



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*Catalyst Fund Awards \$14,175 in Grants to Community Health Organizations
in Worcester, Shrewsbury, Dedham, Holden, and New Bedford*

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Five community health organizations around the Commonwealth have been awarded capacity building grants from the Catalyst Fund. The funds will be used to increase bilingual services, conduct strategic planning, expand outreach for cancer screenings, and purchase two automated electronic defibrillators.

The Catalyst Fund is administered by the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation and is funded entirely with donations from employees of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. (The Foundation was founded by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts in 2001, but is a separate organization with its own board of directors.) Catalyst Fund grants assist with one-time expenses needed to strengthen an organization's ability to fulfill its mission, or enhance the capability of an organization to respond to a medical emergency.

“The mission of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation is to expand access to health care,” said Jarrett T. Barrios, President of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation. “These one-time operating grants to community-based organizations support the heart of that mission.”

The following organizations received Catalyst Fund grants in November, 2008:

Family Health Center of Worcester, Inc. was awarded \$3,000 to partner with faculty at The College of the Holy Cross to audit the proficiency of its 25 bilingual medical assistants who work directly with the health center's Spanish-speaking population.

Friends of the Shrewsbury Senior Center, Inc. was awarded \$2,000 to purchase an Automated Electronic Defibrillator and train staff in its use.

New England Hemophilia Association of Dedham was awarded \$3,500 to plan and conduct a two-day retreat for its board of directors and develop a five-year strategic plan.

Wachusett Regional High School Athletics of Holden was awarded \$2,250 to purchase an Automated Electronic Defibrillator and train staff in its use.

YWCA of Southeastern Massachusetts of New Bedford was awarded \$3,425 to recruit and train four women from faith-based communities to conduct cancer and cardiovascular education and outreach among the New Bedford area's African-American and Hispanic populations.

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More about the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation

The mission of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation is to expand access to health care. Through grants and policy initiatives, the Foundation works with public and private organizations to broaden health coverage and reduce barriers to care. It focuses on developing measurable and sustainable solutions that benefit uninsured, vulnerable and low-income individuals and families in the Commonwealth, and served as a catalyst for the pioneering Massachusetts health care reform law passed in 2006. The Foundation was founded in 2001 with an initial endowment of \$55 million from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts; the endowment has since grown to \$108 million. The Foundation operates separately from the company and is governed by its own 18-member Board of Directors. It is one of the largest private health philanthropies in New England and in 2007 was awarded the Paul Ylvisaker Award for Public Policy Engagement by the Council on Foundations.