

News Release

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Calling All Doctors and Healthcare Professionals

*Rhode Island Free Clinic and Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island
Team Up for Volunteer Challenge*

Providence, R.I., (May 14, 2007) – Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island (BCBSRI) and Rhode Island Free Clinic today announced the kick off of the *Good Health Starts with Good People Volunteer Challenge*. Through this partnership, BCBSRI will match volunteer service to the Free Clinic with financial support.

In its second year, the *Good Health Starts with Good People Volunteer Challenge* was designed by the Rhode Island Free Clinic and BCBSRI to recognize and bolster volunteerism at the Free Clinic and with additional space and new exam rooms, this year the program is especially in need of new volunteers, particularly physicians.

Now through March 2008, BCBSRI matches every volunteer hour worked at the Free Clinic with a \$2 gift and provides a \$1000 gift for every 50 hours of service from a new volunteer. Last year, the program attracted 145 new volunteers to the Rhode Island Free Clinic and resulted in more than 9,000 volunteer hours, resulting in a \$35,000 total contribution from BCBSRI.

“We are dedicated to the success and prosperity of this program that provides a crucial service to our community,” said James E. Purcell, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island president and CEO. “Rhode Island Free Clinic offers quality medical care to individuals who do not have health insurance, and we’re proud to be a part of their efforts.”

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Since its inception, Rhode Island Free Clinic has provided nearly 11,000 visits to more than 1,800 patients, thanks to the dedication of more than 250 volunteers who regularly give of their time. Their responsibilities include caring for patients, entering data, interpreting for Spanish speaking patients, scheduling appointments, counseling patients, and teaching nutritional values.

'We're extremely excited about taking this program into its second year," said Lisa Smolski, Rhode Island Free Clinic executive director. "Thanks to Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island, we have doubled our volunteer base, and have financial support to continue to serve people needing quality healthcare in our community."

Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island has been the state's leading health insurer for 66 years and now covers more than 680,000 customers. Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

Organized in 1999, Rhode Island Free Clinic is a volunteer-staffed, community-based non-profit organization in south Providence. The Free Clinic offers high quality primary medical care and a full array of no and low cost medications, diagnostic and specialty services to adults without health insurance. Rhode Island Free Clinic is funded solely by charitable donations. To find out how you can volunteer or donate, call John Parkhurst, Clinic Manager, at (401) 274-6347 ext 212.

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