continue the care
and grow the clinic.”



Marilyn Golden, RN
Volunteers in Medicine

“We have patients in our clinic that haven’t been to doctors in 10, 20, and one patient, 30 years. So we’re special because we have a place for the uninsured. Our budget is very tight. And so everybody brings their own pencils and pens in. It’s the Horizon grant that has given us that ability to continue the care and grow the clinic. Do we give extended life? Yes, to people that maybe would never have made it.”

The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey supports health centers throughout the state giving the uninsured access to health care. Greater access. Better health. Lower health care costs for New Jersey. To learn more, visit www.MakingHealthcareWork.com.

Horizon.



The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey

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“As a direct result of The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey’s Health Center Initiative, the Center for Healthy Women has rapidly emerged as one of the region’s primary conduits to comprehensive and continuous prenatal care. Together, we will continue to work for healthier babies, healthier women, and healthier communities.”

— Alan Goldsmith, PhD, president, Jewish Renaissance Medical Center, Jewish Renaissance Foundation

Today in New Jersey, more than 1.3 million individuals are uninsured. It’s an unfortunate fact: people without health insurance are less likely to receive preventive and other basic care than those with insurance. This has a devastating impact on their health — and it strains the healthcare system because individuals develop chronic health conditions and turn to expensive hospital emergency rooms to get the care they need. Taxpayers end up paying hundreds of millions of dollars to hospitals for this care, known as “charity care.”

Health centers are vital to the state’s healthcare system because they provide low-cost or free primary care to underserved and uninsured individuals. Some of these centers are staffed by volunteers and supported by charitable donations. These health centers also remove barriers to care by serving communities that face challenging financial, geographic, language, cultural and other obstacles to getting needed care. They are a crucial safety net for the state’s uninsured.

For these reasons, **The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey** created the *Health Center Initiative* to provide financial and technical resources to expand access to quality preventative, primary and prenatal healthcare for the state's most vulnerable and underserved residents.

For five years, beginning January 2007, the Foundation will provide funding to selected health centers across the state.

This five-year grant initiative provides support for nonprofit community-directed organizations that provide comprehensive healthcare services and are open to all residents, regardless of insurance status or ability to pay.

The goals of the *Health Center Initiative* are:

- Increase access to healthcare services for uninsured and underserved individuals
- Provide resources to enhance health center operations
- Expand services available to health center patients

Funding categories were developed through focus group meetings and by gaining feedback from health center staff. Grant funds may be used for one, or a combination, of the following:

- New staff positions
- Staff development
- Development of a specialty provider network
- Mental health and substance abuse services
- Purchase of office equipment (e.g., computers)
- Purchase of medical equipment (e.g., X-ray machines)
- Renovations (e.g., construction of an additional examination room)
- Community outreach and marketing
- Medication and lab fees
- Translation services
- Oral health and wellness programs

An independent, volunteer committee composed of individuals from across New Jersey, who understand the healthcare issues facing the state, make the funding recommendations to the Foundation staff before they are presented to the Board of Directors.

Since 2006, the Horizon Foundation has awarded grants to 20 health centers throughout New Jersey, with grants paid out beginning in 2007. The available balance of resources will be awarded before the end of the grant term.

Between January 2007 and December 2009, with funding from The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey, grantees have:

- Hired more physicians
- Added evening and Saturday office hours in order to see more patients
- Added specialty services, including cardiology and infectious disease
- Increased the number of new patients served
- Increased the number of outpatient medical visits
- Created a central call center for patients
- Implemented Electronic Medical Record systems at several health centers

The *Health Center Initiative* will be fully evaluated at the end of 2011. ■

Wipe Out Lead Campaign

January 25, 2010

Corporate Marketing BULLETIN

Buffalo Bills & BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York Create Exercise Movement

For the past decade, BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York has had a strategic alliance with the Buffalo Bills, which includes being the team's official health plan. While the football season lasts for approximately 17 weeks, our partnership is a year-round effort.

One of many programs we are proud to partner with the Bills is the National Football League's Play 60 physical activity initiative. Play 60 is an incentivized exercise program developed in conjunction with the American Heart Association. This school-based health program (for grades three to six) encourages students to engage in 30 minutes of exercise at school and 30 minutes outside of school. By teaching children about the benefits of exercise and eating healthy foods, we want to help them learn and develop good habits that will last a lifetime.

In the past, the program touched a few thousand Buffalo Public School students. In 2009, Play 60 was expanded regionally to reach 24,000 students throughout Western New York and a pilot group in Northeastern New York. We make this available to our "all Blue" schools (where we are the sole insurance carrier) as a special benefit for them. A Play 60 event was co-hosted by the Bills and BlueCross BlueShield's Marketing and Health Promotions staff late last year at the Bills' Fieldhouse.

This year, we will look at all our community support opportunities to ensure we are promoting health and wellness, and that our "all Blue" groups directly benefit from our strategic alliances, like the Buffalo Bills.



George Wilson, Buffalo Bills Safety, helps a young student through a practice drill.



John Wendling, Bills Safety, encouraging a student as he sprints around the pylons in the Fieldhouse.



Line Evans, Wide Receiver for the Bills, Shannon Day, Health Promotions, and Andy Lison, Product Manager, put the kids through a passing and running relay race.

For Internal Use Only

Not For External Distribution

"Lead poisoning is 100 percent preventable, and in our partnership with BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York our Wipe Out Lead campaign has had significant results: Tens of thousands of individuals were reached with lead poisoning prevention information, 1,000 kids at risk for lead poisoning were tested and treated and 100 homes were made lead safe."

— **Clotilde Perez-Bode Dedecker, president and CEO, Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo**

In 2009, **BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York** supported area health, education, cultural and other organizations that work to improve health and quality of life for everyone in our region. Our charitable donations provided vital support during a challenging year for many not-for-profit organizations.

Among the notable partnerships, BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York collaborated with the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo (the region's primary community-based foundation) on the *Wipe Out Lead Campaign* to address the impact of lead poisoning in Western New York.

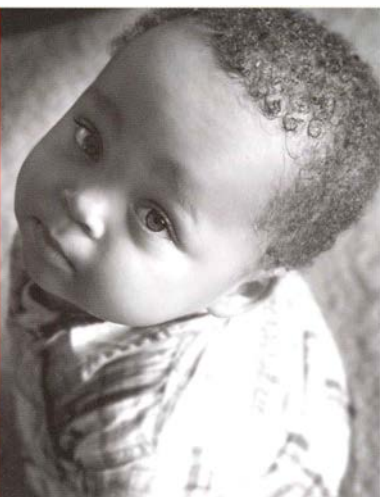
Lead poisoning, which originates primarily from the deterioration of lead-based paint, is a significant health and environmental hazard in older homes. It causes permanent and irreversible damage to the brain and central nervous system, seriously undermining children's ability to learn, and may lead to violent behavior later in life. The problem is so prevalent in Western New York that in 2006, one-third of all lead poisoning cases outside of New York City were from six Buffalo-area ZIP codes — yet this serious health hazard is 100 percent preventable.

