



# Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation

A Subsidiary of Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi.



## Building a Healthy Mississippi

Winter 2016



Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation

### Foundation Names Ocean Springs Upper Elementary School “Mississippi’s Healthiest School” for 2016

Ocean Springs High and 28th Street Elementary also Named 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 2016 Healthy School Awards during the Mississippi Association of School Superintendents Legislative Luncheon held at the Downtown Marriott in Jackson. **Ocean Springs Upper Elementary School** took top honors and was named “**The Healthiest School in Mississippi**” and will receive **\$50,000** to enhance its wellness programs.

**Ocean Springs High School** and **28th Street Elementary 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



*Eugenia King, Health and Fitness Coordinator, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation (right), presents the “Healthiest School Award” for 2016 to Mary Rodgers, Assistant Principal, Ocean Springs Upper Elementary School.*

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.

For more information about the Healthy School Awards and the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation, visit [www.healthiermississippi.org](http://www.healthiermississippi.org).

#### 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

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# Wildcat Wellness at Pearl River Community College



In partnership with the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation, Pearl River Community College is expanding its reach from the campus into the surrounding communities and schools through period two of the Wildcat Wellness initiative.

“We are excited about the opportunity to grow our wellness program with grant funds from the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation,” said Dr. William Lewis, Pearl River Community College President. “The funding that will be provided by this grant will allow Pearl River Community College to grow and enhance its programs and services for our students, employees and the general public. It is a pleasure for us to be able to partner with the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation in providing quality health and wellness programs. We are most grateful for their continuing support.”

A tobacco-free campus, Pearl River Community College, through the Wildcat Wellness initiative, includes two summer

campus for elementary school children and training for employees and students who want to teach exercise classes on campus and in the community.

“We’re proud to support Pearl River Community College in its continued efforts to enhance its healthy campus culture,” said Sheila Grogan, Executive Director of the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation. “Pearl River Community College has made significant progress in integrating wellness opportunities into its campus environment, and this grant will continue to support its efforts.”

The Wildcat Wellness initiative will also include the installation of outdoor exercise equipment along the walking trail, a bike share program, a low ropes course and healthy cooking demonstrations.

## Is Your Town Mississippi’s Healthiest Hometown?

The Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation is pleased to partner with the Mississippi Municipal League to promote community health through the **Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation Healthy Hometown Awards**.

At the 2016 Mississippi Municipal League Annual Conference to be held in Biloxi this summer, up to three municipalities will receive **\$25,000** in recognition of their success in being healthy communities. One municipality will be recognized as the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation “Healthiest Hometown” and will receive a **\$50,000** award.

The application and criteria are available online at [www.healthiermississippi.org](http://www.healthiermississippi.org). Applications are due to the Foundation by March 31, 2016.





## “Get Ready to Run” Program Rocks the Kids’ One-Mile Fun Run

Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi, in partnership with the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation, helped more than 18,000 elementary students learn about the benefits of an active lifestyle through the **Get Ready to Run** Program.

Invitations to participate were sent to public and private schools in Central Mississippi, with 37 schools electing to participate. Students in grades K-5 received incentives as they completed lessons from the **Get Ready to Run Lessons & Activity Guide**. The guide was developed by health and wellness experts at Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi in cooperation with the Mississippi Department of Education to ensure that the lessons fully support the Mississippi Framework for Physical Education and the National Association for Sport and Physical Education Standards.

The program culminated on Saturday, January 9, 2016, as more than 1,000 elementary students gathered in downtown Jackson, laced up their blue shoelaces and ran the **2016 Get Ready to Run Kids’ One-Mile Fun Run**. Participants received finishers’ medals as they crossed the finish line.

**Get Ready to Run** schools competed to win award money for their P.E. programs. Award criteria included completing the seven lessons and activities, creating a storyboard of the program experience and driving the highest percentage of students participating in the **Get Ready to Run Kids’ One-Mile Fun Run**. The winning schools are:

- 1st Place : Davis Magnet School \$2,000**
- 2nd Place: St. Anthony Catholic School \$1,500**
- 3rd Place: Gary Road Elementary School \$1,000**
- Storyboard Winner: Gary Road Elementary School \$500**

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 on the Get Ready to Run program, please email [getreadytorun@bcbsms.com](mailto:getreadytorun@bcbsms.com).*

For additional information about the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation, please visit our website at [www.healthiermississippi.org](http://www.healthiermississippi.org).

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