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Avon Breast Health Outreach Program Awards Grant for Breast Cancer Education and Awareness Program to YWCA

Local Organization Recognized With Support From National Program

Baton Rouge, Louisiana/January 30, 2012 – The Avon Breast Health Outreach Program has awarded an \$80,000 one-year grant to YWCA Greater Baton Rouge to increase awareness of the life-saving benefits of early detection of breast cancer. It is the 17th year that the program has received funding from the Avon Foundation for Women to support its work on this important health issue, and in recognition of the program's excellence.

The YWCA ENCOREplus program educates women in the Greater Baton Rouge area and refers them to low-cost or free mammograms and clinical breast exams in their own communities. The Greater Baton Rouge area includes the following parishes: East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, West Feliciana, Pointe Coupee, St. Helena, Livingston, Iberville, Ascension, St. James, and Tangipahoa. While the incidence of breast cancer in Louisiana is slightly lower than the national average, the death rate among African-American women is significantly higher, due in part to lack of early detection. The YWCA program is designed to help medically underserved women get access to quality health care and take personal charge of their own health.

Since April of 1995, the ENCOREplus program at the YWCA has reached more than 361,000 women with information about the importance of early detection of breast cancer and has referred more than 40,000 women for mammograms and clinical breast exams.

Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer in women in the United States, and the leading single cause of death overall in women between the ages of 40 and 55. According to the American Cancer Society, 2,940 new cases of breast cancer will be detected in Louisiana this year and 610 lives will be lost. Nationwide, there is a new diagnosis every three minutes and a death from breast cancer every 14 minutes. While advances have been made in prevention, diagnosis, treatment and cure, early detection still affords the best opportunity for successful treatment. Programs such as ENCOREplus help ensure that all women have access to early detection information and options, even poor and medically underserved women. "We are proud that the Avon Foundation for Women shares our mission and has chosen to support our program," says Ramona Boatner, director of the YWCA's ENCOREplus program. "With these funds we will be able to provide life-saving information to at least 40,000 women and refer at least 3,600 of them for clinical breast exams and mammograms. The Avon Foundation's support will enable the YWCA to overcome many barriers for low-income women,

including lack of culturally appropriate information and lack of health insurance,” she added.

Since 1993, the Avon Foundation has awarded more than 1,550 grants to community-based breast health programs across the United States, including ENCOREplus at the YWCA. These programs are dedicated to educating underserved women about breast cancer and linking them to early detection screening services.

The Avon Foundation for Women and Breast Cancer Crusade

The Avon Foundation for Women, an accredited 501(c)(3) public charity, was founded in 1955 to improve the lives of women and today is the world’s largest corporate-affiliated philanthropy focused on issues that matter most to women. The Avon Breast Cancer Crusade, which observes its 20th anniversary in 2012, has placed Avon at the forefront of the fight against breast cancer; today, Avon is the leading corporate supporter of the cause globally. In the 20 years since the Crusade’s launch, Avon breast cancer programs in 58 countries have donated more than \$740 million for research and advancing access to care, regardless of a person’s ability to pay. Avon raises funds for the Crusade through the sale of Avon “Pink Ribbon” products, and through events and walks, such as the [U.S. Avon Walk for Breast Cancer](#) series, which is the Foundation’s largest fund-raising source.

The Avon Breast Health Outreach Program

The Avon Breast Health Outreach Program is administered by Cicatelli Associates Inc. to support community-based, non-profit breast health programs across the country. The Fund’s National Advisory Board selected ENCOREplus at the YWCA as one of 120 new grant recipients nationwide in the 2012 cycle of Avon Breast Health Outreach Program grants. These organizations were chosen based on their ability to effectively reach women, particularly minority, low-income, and older women, who are often medically underserved.

For more Information

For more information on YWCA’s ENCOREplus, please call (225) 215-1324. For more information about breast cancer, contact the American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345 or www.cancer.org, or the National Cancer Institute at 1-800-4-CANCER or www.cancer.gov.

To learn more about the Avon Foundation for Women, call 1-866-505-AVON or visit www.avonfoundation.org, where you can access free printable *Breast Health Resource Guides* in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). For information or to register or support the *Avon Walk for Breast Cancer* events, visit www.avonwalk.org or call 1-888-540-WALK.

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