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HHS HONORS ORGANIZATIONS FOR PROMOTING HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson announced today the eight winners of the first Innovation in Prevention Awards to highlight businesses and organizations that are leading efforts to promote healthy lifestyles in their communities.

The awards, part of President Bush's *HealthierUS* initiative and Secretary Thompson's ongoing emphasis on preventive health, recognized organizations in seven categories that have implemented innovative and creative chronic disease health promotion and prevention programs.

"These awardees go above and beyond the call of duty to promote healthy lifestyles in their communities," Secretary Thompson said. "We are working from coast to coast to build a healthier, stronger America, and these efforts start at the local level. To promote healthier lifestyles, we need to reach Americans in the places they work, play and go to school. We have no better partners than these eight organizations."

To be considered, a program had to address one or more of the following categories of chronic diseases and underlying behavioral risk factors: asthma, cancer, diabetes, heart disease and stroke, obesity, physical activity, poor nutrition, and tobacco use.

The following groups are being honored in seven categories:

Faith Based Organization: The Church Health Center, Memphis, Tenn. The Church Health Center is a non-profit ministry that provides affordable health care for the uninsured, prevention services for the community at large and reaches out to the local faith communities to promote its services. After determining that patients needed a place to learn the tools of preventive health care, the Church Health Center opened a state-of-the-art 80,000 square foot prevention and wellness facility known as "Hope and Healing," in January of 2000. Each month more than 5,000 people, 70 percent of whom are below the federal poverty level, participate in the program. Each new member participates in "Prescription for Health," a 30-minute small group session in which a provider helps new members set healthy behavior goals.

Health Care Delivery System: Southeast Kentucky Community Access Program (SKYCAP), Hazard, Ky. SKYCAP hires and trains "patient navigators" who break down barriers to care for uninsured and underinsured rural families, who are disproportionately affected by chronic diseases such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, along with others such as cancer and mental illness. In the first three years of the program, the navigators helped more than 9,000 patients get access to over 87,000 services, including primary care visits, dental, pharmaceuticals, medical supplies, social, housing needs, transportation and most important, education on disease management and prevention. In the participating areas, there has been a 95 percent reduction in heart disease-related emergency room visits, an 87 percent reduction in heart disease-related hospital visits, and a 75 percent reduction in annual cost of hospitalization since the program was

implemented.

Healthy Workplace - Small Employer: Waco-McLennan County Public Health District
Worksite Wellness Training Program, Waco, Texas The Waco-McLennan County Public Health District has a workforce of 72 employees, with 40 of them participating in the worksite wellness program. The program helps individuals set personal goals and flexible exercise routines, and employees are given a paid hour each workday to participate in and record the physical activity of their choice. Participants have improved their physical activity by nearly 60 percent, have a 20 percent lower body weight, and decreased their cholesterol levels by 11 percent and blood pressure levels by 4 percent. The long-term effects of the program include lower rates of sick leave absenteeism, improved work efficiency and increased productivity.

Healthy Workplace - Large Employer: Johnson & Johnson, New Brunswick, N.J. The Johnson & Johnson employee health and wellness program integrates disabilities management, employee assistance, occupational health, wellness/fitness, and work-life services. Through innovative programs such as the Online Health Profile program, CareConnect, JOBFIT and preventive screening and wellness centers, Johnson & Johnson optimizes employee health, well-being and productivity by delivering leading edge health and wellness services that promote prevention, education and self-responsibility. The Health & Wellness program covers more than 47,000 domestic employees. Due to its health programs, health risk among employees declined for 8 out of 13 categories examined. Savings from the programs are about \$9 million per year from reduced medical expenses and lower administration costs.

Healthy Workplace - Large Employer: Union Pacific Railroad, Omaha, Neb. On the cutting edge of health promotion program development since 1987, Union Pacific Railroad continues improving its Health Track program to address the evolving medical needs of its employees. Health Track works to identify possible at-risk employees and provide them with intervention programs, company-sponsored exercise opportunities, and general health education and disease management. Recently, Union Pacific identified health and welfare as one of eight major business initiatives receiving special focus for improvement. The continued integration of health promotion with the company's safety culture has resulted in development of a Health Index for field operating personnel. The Health Index allows work units to set goals related to health promotion activities. By establishing measurable goals, each work unit is then able to develop plans to meet these goals.

Schools (K-12): Healthy Kids Network, 19 states The American Cancer Society's Healthy Kids Network is a community-based program designed to educate and mobilize parents to promote healthier habits among children. Created in Oregon in 1998, the Healthy Kids Network spread nationally in 2000. Local Healthy Kids Networks have worked to meet the needs of individual schools and communities by strengthening local school health policies and programs such as advocating for physical activity in schools or supporting local school health councils. The Healthy Kids Network brings together parents, teachers, school administrators, and community members to educate them about the importance of a quality school health program. Healthy Kids Network communications provide members with the skills and resources to foster changes that strengthen programs and policies in their local schools. Through parents, the Healthy Kids Network continues to support quality health education for kids as a means of providing children with valuable, lifelong healthful habits. Since 1999, the Healthy Kids Network has grown from 200 members to over 30,000 in 19 states. Findings show that the Healthy Kids Network can be successfully implemented in a wide variety of community setting with minimal cost making this

an easy program to replicate.

Public Sector: Seattle-King County Healthy Homes Project, Seattle, Wash. Seattle-King County Healthy Homes Project (SKCHH) is a nationally recognized leader in helping children with asthma reduce the frequency and severity of their asthma attacks through providing their families with education and resources to make their homes asthma-friendly and to keep asthma under control. By using community health workers who provide information, resources and support to families, the project has helped reduce the number of days children have asthma symptoms by 60 percent and the proportion of children using emergency health services by 64 percent -- for its first 138 children enrolled in the project. Community health workers have now served more than 500 families in the Seattle area. SKCHH is partnering with public housing agencies and private landlords to improve structural deficiencies and build new public housing that includes features to minimize exposure to asthma triggers. Such a partnership, which brings together public health experts and housing developers and owners is both novel and exemplifies the leadership role of SKCHH. One of SKCHH's success stories has led to the inclusion of "Healthy Homes" features in 1600 new housing units in the area.

Non-Profit: Campuses Organized & United for Good Health (COUGH), California Youth Advocacy Network (CYAN), Sacramento, Calif. The California Youth Advocacy Network, a funded project of the Department of Health Services - Tobacco Control Section (DHS-TCS), runs the COUGH program and provides technical assistance and training to tobacco control agencies working with young adults 18-24 years of age and to agencies working on college campuses. Through their work, a group of California State University (CSU) students, faculty, staff, as well as representatives from DHS-TCS funded organizations from across California, launched the COUGH campaign in January 2002. COUGH is a statewide grassroots student-led campaign committed to establishing healthy environments for students. In September 2002, COUGH campaign activities prompted a vote by the California State University Board of Trustees that empowered individual campus presidents to create a 20-foot no smoking zone around building entrances. Since then, 20 of 23 CSU campuses have increased their smoke-free areas.

A panel of 13 people chosen by the Partnership for Prevention, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting health and preventing disease, evaluated and rated programs run by the awardees based on five criteria: creativity and innovation, leadership, sustainability, replicability and effectiveness. The Partnership for Prevention used the panel's work to help make recommendations to Secretary Thompson.

The 2003 Secretary's Innovations in Prevention Awards are part of a broader initiative called Steps to a HealthierUS -- Secretary Thompson's initiative that advances President Bush's HealthierUS goal of helping Americans live longer, better and healthier lives.

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