

NEWS RELEASE

For more information, call:
Max Heuer, (501) 378-2131

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***Blue & You Foundation* awards more than \$1.5 million in grants to support health programs**

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (Nov. 15, 2005) – The *Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas* announced its fourth annual grant awards to 23 recipients in an amount totaling \$1,554,453. The grant awards will be given in December for funding of 2006 programs that seek to improve the health of Arkansans.

Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield established the *Blue & You Foundation* in December 2001 as a charitable foundation to promote better health in Arkansas. The *Blue & You Foundation* awards grants annually to non-profit or governmental organizations and programs that positively affect the health of Arkansans. Particular emphasis is given to projects affecting health-care delivery, health-care policy and health-care economics.

“Working together for better health is part of our mission at Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield. By working with other organizations and agencies through the *Blue & You Foundation*, we believe we can have an even bigger impact on the health of Arkansans,” said Robert D. Cabe, chairman of the foundation’s board of directors. “For the fourth year, we are supporting organizations and agencies who share this commitment to better health. This year, we devoted a portion of grant funding to programs that effectively address childhood obesity and prescription medication assistance.”

The *Blue & You Foundation* grants for 2006 also address several other health conditions and issues throughout Arkansas, including fire safety, nutrition and exercise education, case management and health education, medical services, and bilingual health education.

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- **Arkansas Children's Hospital Foundation, Little Rock** (\$149,974) – to support the “Community Focused School-based Obesity Prevention Program” with the Little Rock School District to design and test the effectiveness of a culturally appropriate school-based obesity prevention curriculum, including nutrition, exercise, psycho-social well-being and behavior change strategies.
- **Arkansas Educational Television Network (AETN) Foundation, Conway** (\$107,510) – to enhance the monthly program “Fighting Fat,” hour-long programs designed to help the public grasp the scope of the obesity epidemic and offer tips on how to change this disturbing trend. Each program in the series features three components: healthy living tips, fitness ideas, and a panel discussion by experts who address various health issues related to the topic.
- **Arkansas Delta Rural Development Network, Ozark Mountain Health, Clinton** (\$90,000) – to support the 2006 Fall and Spring Arkansas Institute, which will utilize professional and academic staff to help leaders in 20 rural networks in the delta region of Arkansas who are serving the health and social needs of rural, impoverished Arkansans to build the capacity to implement sustainable rural-based strategic initiatives.
- **Arkansas Foodbank Network, Inc., Little Rock** (\$43,450) – to establish a new “Kids Café” site in Pine Bluff, and expand operations in seven existing sites in central Pulaski County. Kids Café sites provide nutritious after-school snacks and meals to children participating in Boys and Girls Clubs. The programs positively affect the health of these young Arkansans by helping alleviate hunger, teaching valuable life skills and providing important information about healthy eating and living.
- **Arkansas Human Development Corporation, Little Rock** (\$84,957) – to support “Promotoras de Salud (Health Promoters) Project” a program that uses community “health promoters” to address health concerns for Hispanics/Latinos. Promotoras De Salud provides bilingual and bi-cultural staff and volunteers in a seven-county region in Central Arkansas to furnish this population (individuals, small groups and community groups) with health and disease prevention information and education, specifically relating to early breast and cervical cancer, diabetes and hypertension detection. The AHDC also will teach the importance of prenatal care, reproductive health and childhood immunizations. Health promoters will steer the target population to health-care services, provide translation/interpretation services and some transportation assistance.
- **Christian Health Center, Camden** (\$34,640) – to support the “Community Cares Prescription Drug Program,” which targets poverty-level patients for receiving prescribed medications at no cost directly from the pharmaceutical companies. This program hopes to reach 600 clients to assist in providing their monthly maintenance medications.

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- **Coalition for Healthy Children, Jonesboro** (\$61,409) – to support “Ready, Set, Go Camp,” a two-week summer camp for fourth- and fifth-grade youth who are overweight or at-risk for becoming overweight due to their sedentary lifestyles. The camp focuses on a positive and “ultra” stimulating atmosphere for youth and includes nutrition education, social interaction and a fun, physical activity each day. At the end of camp, a reunion is planned for participants and their parents.
- **Committee for Healthier Children (CHC)/Beebe Public Schools, Beebe** (\$61,206) – to support “Beebe & Blue” program, a nine-month after-school program to focus on obesity among pre-kindergarten through ninth-grade children utilizing a positive, proactive approach to nutrition, self-respect and physical activity.
- **Community Clinic at St. Francis House, Springdale** (\$98,760) – to support the “Prenatal Pathways Program,” which provides prenatal care for 1,500 low-income expectant women in Washington County. The goal is to improve health indicators for both the mother and child after delivery, reduce complications at birth due to lack of prenatal care, reduce costs to area hospitals due to conditions that are preventable with appropriate prenatal care and improve child health indicators through healthy life skills education and prenatal vitamins for mothers during pregnancy.
- **Conway County Christian Clinic, Morrilton** (\$44,000) – to support this free clinic’s services to Conway and Perry County residents who are uninsured and whose income is below 125 percent of the poverty level. The clinic provides medical, basic dental, pharmaceutical and optometry services, as well as limited lab services, dietary education and pastoral care.
- **Crowley’s Ridge Rural Health Coalition, Paragould** (\$84,400) – to expand the Medicine Assistance Program into Poinsett, Sharp and Fulton counties to help patients receive medications they otherwise could not afford. The program began in Greene County and within six weeks of opening a medical assistance office there, physicians began seeing patients in the area who were compliant taking their medication and enjoying a better quality of life.
- **Daughters of Charity Services of Arkansas (DCS-Ark), Dumas** (\$43,212) – to support the “Pharmacy Assistance Program,” which targets low-income clients from the Delta region. The program helps patients obtain low-cost or free medications and teaches them proper medication usage. Patient education is offered by DCS-ARK to help teach them the proper way to administer medications, manage their health problems and minimize the number who neglect their prescriptions, to manage their health conditions and avoid hospital stays.
- **Easter Seals Arkansas, Little Rock** (\$61,649) – to expand the Grand Prairie Child Health and Development Outreach Project, which targets critical needs of

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obese children in the Mississippi River Delta region of Arkansas. Through the outreach project, direct services, training and support will be provided to children with and without special needs and to their caregivers to enhance the health and development of young children in the Mississippi River Delta region. The ESA will provide screenings, therapy, consultations with caregivers, and referrals to services.

- **Elkins Public Schools (Elementary), Elkins** (\$48,000) – to support the “I CAN” (Integrated Change Activity and Nutrition) pilot program, an integrated curriculum involving children, family and school to improve the health, physical fitness and weight of children to address the growing obesity problem in youth. I CAN targets fifth-graders with a Body Mass Index (BMI) greater than 95 percent in one rural Northwest Arkansas elementary school, with hopes of increasing the study group to larger, more varied studies.
- **Good Samaritan Clinic, Fort Smith** (\$65,000) – to support “Coping with Hypertension and Diabetes Program,” which targets the needs of diabetic and hypertensive patients with education, medical supplies and services to help manage their disease.
- **Greater Texarkana Peoples’ Clinic, Inc., Texarkana** (\$150,000) – to support funding for medical staff, to provide free medical treatment, prevention and educational services to uninsured residents of Miller County, Arkansas, and Bowie County, Texas, and expand services to include monthly medical specialty clinics such as gynecology, dermatology, urology and internal medicine.
- **Ozark Health Medical Center, Clinton** (\$68,292) – to support “Fit Families Program,” which is a comprehensive family obesity prevention and intervention program that has been shown to reduce the systematic risk factors of obesity. The program will be offered to the uninsured and underinsured in an effort to reduce the systemic risk factors of obesity.
- **Parenting and Childbirth Education Services, Inc., Jonesboro** (\$44,200) – to support the “PACES Coming Alongside Program,” an interactive case management project for high-risk adolescent young women who are pregnant or parenting to ensure consistent prenatal care, fewer preterm births, and children who are at lower risk of child abuse and neglect.
- **Safe Jonesboro Coalition, Jonesboro** (\$25,974) – to sustain the “Get Alarmed! Program,” which partners volunteers and firefighters to install fire alarms or replace batteries at no cost to families. The volunteers go door to door in designated neighborhoods to inquire if the home has installed smoke alarms and install them in homes that do not.
- **Southeast Arkansas Health Foundation, Monticello** (\$16,789) – to support “Fit Kids, Healthy Kids Program,” which targets children in the Monticello School District, to provide affordable options for those who have been identified as overweight or at risk for overweight.

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- **University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS)/Helping Schools Help Themselves, Little Rock** (\$34,466) – to support the “Helping Schools Help Themselves: Resources for Schools Program,” which will provide school guidelines for healthy eating, physical activity and obesity prevention required by state and federal legislation.
- **University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension, Little Rock** (\$88,482) – to expand the “Arkansas HOPE Project,” which is a classroom-based intervention in elementary schools that teaches nutrition and physical activity lessons in Northwest and Southwest Arkansas.
- **White River Rural Health Center, Inc., Augusta** (\$48,081) – to expand the “Medication Assistance Program” through the White River Rural Health Center, Inc. This program provides case managers to improve health outcomes for uninsured and underinsured patients with chronic illnesses.

“Although we’ve seen some slight improvements, the poor health status of our citizens continues to rank 46th in the nation and contributes to rising medical costs,” said Cabe. “Arkansas, however, is being noticed nationally for some innovative health improvement programs. By providing funding and working together with other organizations, we hope to expand a number of diverse health-care projects that will benefit all Arkansans over the long term.”

The *Blue & You Foundation* received 73 grant applications requesting more than \$4.9 million in support. The 2006 grant selections were made by the *Blue & You Foundation* board members, including: Carolyn Blakely, Ph.D., dean of the Honors College, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff; Sybil J. Hampton, president, Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, Little Rock; Hayes C. McClerkin, Of Counsel, Dunn, Nutter and Morgan, Texarkana; Mahlon Maris, M.D., of Harrison; George K. Mitchell, M.D., of Little Rock; Robert L. Shoptaw, chief executive officer of Arkansas Blue Cross, Little Rock; and Cabe.

The *Blue & You Foundation* will accept proposals for its 2007 funding cycle any time between Jan. 1 and July 14, 2006. Grants then will be reviewed and approved in the fall and awarded before the end of 2006 for 2007 programs. For more information or to receive a grant application, write to *Blue & You Foundation*, 601 S. Gaines Street, Little Rock, AR 72201 – or visit the foundation Web site at NK <http://www.BlueAndYouFoundationArkansas.org>

The foundation is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association and serves the state of Arkansas. The foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization.