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**St. Louis Regional Health Commission Announces First Grant Recipients of
\$1.5 Million Research Initiative**

*Program will support research partnerships between community-based organizations
and local universities*

ST. LOUIS, July 21, 2010 – The St. Louis Regional Health Commission (RHC) announced today the recipients of the first round of grants from the \$1.5 million St. Louis Community/University Health Research Partnership, funded by Washington University in St. Louis, Saint Louis University and BJC HealthCare. The initiative, facilitated by the RHC, focuses research efforts on critical health care problems in the St. Louis community and supports the development of research partnerships between community-based organizations in St. Louis City and County and faculty members at Washington University and Saint Louis University.

“One of the ways BJC works to make medicine better is by partnering with others to help eliminate health disparities and improve the health of the St. Louis community. We are pleased to support this important initiative to fund research that will identify innovative solutions to meet these very important goals,” said Steve Lipstein, President and Chief Executive Officer of BJC HealthCare.

“Saint Louis University has a long-standing history of supporting the community,” said Dr. Philip Alderson, Dean of the School of Medicine at Saint Louis University. “We are excited to join this initiative and continue that support.”

The program awarded seven research partnerships, up to \$100,000 per project for a one-year period, to investigate, analyze and publicly report findings on an existing health concern within the St. Louis community. Research projects that produce significant findings requiring additional funding for program development and implementation may be eligible for a second year of funding.

The 2010 St. Louis Community/University Health Research Partnership Awardees are:

- Kendra Copanas (Maternal Child and Family Health Coalition) and Pamela Xaverius (SLU)
Advancing Interconception Wellness Among At-Risk Post-Partum Women
- Ben Cooper (Nurses for Newborns) and Nancy Weaver (SLU)
Promoting Safe Environment and Parenting Practices with Home Visitation Programs
- William Hildebrandt (Queen of Peace Center) and Stephen Wernet (SLU)
Evaluation of a Peer Delivered Recovery Management Checkup Model Among Substance Abuse Women

Add one—Community/University Grant Recipients

- Joan McGinnis (St. Louis Diabetes Coalition) and Thomas Burroughs (SLU)
Self-management Education and Support for Diabetes Care Improvement: Linking High-Touch and High-Tech Approaches
- Sherrill Jackson (Breakfast Club Inc) and Mary Politi/Matthew Krueter (WU)
Connecting Rarely/Never Screened Women to Mammography Via Kiosks and Navigators
- Hannah Reinhart (Gateway Greening) and Susan Racette (WU)
Nourishing an Urban Community II
- Lori Behrens (SIDS Resources) and James Kemp (WU)
Assessing the Delivery of Prevention Messages for Infant Mortality

“This partnership provides an opportunity for the community voice to be recognized and included when looking at health care issues in the St. Louis area,” said Mikki Brewster, a community representative and Co-chair of Grants Award Panel. “Our hope is that through these research projects, we can help advance the quality and availability of health care in our area.”

The awardees were selected by a scientific grant review panel and a grant award panel comprised of community and university representatives who considered scientific quality, potential for positive impact on health outcomes and disparities, and whether the project fits with the interests of the St. Louis community.

“The Institute of Clinical and Translational Sciences has been delighted to play a role in facilitating joint research projects between Washington University, Saint Louis University and community based organizations,” said Kenneth S. Polonsky, M.D., Director of the Washington University Institute of Clinical and Translational Sciences. “The structure we have set in place is designed to ensure that the projects will improve the health of our community and improve the delivery of health care in community settings.”

The St. Louis Community/University Health Research Partnership was established in 2009 following two community forums hosted by the RHC to address medical/health research issues in the St. Louis community. At these forums, representatives of Washington University and Saint Louis University outlined several new initiatives to improve the interaction between medical/health researchers and the community, including the creation of a new granting program for community-based organizations with initial funding from universities and affiliated hospitals. In the spring of 2011, the RHC will host a forum for the universities to provide an update to the community on the status of their efforts, including the new grants.

The St. Louis Regional Health Commission is a non-profit organization with a mission to increase access to health care for people who are medically uninsured and underinsured; reduce health disparities among populations in the St. Louis City and County region; and improve health outcomes among populations in the St. Louis City and County region, especially among those most at risk. The Commission comprises an appointed body of government, health care and community leadership. It was formed in 2001 at the recommendation of Civic Progress in response to an immediate funding crisis in St. Louis after the closure of St. Louis Regional Hospital. (For more information, go to www.stlrhc.org)

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