



Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Associates' Contributions Help the Uninsured

BOSTON –February 3, 2004 -- The personal contributions of 500 associates of the state's largest health insurer built a fund of more than \$90,000 to help support the health care needs of low-income and uninsured people in Massachusetts. The Catalyst Fund supports one-time capacity-building expenses for nonprofit organizations across the Commonwealth that serve the health care needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals and families. Since the Fund's inception as part of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA) Foundation in May 2002, 31 health care and community-based organizations throughout the state have received capacity-building mini-grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500.

"As the number of uninsured people in Massachusetts grows and the operating budgets of the organizations that serve them shrink, spending to strengthen infrastructure seems like a luxury to many nonprofits," said Andrew Dreyfus, president of the **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation**. "Through the generosity of BCBSMA associates, capacity-building activities do not have to be deferred, putting organizations in a better position to deliver critical services to the uninsured."

The Catalyst Fund is completely funded by contributions from BCBSMA associates. One hundred percent of the contributions are used for grant awards to health care and community-based organizations.

Some of the organizations that received awards from the Catalyst Fund in 2003 include:

Outreach Van Project - Uninsured immigrants, migrant workers and homeless people receive basic medical care and support services in East Boston from this mobile unit staffed by volunteer physicians, medical students, nurses and social workers. The program received a \$2,000 grant to train additional volunteers, print health education materials, and fund a part-time grant writer.

The Open Door Free Medical Program - This new free evening clinic at the First United Methodist Church of Hudson opened in January 2003. They have received two Catalyst fund grants for a \$2,500 each to purchase basic diagnostic and intervention equipment

such as EKG cardiographs, external defibrillators, otoscopes or pulse oximeters. The clinic treats approximately 200 uninsured individuals and families each week.

Boston Area Rape Crisis Center - The \$1,250 grant award provided training for the organization's clinical team in serving adolescent sexual assault survivors, including understanding mental health needs and options, and substance abuse prevention and family relationship counseling.

Healthy Malden, Inc. - This health care organization that serves low-income residents in the MetroNorth region received a \$2,500 grant award to hire a development consultant to develop a sustainability plan, and build internal capacity for ongoing fundraising by training staff and board members in prospect research and grant writing. This \$2,500 investment enabled Healthy Malden to raise an additional \$1.2 million from foundations, corporations and individual donors.

Catalyst Fund grant requests are reviewed by a team of BCBSMA associates who make their recommendations to the Foundation's board of directors for final approval.

Since its inception in 2001, the BCBSMA Foundation (www.bcbsmafoundation.org) has awarded grants of \$7.6 million to spark innovation and strengthen services for uninsured and low-income individuals and families in Massachusetts. The Foundation is governed by its own 17-member Board of Directors, and operates separately from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. BCBSMA committed an initial endowment of \$55 million, making the Foundation one of the largest health philanthropies in Massachusetts.