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Portland, Oregon One of 41 Sites Selected for National Program to Fight Childhood Obesity

Community Health Partnership: Oregon's Public Health Institute Receives Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grant to Impact how Urban Planning and Affordable Housing Practices Affect Residents' Health

Portland, Oregon, January 12, 2010 – Community Health Partnership: Oregon's Public Health Institute has been awarded a \$360,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to improve healthy eating and active living for children and families living in affordable housing settings in Portland and throughout Multnomah County. Based on a rigorous selection process that drew more than 500 proposals from across the country, Portland is one of 41 sites selected for the RWJF Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities initiative.

Local data demonstrate that Portland communities with concentrations of multi-family affordable housing have inadequate infrastructure and fewer opportunities for healthy eating and active living. Community infrastructure that impacts healthy eating and active living includes walking/biking networks to schools and services, parks and greenspace, community gardens and other urban agriculture opportunities, healthy food retail, and community safety. The goal of this four-year project is to bring together public health, affordable housing, and urban planning stakeholders to ensure that families living in affordable housing settings have access to healthy eating and active living amenities in their communities. Key components of the project include conducting a health impact assessment on an urban planning study currently being conducted by the Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability along SE 122nd Avenue and translating findings into recommendations for the City's Portland Plan. This summer after final assessment and partnership development, Community Health Partnership will identify additional policy and community change objectives to pursue for the next three years.

“This grant will help create healthy, complete communities for all Portland residents, not just for those who can afford to live in Portland's most desirable neighborhoods,” said Noelle Dobson, project director at Community Health Partnership. “We need to ensure that as Portland grows and develops over the next decades that lower income residents and communities of color also benefit from Portland's tradition of building livable communities.”

“Our unique partnership with urban planning and affordable housing partners allows us to build support for healthy eating and active living into the very framework of how we approach community development in Portland.”

The *Healthy Active Communities for Portland's Affordable Housing Families* initiative is led by Community Health Partnership in collaboration with Oregon Opportunity Network, Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, Community Cycling Center, ROSE Community Development Corporation, Janus Youth Village Gardens, Kaiser Permanente, and other housing, health, and advocacy groups.

“To reverse this epidemic, communities are going to have to rally around their kids and provide the opportunities they need to be healthy,” said Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, M.D., M.B.A., president and CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. “Through this project, Community Health Partnership and its partners are doing what it takes to make sure children lead better lives.”

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities is a \$33 million national program and RWJF’s largest investment to date in community-based solutions to childhood obesity. With nine Leading Sites chosen in late 2008, the program now spans 50 communities from Seattle to Puerto Rico. All are targeting improvements in local policies and their community environment—changes that research indicates could have the greatest impact on healthier eating, more active living and obesity prevention. Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities is a cornerstone of RWJF’s \$500 million commitment to reverse the country’s childhood obesity epidemic by 2015.

All were selected because of strong vision, partnership and a commitment to make lasting change in their communities. The new program grants will continue through June 2013.

Visit www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org to learn more about these communities’ work and plans.

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Community Health Partnership: Oregon’s Public Health Institute is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to improve the health of Oregonians through advocacy and support of effective public health policy. For more information visit, www.communityhealthpartnership.org.

About Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), advances community-based solutions that will help reverse the childhood obesity epidemic. It focuses on changing policies and environments to support active living and healthy eating among children and families. The program places special emphasis on reaching children who are at highest risk for obesity on the basis of income, race/ethnicity and geographic location. It will support RWJF’s efforts to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic in the United States by 2015.

The Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities national program office is housed at Active Living by Design, part of the North Carolina Institute for Public Health at the Gillings School of Global Public Health at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. Established in 2001 as an RWJF national program, Active Living By Design now serves funders and partnerships across the country that are fostering community-led change to build a culture of active living and healthy eating.

About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation’s largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. For more than 35 years, the Foundation has brought experience, commitment, and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, the Foundation expects to make a difference in your lifetime. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org.