



Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation

A Subsidiary of Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi.



Building a Healthy Mississippi

Spring 2015



Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation

Vision

A Healthy Mississippi

Mission

Provide targeted grants to fund health programs and initiatives to improve the health of Mississippians

Strategic Focus

- Schools
- Colleges and Universities
- Communities

Inside this issue:

2015 Healthy School Awards	1
Itawamba Community College's WellFit 365	2
FitNess at Northeast Mississippi Community College	2
Foundation Honored with Two Governor's Awards	3
Camden Students Celebrate "Get Ready to Run" Win!	3

Northside Elementary is Mississippi's Healthiest School Ocean Springs Upper Elementary and Forrest County Agricultural High also Honored as Healthy Schools

Supporting Mississippi's schools, communities, colleges and universities in their efforts to make our state healthy is at the forefront of the mission and vision of the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation.

The Foundation announced the winners of the inaugural Healthy School Awards during a luncheon held at Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi headquarters in Flowood. **Northside Elementary School** in Clinton took top honors and was named "**The Healthiest School in Mississippi**" and will receive **\$50,000** to enhance its wellness programs.

Ocean Springs Upper Elementary School and **Forrest County Agricultural High School** both received **Healthy School Awards** and each will receive **\$25,000** for their respective wellness programs. Leaders from the winning schools were on hand to accept the awards.

The Foundation's Healthy School Awards recognizes and rewards public schools with health policies and programs that promote healthy eating, physical activity, staff



wellness, tobacco-free lifestyles among students and staff, and parental and community involvement. The criteria for this award are based on state and national school health standards.

The goal of these awards is to motivate Mississippi schools as they create and maintain healthy school environments. Healthy schools help students achieve full academic potential and support them in developing lifelong healthy behaviors.

The Healthy School Awards will assist school leaders in their efforts to make their schools, and ultimately our state, a healthier place to live. Prestigious leaders from across Mississippi reviewed and scored the applications.

The **2016 Healthy School Awards Application** is now available. To access the application, please visit the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation's website at www.healthiermississippi.org. Applications are due to the Foundation by October 31, 2015.

Itawamba Community College's WellFit 365



The Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation is proud to partner with Itawamba Community College to promote healthy lifestyle habits to its students, staff, faculty and the community through the WellFit 365 initiative.

The initiative originated from the Foundation's Community College Health and Wellness Summit, where community college leaders were introduced to the Foundation's University and College Health and Wellness Model that is designed to support the development of health and wellness cultures that extend from campuses into the surrounding communities and schools.

WellFit 365 will provide new cardio equipment and a nine-week health and nutrition program each semester.

"Itawamba Community College is extremely grateful to the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation for this grant that will enable us to provide expanded health and wellness opportunities not only for our faculty, staff and students but also for those in K-12 as well as our community," said President Mike Eaton. "It will further enhance the College's role in the promotion of a healthier institution and community."

The college plans to take a lead role in developing relationships with the local school district and surrounding communities by creating health and wellness programs, including summer youth camps to educate students on the importance of living healthy lifestyles.

FitNEss at Northeast Mississippi Community College

A comprehensive wellness program at Northeast Mississippi Community College seeks to create a healthy campus culture with FitNEss, a program designed to assess and monitor the health status of students and employees, including support in making lifestyle modifications to improve wellness and reach fitness goals.

The FitNEss initiative is aligned with the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation's University and College Health and Wellness Model. The Model includes best practices based on the Foundation's partnership with Delta State University and is designed to support the development of health and wellness cultures that reach from campuses into the surrounding communities and schools.

New fitness equipment and a cooking lab will offer the campus and community population opportunities to participate in exercise programs and nutrition education classes. Summer youth camps and community-wide events are planned to offer lessons about the importance of healthy eating and exercise.

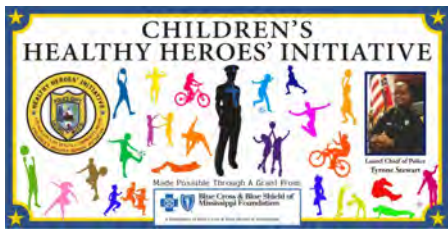
This initiative also includes improving the college's Burgess Activity Center with quality fitness equipment and opportunities for a variety of intramural activities.

"The Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation provides targeted grants to organizations working to build a healthy future for all Mississippians," said Sheila Grogan, Executive Director of the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation. "We applaud Northeast Mississippi Community College's efforts as they partner with the Foundation to create a healthy campus environment that reaches into the surrounding communities and schools through the FitNEss initiative."

The college held a kickoff event to launch the FitNEss initiative that included a check presentation to college president Johnny Allen, followed by a yoga session, a Zumba class and a community walk around campus.



Foundation Honored with Two Governor's Awards



Each year the Mississippi Association for Partners in Education honors the state's top partnership programs during the Governor's Awards luncheon. The Foundation was honored to receive the Governor's Award of Distinction and the District & Community-Wide Level Award for its partnership with the City of Laurel Police Department and the Laurel School District for the Children's Healthy Heroes Initiative. A second award, the University Partnership Award, was presented to the Foundation and Delta State University for the Healthy Campus/Community Initiative in Coahoma County and the Clarksdale Municipal School District.

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

Healthy Campus/Community Initiative

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Known as the Healthy Heroes initiative, officers from the Laurel Police Department visited K-5 elementary schools in the Laurel Municipal School District to exercise with the students and to teach lessons about the importance of healthy eating. Police officers also led a community walk at each school and involved students, faculty and neighborhood residents.

Delta State University, in partnership with the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation, provided health fairs for teachers, parents and students in the Clarksdale Municipal School District and introduced new fitness activities with nutrition education. Pre- and post-testing revealed a 17 percent increase in exercise, a 24 percent increase in the ability to identify a whole grain and a 20 percent increase in knowledge of portion sizes.



Camden Elementary Students Celebrate "Get Ready to Run" Win!

Students from **Camden Elementary School** visited the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi campus in Flowood to celebrate their honor of having the highest participation at the **2015 Mississippi Blues Kids' One-Mile Fun Run**, which is part of the Mississippi Blues Marathon. Camden students participated in Zumba, enjoyed a healthy snack and took a celebratory lap around the blue outdoor walking track.

Elementary schools in Central Mississippi competed to win award money for their P.E. programs by participating in the **Get Ready to Run** program. Award criteria included completing lessons from the **Get Ready to Run Lessons & Activity Guide**, creating a storyboard of the program experience and having the highest percentage of students participating in the Kids' One-Mile Fun Run. The winning schools are:

1st Place: Camden Elementary School \$2,000

2nd Place: Davis Magnet School \$1,500

3rd Place: Christ Covenant School \$1,000

Storyboard Winner: Highland Elementary School \$500

Supported by **Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi** and the **Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation**, the **Get Ready to Run** program is helping to build a healthy generation of Mississippians by enabling students to develop the skills they need to make exercise and physical fitness a part of their lives.

For more information about Get Ready to Run, please email getreadytorun@bcbsms.com.

For additional information about the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation, please visit our website at www.healthiermississippi.org.

Spring 2015 News

© Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation