



**BlueCross BlueShield
of Nebraska**

An independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Health Insurer Introduces New Grant Program for Greater Nebraska

Funds will support community health and wellness programs

February 15, 2008 (Omaha, NE)-- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska announces a new grant program to support health and wellness programs across the state, especially in Greater Nebraska. In 2008, the **Blue Health Advantage Wellness Grants** will provide a total of \$50,000 to be shared by as many as ten different non-profit organizations. The grants, totaling \$5,000 to \$10,000 each, will be awarded this summer to those projects which show the greatest promise for bettering the health and well-being of community residents outside of the Omaha/Lincoln metropolitan areas.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska exists to deliver the health and wellness solutions that people value most. "We're committed to investing in the health and wellness of citizens and communities across Nebraska," says Celann LaGreca, vice president, Community Investment. "With our new grants program, we hope to foster community-based action that will improve the health and well-being of Nebraskans where they live."

Studies¹ show that the three leading causes of death in Nebraska are linked to obesity and lack of physical activity. Among Nebraskans, 30% of women and nearly 44% of men struggle with obesity², which puts them at greater risk for heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and cancer. Says LaGreca: "Choosing wellness is a lifestyle decision. If we can bring it closer to home, we anticipate greater success."

Proposals for the grants are currently being accepted. Those applications must be received at Blue Cross and Blue Shield no later than April 2, 2008. The complete Request for Proposal (RFP) and full application details can be found under "Features" or "Who We Are-Community Relations" at www.bcbsne.com. For a hard-copy of the RFP, please contact Carol Vidlak at carol.vidlak@bcbsne.com or (402) 398-3734.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, insures or provides benefit administration to more than 717,000 people. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska is a mutual insurance company committed to delivering the health and wellness solutions that people value most.

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¹"Nebraska Health Information Project: 2005 Data Book," p.141 "Health Status"

²"Nebraska Office on Women's Health Annual Report 2006-2007," p. 9 "Behavioral Risk Factors"

For More Information, Contact:

Bev Carlson

(402) 548-4328

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Bev Carlson

(402) 548-4328