

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Blue & You Foundation **issues third annual call for grant applications** **to support health programs**

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (May 10, 2004) — The *Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas* has issued its third annual call for grant applications to fund 2005 health programs, which support services to improve the health of Arkansans.

The foundation anticipates awarding up to \$1 million in 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. The foundation also intends to devote a portion of this year's grant funding to programs that effectively address maternal and child health issues, as well as childhood obesity.

The deadline for applications is Aug. 13, 2004. Information about applying for a grant is found on the foundation Web site at www.BlueAndYouFoundationArkansas.org, or may be requested by writing to Blue & You Foundation, 601 S. Gaines Street, Little Rock, AR 72201. The grant applications will be reviewed in the fall and grants awarded in December for 2005 programs.

"We have a health-care crisis in Arkansas that must be addressed," said Robert L. Shoptaw, chief executive officer of Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield and chairman of the foundation's board of directors. "The poor health status of our citizens ranks 47th in the nation and contributes to rising medical costs. By providing funding and working together with other organizations, we hope to establish or expand a number of diverse health-care projects that will benefit all Arkansans over the long term."

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The foundation awarded its second grants totaling \$1,001,235, at the end of 2003 to fund 14 programs statewide during 2004.

Recipients of 2004 grants included the American Lung Association of Arkansas; Arkansas Center for Addictions, Research, Education and Services (CARES); Arkansas Center for Birth Defects Research and Prevention; Bess Chisum Stephens YWCA; Crowley's Ridge Development Council, Inc.; Delta Memorial Hospital; Focus, Inc.; Guadalupe Prenatal Clinic; Interfaith Clinic; KIDS FIRST/UAMS Department of Pediatrics; Kiwanis Activities, Inc.; Northwest Arkansas Radiation Therapy Institute (NARTI); Safe Jonesboro Coalition; and the University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service.

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.

Founded in 1948, Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield, an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, is the largest health insurer in Arkansas. Arkansas Blue Cross and its affiliates have more than 2,400 employees and serve approximately one-third of Arkansans. If combined, the 41 independent, locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans collectively provide health-care coverage for 88.3 million people — nearly one-third of all Americans.