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TO: *Kansas media outlets*

**BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF KANSAS FOUNDATION
CELEBRATES 10 YEARS OF GIVING:
TEN ORGANIZATIONS EACH RECEIVE \$10,000 GRANT**

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation is celebrating its 10th anniversary by granting 10 deserving statewide organizations \$10,000 each to focus on the health and wellness of Kansans. All of the organizations were chosen by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas employees through an online voting process. Eight additional runner-up organizations will each receive a \$1,000 grant, bringing the total amount given for the campaign to \$108,000.

“We are proud of the opportunities that BCBSKS Foundation grants have provided Kansas non-profits and the communities they serve since it was incorporated in 2005,” said Marlou Wegener, chief operating officer. “We couldn’t think of any better way to celebrate 10 years of giving than to grant even more funds to deserving organizations.”

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas incorporated the Foundation in 2005 with a \$2 million gift and has grown the corpus to \$12 million. During the past 10 years, the Foundation has funded organizations that focus on health issues that can impact the lives of many Kansans. More specifically, the Foundation funds programs that promote health improvement, health care access, health education, healthy behaviors and prevention initiatives. One of its major granting efforts is **Healthy Habits for Life**. This yearly program has provided more than \$960,000 in grants to assist Kansas schools in promoting healthy lifestyle choices to their K-12 students.

Since 2005, the Foundation has granted nearly \$4.2 million to worthy organizations across Kansas.

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“These 10 organizations represent the best of Kansans helping Kansans,” said Wegener.

“The Foundation is proud to grant this money knowing the dollars will be used to improve the health and wellness of Kansans across the state.”

Following is information on the grantees and the programs each \$10,000 grant will support:

American Cancer Society

Mission: ACS is the community based, voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem. Grant will support: **Road to Recovery**, which provides transportation to medical appointments; **Look Good, Feel Better**, a program to learn how to handle the side effects of treatment; and **Patient Navigation**, which addresses the barriers that prevent patients from getting the education and treatment they need.

American Diabetes Association

Mission: To prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes. Grant will support: **Camp Discovery**, a camp for diabetic children to educate on self-management skills including diet, exercise and insulin treatments.

American Heart Association

Mission: To build healthier lives, free of cardiovascular diseases and stroke. Grant will support: **Community Commons**, a website that includes data for Kansas communities to develop a healthy food and nutrition report, versus having to rely on national tools and sites.

Association of Community Mental Health Programs

Mission: Advance the interest of community mental health centers and the individuals they serve. Grant will support: **Health Home Program**, involving seven community mental health clinics in a project to enhance home health services for the mentally ill in Kansas.

Kansas Big Brothers Big Sisters

Mission: To create and support relationships that provide consistent, positive, one-to-one interaction between the child and a mature adult. Grant will support: **Matches on the Move**, a health and wellness program that engages children, parents and volunteer mentors in adopting healthy habits and behaviors.

Kansas Children's Service League

Mission: To protect and promote the well-being of children. Grant will support: **Period of PURPLE Crying**, a prevention program to educate parents and caregivers on the normalcy of increased infant crying and techniques for dealing with it to decrease stress and likelihood for abuse.

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Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence

Mission: To prevent and eliminate sexual and domestic violence through a statewide network of programs providing support and safety for all victims. Grant will support: **Impact of Sexual and Domestic Violence On Your Health**, a program to develop a toolkit on this issue including brochures and training materials in both English and Spanish.

Kansas Head Start Association

Mission: Supporting and strengthening Kansas early learning programs through advocacy, professional development and leadership. Grant will support: **Parent Health Literacy**, which provides education for low-income Head Start parents about health literacy and education on use of the health provider system.

March of Dimes

Mission: To help moms have full-term pregnancies and research the problems that threaten the health of babies. Grant will support: **Healthy Babies Are Worth The Wait**, a program designed to help English and Spanish-speaking women in Sedgwick County and the surrounding area get access to prenatal education in a group setting.

National Alliance of Mental Illness of Kansas

Mission: Dedicated to building better lives for the millions of people affected by mental illness. Grant will support: **In Our Own Voice**, a speakers' bureau program addressing the stigma associated with mental illness, living with mental disease and recovery efforts.

Organizations receiving \$1,000 grants are American Lung Association; ChildCare Aware of Kansas; Kansas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance; Kansas Association for the Medically Underserved; Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition; Kansas Learning Center for Health; Kansas Family Partnership; and, Oral Health Kansas.

About the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Foundation

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Foundation promotes the good health of Kansans who live in the Foundation's 103-county service area. The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Foundation and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas are independent licensees of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. Both entities serve all Kansas counties except Johnson and Wyandotte. For more information on the Foundation, visit www.bcbsks.com/foundation.