IS YOUR HOME POISONING YOUR CHILD WITH LEAD?


If your home was built before 1978, there's a good chance that it contains lead paint. Lead is a poison, and a child who eats lead paint chips, or breathes lead paint dust can get very sick. Your child could be poisoned already and you might not know it.

Please call 712-5500 for help. It's free and easy.

WIPE OUT LEAD.



Sponsored by:





BlueCross BlueShield
of Western New York

An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

“At least 2,000 children in our community have already had their potential undermined by this health hazard,” said Clotilde Perez-Bode Dedecker, president and chief executive officer of the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo. “When you add this to the fact that more than 90 percent of Buffalo’s African American children and 64 percent of Hispanic children are living in our state’s top ZIP codes for lead poisoning, it is clear that this is more than a health crisis: it is a social injustice. It is unconscionable for us not to act to prevent this from happening to others.”

BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York and the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo seek to end childhood exposure to lead paint through a public awareness and education campaign that includes print and online materials; public service advertisements; and an abundance of free and low-cost resources to identify children at-risk and get appropriate care, as well as helping homeowners and landlords remediate lead-based paint risks.

“Good health is essential to quality of life and even one case of lead poisoning is too many in our communities,” Alphonso O’Neil-White, president and chief executive officer of BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York, explained. “As the region’s largest health plan, BlueCross BlueShield won’t stand aside and let this continue — not when we have an opportunity to help — and the good news is that through awareness and action, lead poisoning can be prevented.”

In addition, the campaign has received support from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and a number of community-based organizations including the City of Buffalo, Erie County, Buffalo Block Clubs, the Baptist Ministers’ Conference of Buffalo and Vicinity, Community Action Organization, Buffalo Prenatal and Perinatal Network, Environmental Education Associates, and Family Environmental Health Resources. ■

NFL/BCBSWNY’s *Play 60 Exercise Program* Impacts 24,000 Local Students

Thanks to the *Play 60 Challenge* — sponsored by the Buffalo Bills, **BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York** and the American Heart Association — 24,000 students across Western New York were incented to exercise for 60 minutes every day. As a special reward, 250 students (third-sixth graders from Buffalo Public Schools and Cattaraugus-Little Valley Central School District) celebrated at the Buffalo Bills Field House with an interactive fitness event to conclude the fitness program.

The *Play 60 Challenge* is a national partnership of the National Football League and American Heart Association and is one the Bills’ largest community programs. The goal of the program is to reduce childhood obesity by encouraging 30 minutes of daily exercise in school plus another 30 minutes of fitness at home. Kicked off in September 2009 at a special assembly attended by 2,000 students, *Play 60* provides each classroom with an activation kit (exercise journals for each student, player trading cards and tracking poster).

Play 60 Challenge kits were distributed to all Buffalo Public School classrooms (grades 3-6) plus schools throughout Western and Northeastern New York. Approximately 800 classrooms and a potential of 24,000 students got moving!

The ‘*Play 60*’ movement was created in response to the national decline of physical education programs and lack of physical activity for today’s youth and is designed to promote physical fitness and healthy living to an increasingly inactive generation of children. Through support from Buffalo Bills partners’ BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York and the American Heart Association, the program’s success continues to gain momentum each year.



Excellus BCBS HAI reduction initiative.

“Thanks to Excellus BlueCross BlueShield’s support of Care Fusion’s MedMined Data Mining Surveillance Services, I can data mine microbiology culture information; query and aggregate that information; print reports, graphs and charts; and trend information over time without leaving my desk.”

– **Karen L. Davis, RN, BSN, CIC, infection prevention coordinator, Arnot Ogden Medical Center**

Hospital-acquired infections (HAIs) are a serious health threat and a drain on resources. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2002, there were an estimated 1.7 million healthcare-associated infections and 99,000 resulting deaths. The annual medical cost of healthcare-associated infections to U.S. hospitals is estimated to be between \$28 billion and \$45 billion, adjusted to 2007 dollars, reports the CDC.

Many HAIs are preventable. However, determining a few pieces of critical information is a burdensome, time-consuming process for hospital infection prevention staff. In 2005, **Excellus BlueCross BlueShield (Excellus BCBS)** launched its *Upstate New York Quality Initiative* with financial support to underwrite the cost of data mining surveillance technology at select hospitals in its network. The patented technology allows hospitals to monitor and continuously analyze their patient populations for community and hospital-acquired infections.

Of the 18 participating hospitals, most have realized a 200-percent return on their initial investment in Care Fusion's MedMined™ Data Mining Surveillance Services.

From 2007 to 2008, these hospitals averaged a 12.9-percent reduction in HAI rates, resulting in 509 HAIs prevented, 4,759 incremental days in the hospital avoided and \$4.89 million saved.

Participation in the collaborative between Excellus BCBS and the hospitals includes semiannual meetings where best practice guidelines are reviewed and training and tools are provided. Excellus BCBS has expanded the initiative with a new Quality Leaders Program for hospitals that continue to achieve benchmark performance in HAI reduction over time.

In 2009, 11 smaller hospitals in the network — that don't have the resources for MedMined's technology — agreed to participate in best practice meetings where they can interact with colleagues from larger hospitals and learn from their successes and challenges in eliminating HAIs. These smaller hospitals are entitled to MedMined's Lab Best Practice Manual and Collection Guide and ongoing training.

"Thanks to Excellus BlueCross BlueShield's support of Care Fusion's MedMined Data Mining Surveillance Services, I can data mine microbiology culture information; query and aggregate that information; print reports, graphs and charts; and trend information over time without leaving my desk," said Karen L. Davis, RN, BSN, CIC, Infection Prevention Coordinator, Arnot Ogden Medical Center, Elmira, NY. ■

KaBOOM! Playground Build



A banner day as 2,500 area children now have a safe place to play.

"The Fit Together program provided a catalyst to enable us to no longer rely on volunteers and help from the neighboring city to provide physical activity opportunities in our own county."

– Dan Porter, Fit Together project director and Camden County planning director

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC)

is committed to investing in North Carolina's communities, one way being to provide creative ways to help children live healthier lives. To support this commitment, BCBSNC partnered with KaBOOM!, a national nonprofit organization that envisions a great place to play within walking distance of every child in America.

On Saturday, June 20, 2009, more than 125 employees from BCBSNC joined forces with 100 volunteers and staff from the YMCA of Northwest North Carolina, KaBOOM! and residents of the Winston-Salem community to build a new, safe playground at the Winston Lake Family YMCA. Volunteers gathered to build the playground, an outdoor classroom, a butterfly garden and a picnic space for parents and families to gather while their children play. In just eight hours, an empty lot was transformed into a colorful play space that encourages physical activity and creativity.

The play space compliments BCBSNC's interest in working to reduce childhood obesity and was the first collaboration between BCBSNC and KaBOOM!.

By working to ensure children have access to playgrounds like this, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina is making important strides in improving the health and well-being of North Carolinians. ■



Fit Together: Improving Active Living in Rural North Carolina

Taking note of the alarming disparity surrounding obesity and inactivity in rural North Carolina, in 2006 the **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC) Foundation** initiated a multi-year grant program, entitled *Fit Together*, aimed at addressing physical inactivity in five rural North Carolina communities. Through a partnership with Active Living By Design — a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation — the initiative integrated a multi-faceted approach to eliminating barriers to, and promoting physical activity in, rural communities.

The *Fit Together* program was designed to increase routine physical activity in rural communities. Through a competitive grant process, five communities were selected as grant recipients.

Each of the five communities implemented the Active Living By Design Community Action Model and 5P strategies as the framework for their *Fit Together* initiatives. The model is based on the notion that multiple strategies integrated concurrently within a community increase the likelihood of success.

Each of the 5P strategies involves specific tactics. Preparation includes partnership development, assessment and sustainability planning. Promotions tactics involve targeted communications with project audiences and policy makers. Programs are organized, on-going activities that encourage routine physical activity. Policy strategies inform, influence and implement policies and practices that support active living. Physical projects directly improve the community environment and/or remove existing barriers to routine physical activity opportunities. While this model had been implemented successfully in urban communities, the *Fit Together* partnerships were among the first to implement Active Living By Design's approach exclusively in rural settings.

Fit Together grantees received funding for three years from the BCBSNC Foundation, and through the Foundation's partnership with Active Living By Design, they also received ongoing technical assistance throughout the project.

Some successes seen by the five *Fit Together* grantee communities include:

- Ongoing sustainability of county infrastructure to create, operate, and coordinate physical activity opportunities through the development and staffing of a county parks and recreation department, and establishment of a county greenway coordinator and county wellness director

- Increased access to physical activity spaces through park improvements, trail enhancements, new sidewalks, and greenway connections
- Increased physical activity programming through the establishment of county worksite wellness programs, community wellness events, walking programs, and after school programming
- The implementation of the 5P Action Model created a sustainable and holistic approach to increase active living in rural communities.



North Carolina residents participating in the *Fit Together* program.



"The program has been very helpful, allowing me, as a single parent, to get health, dental and vision care with no burden to me and my daughter. I truly appreciate this program."

– Parent, North Dakota



Caring for Children
North Dakota Caring Foundation, Inc.



The North Dakota Caring Foundation was founded by Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota (BCBSND) in 1989 with the intent to increase wellness in North Dakota residents by improving the quality of, awareness of and accessibility to healthcare.

In North Dakota there are approximately 14,000 uninsured children. The foundation developed the *Caring for Children* program to address the unmet need of primary and preventive medical, dental and mental healthcare coverage for children from families that do not qualify for government-funded programs but cannot afford to purchase private insurance.

The mission of *Caring for Children* is to identify and enroll all eligible uninsured children in North Dakota. The program serves uninsured children from birth up to age 19 whose families meet income guidelines of 161 percent through 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. *Caring for Children* links these children to participating healthcare providers who will provide the primary and preventive health and dental care they need.

This program helps ensure that all children will have a healthy start and healthy future. BCBSND donates all administrative costs associated with the North Dakota Caring Foundation and *Caring for Children* program as an in-kind donation. This means 100 percent of all contributions directly serve enrolled children.

Caring for Children is a demonstrated successful solution for uninsured children in our state. In the past 19 years, *Caring for Children* has provided access to medical and dental coverage to more than 7,000 children across North Dakota. Without this program, these children may have been without coverage, which could have resulted in a lack of preventive and primary care and put them at risk for more serious health problems. ■

Regence has both a private and public foundation.



Patients receiving care through programs supported by The Regence Foundation.

More than 2 million people in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Utah are currently without health insurance. In funding programs to build healthier communities, **The Regence Foundation** aims to increase access to medical care for those who cannot afford it, coordinate and deliver care with innovative methods that improve outcomes, and address disparities in care.

The Regence Foundation's *Building Healthier Communities* program supports local and regional partnerships that are focused on addressing critical community health needs.

Foundation leadership and staff reach out to medically underserved areas and those with severely burdened systems of care — both rural and urban — in order to move like-minded organizations in the same direction.

Access to Health Care grants support collaborative projects with one or more of the following goals:

- Supporting and expanding the healthcare safety net
- Decreasing inefficiencies and gaps in local healthcare systems
- Engaging people in their own healthcare

Health Care Connections grants are intended to support new or emerging partnerships between organizations that are striving to improve healthcare access and a community's healthcare system as a whole. Funding may be used for planning activities such as:

- Community needs assessments
- Data analysis
- Community meetings

Transforming Health Care grants support groups that are:

- Exploring the barriers to — and public attitudes about — healthcare transparency and factors that affect long-term behavioral changes
- Increasing the public's access to, and usage of, information about healthcare's quality and cost
- Developing and implementing tools that allow people to make healthy decisions

As a result of The Regence Foundation's *Building Healthier Communities* program:

- Family Medicine Residency of Idaho partnered with the Garden City Community Clinic to utilize available clinic space to increase services to the local uninsured and underserved population.
- Community-Minded Enterprises in Spokane, Wash., expanded its program to match and enroll eligible individuals and families in available healthcare coverage products.
- Utah Partners in Health in Magna, Utah, expanded its unique safety net program, utilizing donated appointments with private practice providers, to serve an additional 1,300 patients.



- The Coalition of Community Health Clinics in Portland, Ore., launched a pharmacy bridge program to ensure that patients at its 13 member clinics would received the highest quality prescription medication at the lowest possible cost.
- Western Washington Area Health Education Center in Seattle partnered with associates across the state to develop an online pathway for incumbent rural healthcare workers to complete an Associate Degree in Nursing/Registered Nurse program. ■

The Regence Caring Foundation for Children Dental Program

The Regence Caring Foundation for Children was established to deliver dental care to vulnerable children — those who come from families who make too much to qualify for government assistance, but make too little to purchase dental insurance. Tooth decay — the most common chronic childhood disease — is twice as common among poor children as among their affluent peers.

The Regence Caring Foundation’s mission is to provide low-income children with access to dental care and oral health education. Through the Regence Caring Foundation for Children Dental Program, the Foundation:

- Provides children with a dental home, enabling them to receive quality care and develop relationships with dental professionals
- Provides children with the comprehensive care necessary to address existing oral health issues
- Provides proactive preventive dental health education through in-school programs and screening clinics that include interactive instruction, take home reading materials (in English and Spanish) and hygiene tools such as toothbrushes, floss and toothpaste

The Regence Caring Foundation achieves the objectives of the Dental Program by:

- Collaborating with local health departments, schools and other outreach organizations to identify children needing clinical and other program services
- Enrolling children in our annual dental program, providing them with direct services at no cost
- Engaging in varying fundraising activities to sustain and grow our ability to serve children

- Maintaining an informative Web site that provides educational and program material to families and prospective donors

The Regence Caring Foundation for Children Dental Program had impressive results in 2009, as it:

- Provided 2,879 children with comprehensive dental care services
- Provided an additional 1,335 children with preventive dental care, such as sealants and screenings
- Educated more than 12,020 children about the importance of good oral health habits

For 17 years, Regence BlueShield of Idaho and Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Utah have proudly donated all of the Regence Caring Foundation’s general administrative costs, allowing 100 percent of profits from donations and fundraising to go toward providing free dental care services to children.

To date, The Regence Caring Foundation for Children has provided more than 29,000 children with needed medical and dental care.



An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association



Regence Caring Foundation for Children Dental Program participants.

“Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania’s Nursing Scholarship Program has been a great source of encouragement and financial assistance to many of our students. At times, it has added just enough to a student’s resources to enable him or her to continue in the program.”

– Sharon Auker, RN, PhD, director of nursing, Pennsylvania College of Technology



2009 Nursing Scholarship Program participants.



Physicians and hospitals throughout northeastern and north central Pennsylvania continue to face a significant nursing shortage. According to the Health Resources and Services Administration, an arm of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Pennsylvania healthcare providers will experience a 41-percent vacancy rate in nursing positions by the year 2020, requiring more than 54,000 nurses to provide adequate patient care.

To support the education of future nurses, **Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania's (BCNEPA) Nursing Scholarship Program** provides financial aid to nursing students at 15 degree-granting institutions throughout BCNEPA's 13-county service area. An additional grant is made each year, on a competitive basis, to help one institution increase the number of nursing faculty in their program.

Since 2004, BCNEPA has partnered with the Pennsylvania Higher Education Foundation to administer the scholarship fund. The annual pool is allocated to participating schools according to the number of nursing students that graduated the previous year. The selection of student recipients is managed by each school in accordance with its financial aid policy.

BCNEPA provided funding through its *Nursing Scholarship Program* for the 2009/2010 academic year, helping more than 100 nursing students meet the costs associated with staying in school to complete their education.

In combination with other efforts across Pennsylvania designed to address the nursing shortage, BCNEPA's initiative has helped generate real results. Data collected by the Pennsylvania Higher Education Foundation for the years 2003 through 2008 show a 40-percent increase in nursing graduates in Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania's service area during that time. ■

Active Schools Grant Program!



Students participate in Active Schools Grant Program!

“One-third of all Pennsylvania children are overweight or obese, putting them at risk of a lifetime of health problems. Thanks to the support of the Capital BlueCross Active Schools Program, local schools are making the health of children a top priority by combating childhood obesity through increased physical activity and improved nutrition for their students.”

– Everette James, secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Health



Capital BlueCross and school officials prepare for Active School kick-off ceremony.



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) statistics show that more than 16 percent of children nationally are in the 95th percentile or higher on a measure of their body mass index (BMI), classifying them as obese. According to a recent study by the Pennsylvania Department of Health's Nutrition and Physical Activity Division, approximately 18 percent of Pennsylvania youth are obese.

In response to this alarming trend, **Capital BlueCross** has partnered with the Pennsylvania Department of Health on the *Active Schools Grant Program!* Under the program, schools are provided a list of proven programs they can use to structure their own programs in order to meet the daily/weekly recommended physical activity requirements. As a partner in this effort, Capital BlueCross is providing funding, informational support and incentives to 10 middle schools this year in the central Pennsylvania and Lehigh Valley areas to promote healthy activities for children.

With the help of Capital BlueCross, these schools can purchase programs like *HOPSports*, a new and exciting physical education program which incorporates the use of media with aerobic activities such as circuit

training, dance and kickboxing. They also will receive informational support and incentive options that include signage and sticker programs in cafeterias to encourage healthier eating habits, online or printed food diaries and lesson plans that encourage students to create a healthy cookbook or a vegetable container garden.

To launch the program, Capital BlueCross is hosting several kick-off events at middle schools promoting awareness and generating excitement among the students. The pep-rally-inspired events include video presentations, exercise events for a select group of students, cheerleading and dance routines, and surprise visits by local sports team mascots.

Capital BlueCross will be a partner in the *Active Schools Program* for two years providing support to a total of 20 Pennsylvania schools specifically chosen according to need by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. ■



"Thanks to Highmark's leadership in handling the logistics, the Walk for a Healthy Community provides DePaul School for Hearing and Speech with an additional fundraising event that has become a stable source of annual funds at a minimum cost. We are so grateful to be a part of the event, which has helped DePaul raise funds, generate greater awareness in the community and provide a forum for the entire DePaul school community to come together for a fun day that promotes a healthy lifestyle."

– John Krysinsky, marketing and special events manager, DePaul School for Hearing and Speech



2009 Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community participants.

Each year, **Highmark Inc.** holds *The Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community*, a fundraiser that helps local health and human service agencies across Highmark's 49-county Pennsylvania service region effectively raise funds in support of their community missions.

The estimated cost for a nonprofit organization to plan and host a fundraiser walk is \$35,000. Knowing that multiple walks compete for attention and fundraising dollars each year, Highmark created *The Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community* to assist dozens of nonprofits.

The Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community aims to energize community members to have a greater hand in their health by becoming or staying physically active, while they also play an active role in supporting local nonprofits, including patient advocacy organizations, food banks, mental health associations, family services agencies and community outreach groups.

Highmark underwrites 100 percent of the cost associated with the walk and handles all of the logistical planning so that all funds donated by walkers are given directly to support the operating and programming needs of the participating organizations.

Health and human service organizations that are 501(c)(3) tax exempt entities, do not operate their own fundraising walk event and demonstrate the commitment necessary to be successful are eligible to participate.

Because smaller nonprofit organizations often operate with few staff and volunteers, their resources for marketing, development and staff education are limited. Through monthly planning meetings, Highmark staff members engage the organizations in event logistics, public relations and marketing strategies. Highmark provides the organizations with comprehensive training in walker recruitment and fundraising coaching to ensure that each nonprofit is maximizing the potential of every walker.

Highmark also is responsible for:

- Developing promotional materials, such as informational brochures, posters, signage and press kits
- Maintaining a Web site that includes event information, online registration and tips on training for the walk
- Working with local media partners to generate enthusiasm for the walk
- Providing entertainment, prizes, refreshments and T-shirts for participants on the day of the walk

The 2009 *Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community* raised funds for 115 nonprofit organizations through events held in four Pennsylvania cities:

- In Pittsburgh, 7,500 walkers raised money for 44 organizations
- In Erie, 2,000 walkers raised money for 26 organizations
- In Harrisburg, 2,000 walkers raised money for 27 organizations
- In Bethlehem, 1,000 walkers raised money for 18 organizations

Many of the participating nonprofits that previously had little recognition in the general public are now enjoying an increase in their donations, more visibility and some have even found new volunteers due to the effective branding and promotion of their participation in the walk.

Since the inception of the *Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community* in 2003, more than 160 nonprofit organizations have benefited from participating in the event and collectively have raised nearly \$2.7 million dollars to carry out their missions in our local communities. ■



Independence Blue Cross 2009 nursing internship recognition event.

“I would like to offer my sincere thanks to IBC for its Nursing Education Grant. Funds will be used to provide scholarships and serve as a catalyst for increasing the number of qualified nurses practicing in the Philadelphia region. IBC’s investment in the community and nursing education is exemplary and greatly appreciated.”

– Dr. Stephen M. Curtis, president, Community College of Philadelphia



Independence Blue Cross (IBC) created the *Nurse Scholars Program* in 2004 to address the severe threat posed to the quality and cost of healthcare by the nursing shortage in southeastern Pennsylvania.

In partnership with the Pennsylvania Higher Education Foundation, the IBC *Nurse Scholars Program* currently supports accredited graduate and undergraduate nursing programs in southeastern Pennsylvania and is addressing the nursing shortage by:

- Providing financial support for undergraduate and graduate nursing scholarships for future practice nurses and nurse educators
- Launching the IBC *Nurse Faculty Program*, a companion initiative that provides direct support for additional nurse faculty positions and supplemental graduate program expansion grants
- Developing a nursing internship program that exposes undergraduate nursing students to unique nursing roles in managed care and public health settings, including working at nonprofit clinics that IBC supports through its *Charitable Medical Care Grant Program*
- Organizing and hosting an annual Nursing Education Forum to recognize student scholarship recipients, celebrate nurse educators, and promote dialogue and collaboration to address the nursing shortage and other issues facing the nursing profession

Since the IBC *Nurse Scholars Program's* 2004 inception, more than 3,000 scholarships have been awarded to future practice nurses and nurse educators at 31 accredited nursing programs in southeastern Pennsylvania. Additionally, 88 clinical and administrative nursing internships have been provided.

During the 2008-2009 school year alone, more than 170 undergraduate nursing students and nearly 200 graduate nursing students received scholarships through the *Nurse Scholars Program*.

The IBC *Nurse Scholars Program* has been nationally recognized, and is the recipient of numerous awards including National League for Nursing's Award for Public Service and the America's Health Insurance Plans Foundation (AHIP) Community Leadership Award. ■

Independence Blue Cross Charitable Medical Care Grant Program

Independence Blue Cross (IBC) created the *Charitable Medical Care Grant Program* to address the uninsured crisis in southeastern Pennsylvania, and enhance the overall regional healthcare system by partnering with local safety net health providers.

Through the *Charitable Medical Care Grant Program*, IBC awards financial and programmatic grant support to nonprofit, privately funded health clinics that provide free or nominal-fee care to the uninsured and underinsured.

IBC currently supports 36 nonprofit, privately funded health clinics, which served more than 113,000 unduplicated patients and provided more than 350,000 visits in 2009. The clinics served 17,000 more patients and provided nearly 50,000 more visits in 2009 than in 2008. Approximately 36 percent of all patients were uninsured and 53 percent were enrolled in Medicaid. IBC's investment has strengthened the capacity of our community safety net as evidenced by:

- 30 clinics reported increases in new patients over the last year
- Clinics offering social work services enrolled more than 3,000 eligible patients in Medicaid or other government assistance programs in 2009
- 22 clinics expanded or plan to expand, relocated to a larger site, or opened a satellite location in order to accommodate more patients

Triple-S Sponsorship Program



In 2009, the sponsorship program awarded funding to 160 organizations.

Triple-S Golf Tournament raises \$50,000 for MDA and Alianza para un Puerto Rico sin Drogas.



Grupo Triple-S volunteers joined the homeless at Albergue El Paraíso to celebrate the annual Thanksgiving lunch.

Triple-S, the largest health insurance company in Puerto Rico, supports countless initiatives to enhance the quality of life and access to healthcare in Puerto Rico.

The company created the *Triple-S Sponsorship Program* to support community and charitable organizations whose programs are aligned with the company's focus on health, education, environment and wellness. In 2009, the sponsorship program awarded funding to 160 organizations.

The *Te Ayudamos a Ayudar (We Help You Help)* initiative, another element of the program, promotes volunteer work by Triple-S employees in community organizations.

Through *Te Ayudamos a Ayudar*, Triple-S volunteers join the homeless each year at Albergue El Paraíso — an organization that benefits from the *Triple-S Sponsorship Program* — to celebrate the annual Thanksgiving lunch and provide the homeless with clothes and other essential items. Triple-S volunteers also participate in activities for United Way, Muscular Dystrophy Association and the Pediatric Oncological Hospital, among others. ■

Hope Lodge

Triple-S is a supporter of the *Niños Que Quieren Sonreír Hope Lodge*, an initiative of the American Cancer Society. The Hope Lodge, which will be inaugurated in September of 2010, will provide free temporary lodging for patients and their caregivers who must visit the San Juan metro area from different parts of the island for treatment.

The Hope Lodge offers a place where patients and caregivers can find support, understanding and encouragement from other families going through similar situations to their own. It will be open 24 hours, seven days a week to children — from newborns to age 21 — undergoing cancer treatment in Puerto Rico.

Triple-S Golf Tournament

The *Triple-S Golf Tournament* is held annually to raise funds for charitable organizations aligned with Triple-S's mission. The 2009 edition marked the tournament's 15th year and raised \$50,000. Proceeds from the 2009 tournament were awarded to two organizations: the Muscular Dystrophy Association and Alliance for a Drug-Free Puerto Rico.



Employees from the BCBSRI Communication Services Division show their team spirit as participants in the Shape Up RI 2009 competition.

“We have had a wonderful partnership with Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island for the last four years. During this time we have grown our wellness program from fewer than 2,000 people per year to over 15,000, and our participants have lost an average of one full BMI point (over 7 lbs.).”

– Colin Murphy, RN, MBA, executive director, Shape UpRI



Shape Up Rhode Island (RI) is a statewide exercise and weight-loss challenge developed by Brown University Medical School student Rajiv Kumar. The program is founded on the belief that healthy living lies in the power of teamwork and peer support. This annual health campaign encourages Rhode Islanders to pursue healthy lifestyles through increased physical activity and better nutrition. Participants compete on teams and track their weight, exercise hours, and/or pedometer steps over a 12-week period in the spring challenge or an eight-week period in the summer (*Summer Shape Up RI*).

Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island

(BCBSRI) has been a partner and lead sponsor of *Shape Up RI* for the past four years and has provided lead funding to the organization to support the statewide initiative.

As a team-based wellness program, *Shape Up RI* encourages employees and members of the community to join together to be more active, eat healthier and make other lifestyle changes to improve their health. Each participant is provided a start-up kit and access to the *Shape Up RI* online system.

BCBSRI works with *Shape Up RI* on a regular and engaged basis to reach out to various populations to encourage enrollment in the program. This includes Web promotion, outreach to membership, media relations and employee engagement. Though the program is open to all Rhode Islanders, nearly 50 percent of the 2009 program participants were BCBSRI members.

During the past four years, nearly 35,000 Rhode Islanders have participated in this successful program, collectively losing thousands of pounds, walking millions of miles and proving that teamwork is a powerful prescription for taking control of our health.

In 2009, the competition involved 12,671 participants on 1,774 teams. Participants who completed the program overall lost an average of 73 pounds and 1.2 body mass index (BMI) points, and 17.4 percent of participants in the weight-loss division lost 10 or more pounds. Additionally, 957 participants lowered their BMI status from obese to overweight, or from overweight to healthy weight.

Based on survey results, an overwhelming majority of participants (89 percent) were satisfied with the program, and 98 percent of participants felt they were more physically active at the end of the program than they were at the start.

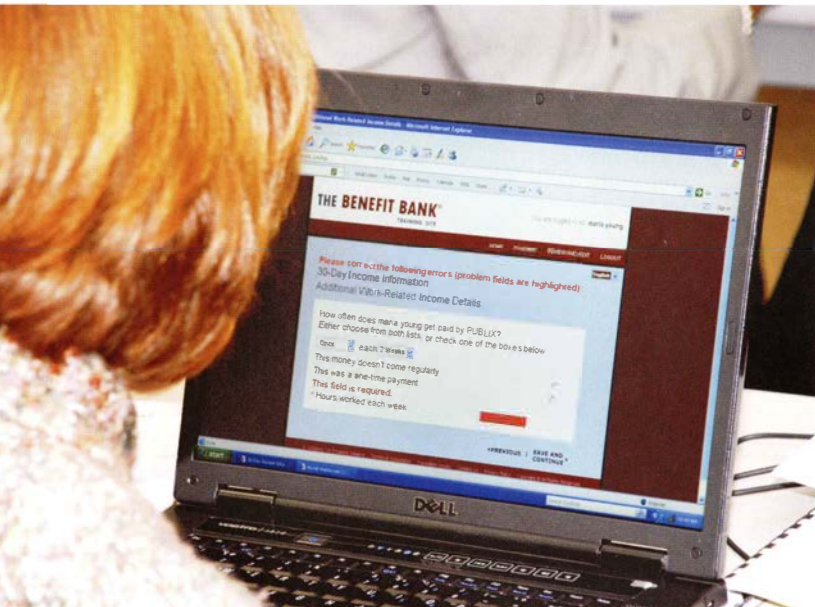
An individual's BMI status and physical activity level are proven to have a high correlation with medical and pharmaceutical claims costs. A decrease in an individual's BMI status from obese to overweight, or from overweight to a healthy weight, is associated with a decrease in medical claims, ranging from \$250 to more than \$1,700.¹ A one-point decrease in BMI is associated with a \$202.30 decrease in medical and pharmaceutical claims costs over one year.²

During the 2009 *Shape Up RI* program, there was a combined total decrease of 7,237.3 BMI points among all participants. The estimated cost savings over one year due to this change in BMI status is \$1,464,107. Over time, additional significant cost savings are likely to be realized due to decreased absenteeism, fewer worker's compensation claims and increased productivity, morale and retention. ■

¹ *Cost per risk level*, Dr. Dee Edington, University of Michigan, 2004.

² *Association of Healthcare Costs With Per Unit Body Mass Index Increase*, Dee Edington, American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, 2006.

The Benefit Bank – South Carolina



“The Benefit Bank connects [people] to the \$500-\$800 million in allocated work supports and benefits that are left on the table in South Carolina each year. The Benefit Bank volunteers are people they know in places they trust who help them connect to food, finances, and referrals through a seamless online service.”

– Karen Papouchado, director, The Benefit Bank of South Carolina

The Benefit Bank counselor training session.



MJ Maurer, director of Training at counselor training.



Each year, needy South Carolinians unknowingly walk away from more than half a billion dollars they are already eligible to receive — unclaimed monies including health insurance for children, Medicare Part D subsidies for low-income senior citizens, Pell grants for college students and SNAP/Food stamps. Even when they believe they may be eligible for these benefits, the complexity of the system often makes it too difficult for them to apply.

Thanks to a grant from the **BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina Foundation**, the South Carolina Office of Rural Health will help remove those barriers with the launch of *The Benefit Bank – South Carolina*.

The Benefit Bank – South Carolina is a “one-stop-shop” where low- and moderate-income individuals can obtain help preparing their state and federal taxes, and, at the same time, apply for the government work-support monies available to them. This is all done electronically, through a Web-based system that eliminates the inefficiency and confusion that often keep people from obtaining the support they have earned.

Research has shown that connecting people to government work-support benefits improves health outcomes, increases welfare-to-work success rates, reduces recidivism in ex-offenders, boosts local economic prosperity through multiplier effects and reduces poverty.

The Benefit Bank – South Carolina’s one-stop sites are sponsored by community-based organizations including faith-based, community, private-sector and governmental organizations. Trained counselors will pose easy-to-answer questions and use client answers to complete income tax returns and other work-support applications. The forms are typed, completed and prepared to file, often electronically, to the appropriate agency.

The rollout of *The Benefit Bank – South Carolina* sites will occur in planned phases, targeting areas of highest need first, based on statistics on poverty, unemployment and health disparities. Trained counselors will also be placed in South Carolina’s free clinics and other healthcare facilities to reach out to the uninsured.

By 2011, the South Carolina Office of Rural Health plans to have at least 120 *Benefit Bank – South Carolina* sites operating across the state, with 80 trained volunteer counselors checking eligibility for 30,000 people and enrolling 20,000 people for at least one government work-support or health program. ■

Tennessee Senior Olympics



Sarah Overton of Memphis competing in Tennessee Senior Olympics Track & Field event.



Presentation for the Tennessee Surgical Quality Consortium Expansion Project (Left to Right) Craig Becker, Vicky Gregg and Dr. Joseph Cofer.

“This partnership will provide a valid database for quality improvements that surgeons and hospitals can utilize, and improve care. We also expect this partnership to carry over into other relationships and future projects with physicians.”

– Craig A. Becker, president, Tennessee Hospital Association

The *Tennessee Senior Olympics* is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization devoted to promoting healthy lifestyles for seniors through fitness and sports.

BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee (BCBSTN) has been a major statewide corporate partner and sponsor of the *Tennessee Senior Olympics* sports competition since the games' inception in 1981.

The *Tennessee Senior Olympics* are held yearly to promote and celebrate fitness in every stage of life. About 3,500 Tennessee senior athletes participated in the district games in 2009 and 1,600 seniors participated in the state finals.

BCBSTN's partnership with the *Tennessee Senior Olympics* is three-fold: it involves a corporate donation, employee volunteers to assist with the games and development of the *Tennessee Senior Olympics* annual calendar for the organization's fundraising program.

The 2010 *Tennessee Senior Olympics* Calendar, created by the BCBSTN design team, salutes the 2009 *Tennessee Senior Olympics* athletes and their commitment to leading an active lifestyle, and features color photos of senior Olympians from around the state. All proceeds from sales of the calendar go toward helping fund and continue this important event. ■

BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee Health Foundation

Patient Safety and Quality Improvement

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, healthcare-associated infections are one of the most common complications of hospital care. Nearly two million patients develop such infections annually, which contribute to 99,000 deaths each year and \$28 to \$33 billion in healthcare costs.

In 2007, the Tennessee Hospital Association, through its not-for-profit, education and research subsidiary, Tennessee Hospital Education and Research Foundation, launched the *Tennessee Center for Patient Safety*, which provides education, resources and other tools to assist hospitals in accelerating their performance on quality and patient safety initiatives.

Blue Cross Blue Shield Tennessee Health Foundation provided a three-year grant to fund the center, which aims to reduce healthcare-acquired infections with use of evidence-based strategies, and improve the reliability, safety and quality of care received by patients in Tennessee hospitals.

Specifically, the *Tennessee Center for Patient Safety* is working toward:

- Reduction of central line infections at Tennessee hospitals as reported by hospitals to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) NHSN system
- Improved performance on Surgical Care Improvement Project (SCIP) measures as reported to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)
- Reduction in the incidence of pulmonary embolism/deep vein thrombosis (DVT) at Tennessee hospitals
- Reduction in the incidence of ventilator-associated postoperative pneumonia at Tennessee hospitals
- Reduction in surgical site infections at Tennessee hospitals
- Reduction in nurse turnover at Tennessee hospitals as reported by the Joint Annual Report of Hospitals and other pertinent THA data
- Increasing participation levels among Tennessee hospitals

The *Tennessee Center for Patient Safety* works toward these objectives by forming strategic collaborations and partnerships, and creating a structure to develop best-practice recommendations. Center representatives participate in statewide conferences, regional networking meetings and conversations with faculty experts.

As of November 2009, 122 Tennessee hospitals are enrolled in the *Tennessee Center for Patient Safety* as safety partners. There also are 77 SCIP (Surgical Care Improvement Project) teams, 64 central lines and 67 MRSA (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) teams. Unit-based teams continue to work on infection reduction strategies within their organizations and participate in calls and networking meetings hosted by the *Tennessee Center for Patient Safety*.



Scooter, BCBSVT mascot, hangs out with friends at Girls on the Run 5K in 2009.

“Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont has been an essential part of Girls on the Run Vermont’s (GOTRVT) ability to reach more than 10,000 girls statewide over the past seven years. This ongoing partnership with GOTRVT has extended from coaching, through providing volunteers for our 5K events, taking videos and photos at the events, and advertising about our program, to offering substantial financial support.”

– Nancy Heydinger,
executive director,
Girls on the Run Vermont



Any they're off. Thousands of Girls on the Run begin the 5K run in 2009.



Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont (BCBSVT)

sponsors *Girls on the Run* in Vermont. This national program encourages elementary and middle school girls to engage in healthy behaviors and to feel good about themselves. The 10-week program teaches the girls the basics of running for fitness — from stretching to hydration to energy boosting techniques. The coaches use fun games, energy awards and exuberant cheers to make running fun. The girls give each other encouragement, too, cheering their successes and empathizing with their struggles. The sessions also feature curriculum pieces, in the form of short discussions, games, etc., that cover topics such as body image and nutrition.

After weeks of training, encouragement, education and bonding, the girls meet one of two sites in the state for a 5K run and a celebration of better health. BCBSVT attends as well, to provide fresh Vermont spring water and to paint happy faces. The crowds at these events have grown exponentially in size over the seven years the program has been giving girls the opportunity to develop stronger bodies and healthier outlooks. In the past 10 years *Girls On the Run* in Vermont has grown from one site to 124 different programs at 115 schools and now serves 2,000 girls. The two 5Ks will draw about 6,000 participants this year.

Girls on the Run International contracts with Rita DeBate, Ph.D., MPH, CHES to provide formative impact evaluations. The evaluation assesses the *Girls on the Run* program and how well it meets stated objectives. Through the evaluations, Dr. DeBate has documented that the *Girls on the Run* curricula improves girls' self esteem, body size satisfaction, and physical activity behaviors to a statistically significant extent. She also noted positive changes regarding girls' attitudes towards physical activity, health behaviors, and empowerment. ■

Vermont Caring for Children Foundation *Blue Socks For Kids* Project

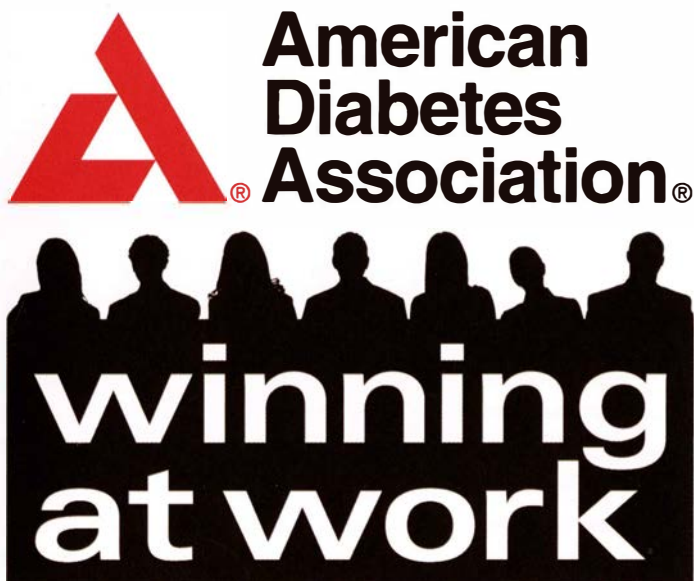
Based on research from the United States and Canada indicating that warm underclothing is high on the list of needs among the low income and homeless living in cold climates, the **Vermont Caring for Children Foundation**, a charitable affiliate of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont (BCBSVT) launched the *Blue Socks for Kids* project during the winter of 2008 to provide warm socks to needy Vermont youngsters.

