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## **Healthcare Georgia Foundation Launches Statewide Public Health Campaign**

### *Advocacy Grants Awarded to Build Support for Public Health*

**Atlanta, Georgia - October 14, 2009** - Healthcare Georgia Foundation today announced six grant awards totaling \$631,800. The grant awards reflect the Foundation's desire to prominently position Georgia's public health system and its leadership.

Georgia's public health system has essentially been decimated in recent years through a series of state budget cuts. Today, per capita spending on public health in Georgia is down to about a nickel a day. Among other unfortunate measures, Georgia ranks in the bottom ten unhealthiest states on several measures including infant mortality, percentage of population without insurance, percentage of low-birth weight babies, the number of children with AIDS, etc.

"To redress this dire situation, Healthcare Georgia Foundation recently launched an initiative aimed at building public and political will," said Gary D. Nelson, president, Healthcare Georgia Foundation. "Doing so is necessary to reverse the dangerous and harmful trends in public health capacity that we have all directly experienced in recent years."

At the heart of this initiative is a grant to Hayslett Group LLC, an Atlanta based communications firm, to fund a two-year program called *Advancing Public Health in Georgia*. The goal of the program is to prepare public health leaders in Georgia to be more effective advocates in the public policy arena. By using media and other public communications tools to shape the policy environment, it can become possible to begin improving Georgia's public health system.

In addition, the Foundation awarded a \$200,000 grant to the Georgia Public Health Association. The Georgia Public Health Association is comprised of more than one thousand local, state, and federal public health professionals working in Georgia.

The grant awards are as follows:

<b>Georgia Public Health Association</b>	<b>\$200,000</b> Support to strengthen the organizational capacity in order to create a more sustainable and viable association.
<b>Hayslett Group LLC</b>	<b>\$7,300</b> Support for the license renewal for the Georgia Statewide Trauma

Action Team (GSTAT) website.

**Hayslett Group LLC**

**\$307,500**

Support to execute a statewide advocacy campaign, Advancing Public Health in Georgia.

**Mathews & Maxwell, Inc.**

**\$60,000**

Design and produce a 2010 Georgia election guide featuring candidates for governor and lieutenant governor and their positions with respect to priority health issues.

**The Carter Center, Inc.**

**\$10,000**

Support for the 25th Annual Rosalynn Carter Symposium on Mental Health Policy, Preparing for Health Care Reform: Challenges and Opportunities for Behavioral Health Care.

**The Schapiro Group, Inc.**

**\$47,000**

Support to analyze Georgia's policy capacity to address the integration of primary care and mental health among children and adolescents in the state.

**Total**

**\$631,800**

**About Healthcare Georgia Foundation**

Healthcare Georgia Foundation is a statewide, private independent foundation. The Foundation's mission is to advance the health of all Georgians and to expand access to affordable, quality healthcare for underserved individuals and communities. Through its strategic grantmaking, Healthcare Georgia Foundation supports organizations that drive positive change, promotes programs that improve health and healthcare among underserved individuals and communities, and connects people, partners and resources across Georgia. For more information, please visit the Foundation online at [www.healthcaregeorgia.org](http://www.healthcaregeorgia.org).

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