



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 26, 2011

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Opa-Locka childhood obesity prevention project activates the community with more than \$160,000 in grants

MIAMI, Fla. – Hip-hop dancing, community gardening and healthy cooking are activities that Opa-Locka, Fla. children and families will have access to starting this summer as a way to prevent childhood obesity. These and other health initiatives received a total of \$64,500 in grants today from War on Poverty-Florida (WPF) as part of the Building a Healthy Community Opa-Locka Childhood Obesity Prevention Project and community Call to Action issued in October 2010. The grants were announced at a special meeting of the community coalition at Opa-Locka City Hall.

Combined with an additional \$97,700 sustaining grant to WPF from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation (BCBSF Foundation), the community initiative to reduce or prevent childhood obesity today received more than \$160,000 to implement its Call to Action.

Seven community organizations received grants for programs that address one or more of the four Call to Action focus areas: early learning, schools and after-school programs, community- and faith-based organizations and built environment.

- **The Portrait of Empowerment** -- \$10,000 for its *Back to Eden* program, providing afterschool nutrition and physical education for 150 youth and their families at three community schools.
- **Health Council of South Florida** -- \$10,000 for its *Miami Matters: Collaborating and Calculating to Prevent Childhood Obesity in Opa-Locka* program, creating a customized database to track and identify trends in health and quality of life in Opa-Locka.
- **Opa-Locka North Dade Front Porch Council, Inc.** -- \$10,000 for its *Healthy Students, Healthy Family, Healthy Community* program, serving youth and families at seven community schools with nutrition and exercise education.
- **Family Christian Association of America, Inc.** -- \$10,000 for its *FCAA Healthy Kids Opa-Locka* program, engaging 180 students ages 3 to 12 in preschool and afterschool health and wellness instruction.

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- **The Miami Foundation with Youth L.E.A.D.** -- \$10,000 for its *Youth L.E.A.D. Activist Academy and Service Learning Projects* program, training and empowering 30 Opa-Locka teens as food justice activists to educate community residents on locally available, nutritious foods.
- **Urban Green Works** -- \$10,000 for its *Opa-Locka Farmers Market*, educating and empowering youth and residents to purchase, grow and consume more locally-grown fruits and vegetables through community gardening, farmers market and cooking classes.
- **Carrie Meek Foundation** -- \$4,500 for its *Hip Hop 4 Health* program, engaging 100 Opa-Locka youth in weekly afterschool dance training and competition combined with nutrition and cooking classes.

The Build a Healthy Community Childhood Obesity Prevention Project, is an initiative of the War on Poverty-Florida (WPF) and is funded in part by a grant from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation. War on Poverty-Florida, Inc. is a nonprofit organization committed to the revitalization of minority communities in Florida. Through work in targeted Florida communities, WPF endeavors to help reduce poverty and racial inequality, close the wealth gap and ensure minority voices are heard in major policy debates. For more information visit www.waronpoverty.org

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation (BCBSF Foundation) is a separate, philanthropic affiliate of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida (BCBSF), incorporated in the state of Florida. The BCBSF Foundation, and its parent, BCBSF, are independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, an association of independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies. For more information on the BCBSF Foundation, please visit its website at www.bluefoundationfl.com.

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Editor's Note: Call to Action Report is available at www.waronpoverty.org. Attached chart shows Call to Action focus areas addressed by each program awarded grants.