The Vermont Caring for Children Foundation worked with Cabot Hosiery Mills, a Vermont-based sock manufacturer, to provide high quality, Vermont-made woolen socks to low-income and homeless Vermont children. The project helped to ensure they had warm undergarments to protect their health during the winter of 2009/2010.

The Vermont Caring for Children Foundation provided funding to manufacture 11,000 pairs of merino wool socks in children's sizes. BCBSVT then delivered the socks to community action agencies and homeless shelters around Vermont, where they were distributed to the children of families seeking emergency assistance including food, shelter and heating fuel.

Vermont Governor Jim Douglas provides strong support for the initiative, using his office as a platform from which to promote the program. He participated in a kick-off news conference and helped to load BCBSVT vans with boxes of socks for distribution.

Low-income advocates expressed strong support and gratitude for the program, reinforcing the significant need for quality undergarments for children among low-income Vermonters during the long winter months.



“The American Diabetes Association’s Winning at Work program helps employers to detect, prevent and manage diabetes in the workplace. Thanks to the continued support of Premera Blue Cross, this program has reached more than 5,000 employees in Western Washington.”

– **Linda Henderson, executive director, American Diabetes Association, Washington State**

The health and wellness of employees is a growing area of focus for many companies. The diabetes epidemic is consequently of primary concern as employers seek innovative ways to foster the well-being of their work force and the communities in which they operate.

As a health plan — and an employer — **Premera Blue Cross** understands the impact of diabetes on productivity and healthcare costs.

Premera works actively in support of initiatives that encourage individuals to make positive health-related lifestyle choices. Premera also helps build healthier workplaces and communities that champion individual progress toward wellness.

Premera has a long-standing relationship with The American Diabetes Association and actively supports the fight against diabetes. Since 2006, Premera has sponsored the American Diabetes Association *Winning at Work Program* (formerly called the Corporate Health Ambassador Initiative), which helps Washington state employers build healthier work environments.

The *Winning at Work Program* helps employers reduce healthcare costs and create a healthier workplace for employees. The program includes four key components: diabetes awareness, detection, prevention and management.

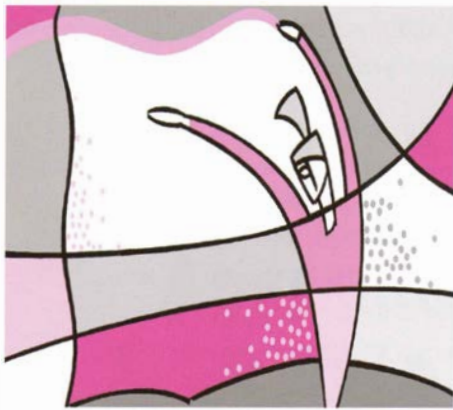
In 2009, *Winning at Work* also included the launch of a pilot Health Partner Network, which is available to assist employers with the prevention and management of diabetes and related health conditions in the workplace. Participating employers received access to free and reduced cost biometric screenings, professional speakers on health related topics of interest and free educational resources.

The annual *Winning at Work* event serves as a learning and networking opportunity for CEOs and business leaders representing companies of different sizes, different cultures and at different stages in developing workplace wellness programs.

During the event, representatives of these companies can learn about best practices, innovative approaches and available resources to support their respective programs. The event also features community-based partners involved with the design and support of workplace wellness programs. The initiative provides employers with actionable steps to take to encourage their employees and co-workers to adopt healthier lifestyles.

Building a foundation for continued momentum, the 2009 *Winning at Work* event was a great success. The program included the participation of 85 people from more than 35 different employers, and presentations by speakers with expertise in business, psychiatry, medicine and public health.

Vivacity, a consulting company focused on promoting workplace wellness, also contributed expertise to the program and engaged employers in meaningful discussion about how to design and implement supportive cultures for wellness in the workplace. In conjunction with the Health Partner Network, the *Winning at Work* initiative has reached more than 5,000 employees in Western Washington. ■



The
Caring for Women
Program

Mammograms
and other services
for Women
In Wyoming

A program sponsored by
The Caring Foundation of Wyoming, Inc.
and administered by
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wyoming

Funded in part by a grant from the
Wyoming Affiliate of the
Susan G. Komen
Breast Cancer Foundation

"You just approved my mammogram assistance. I just want to say thank you so much, because without you, I would not be able to afford this procedure. It is especially important to me as I lost my sister one and a half years ago to breast cancer. You are a blessing."

– Robin Winters, Wyoming



A 2001 community needs assessment determined that there was a significant need among low-income women in Wyoming for health screenings — including mammography and pap smears — as well as wellness exams and health awareness programs.

In response, **The Caring Foundation of Wyoming**, part of **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Wyoming**, developed the *Caring for Women Program*. The program's mission is to improve access to mammography, pap smears and comprehensive wellness exams to women throughout Wyoming. The *Caring for Women Program* targets women who otherwise would not receive these services. Women who indicate they do not have insurance coverage for the services and/or cannot meet the financial obligations necessary for the services receive them free of charge. Foundation staff is responsible for certifying the eligibility of applicants.

As part of the program, the Caring Foundation has developed a Statewide Network of Caring Partners: healthcare professionals who agree to provide mammography, pap smear and wellness services at reduced rates. Contracted providers performing services for the program are reimbursed directly at no cost to the women participating in the program.

The *Caring for Women Program* has enjoyed a long-standing relationship with the Wyoming affiliate of Komen for the Cure, which has also provided funding for the mammography services provided by the program. The Caring Foundation provides all payment for the comprehensive wellness exams, pap smears and program administration.

During 2009, more than 550 Wyoming women received mammograms as a result of this program and many others received comprehensive wellness exams and pap smears as indicated by their Caring Partner. The mammography screening target for 2010 is 650. ■



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