FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, January 24, 2014

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FOUR CITIES WIN GRANTS FOR OUTSTANDING PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION INITIATIVES

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Today, The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) announced the winners of the Safeguard My Meds Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Recognition Program, during the 82nd Winter Meeting in Washington, D.C. Awards were given to outstanding local initiatives that have the greatest potential to reduce the misuse and abuse of prescription drugs, particularly among young people.

Grants were made to Mayoral-based initiatives in four cities:

• Columbus, IN
• Fayetteville, AR
• Indianapolis, IN
• Philadelphia, PA

This is the second round of grants awarded as part of the five-year partnership between USCM and Purdue Pharma, L.P. The successful USCM/Purdue Pharma partnership began in 2009 with a nationwide public awareness campaign, featuring Mayoral PSAs on the dangers of prescription drug abuse, and offering simple steps parents can take to protect their children by properly storing and disposing of medication in the home.

To date, Mayors have recorded more than 200 radio and television PSAs, which have reached an audience of millions in cities across the country. The goal of the grants program is to support and/or enhance existing prescription drug abuse prevention programs in America’s cities, as well as encourage the development of new and innovative programs.

“I am proud to be a part of this important partnership with Purdue Pharma,” said Tom Cochran, U.S. Conference of Mayors CEO and Executive Director. “Together, The Conference of Mayors and Purdue Pharma have taken a national leadership role in the fight against prescription drug abuse, particularly among our young people, and these awards are an important step in supporting the efforts of mayors on the ground, at the local level.”

Grant awards were divided into two categories: small city (those with populations of less than 100,000) and large city (those with populations of 100,000 or more). First and second place awards were given in both categories. An independent panel of judges evaluated the applications based on innovation, creativity, mayoral involvement and potential impact.
"It was great to see the enthusiasm from our nation’s mayors for the second year of this award, and we are grateful to all the mayors and their respective staffs who took the time to apply for recognition. And we are also very appreciative for the programs the mayors implemented to address the issue of prescription drug abuse. We congratulate the mayors who were selected by the panel, and look forward to hearing more about their projects in the future,” said Pamela Bennett, RN, BSN, Executive Director of Healthcare Alliance Development at Purdue Pharma.

For more information on the winning cities’ programs, please see the program descriptions below.

**Small City**

1<sup>st</sup> Place ($10,000): Fayetteville, AR – Mayor Lioneld Jordan, “Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Program”

The mission of the Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Program is to educate parents/grandparents about the prescription drug abuse epidemic, and about ways to safeguard prescription drugs within the household, as well proper disposal options. Through the program classroom presentations targeting pre-teen children on the dangers of prescription drug abuse are also offered, as well as public service announcements on the topic. With this award the city plans to commission the production of a video public service announcement (PSA) entitled “Grandma, You May Be a Drug Dealer.” The PSA would be broadcast on Fayetteville’s government/public access channels, along with digital signage networks and other public service announcement opportunities. The program also plans to expand its education and engagement efforts to include real estate agencies over the next year. (Law enforcement officials have discovered that an emerging source of illegal prescription drug for potential misuse/abuse is real estate open houses, during which potential ‘buyers’ search these houses for the purpose of stealing prescription drugs.)

2<sup>nd</sup> Place ($5,000): Columbus, IN – Mayor Kristen Brown, “Diversion Education & Enforcement Program”

Columbus Police Department’s (CPD) diversion program is an innovative, multi-faceted effort aimed at reducing the prevalence of prescription drug abuse in the community. The goal is to establish Columbus, Indiana as a showcase on how community collaboration can make a difference in reducing pharmaceutical drug abuse. The past two years, CPD’s accomplishments include appointing a detective to investigate diversion cases exclusively and coordinate outreach and public awareness on prescription drug abuse (the only Columbus is the only municipality in Indiana to have such a position); diversion trainings for law enforcement with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and National Association of Drug Diverions Investigators (NADDI); enhanced prescription drug monitoring and tracking; participation in DEA’s National Drug Takeback Days to collect and destroy unwanted and unused prescription medications from citizens’ homes; and quarterly meetings with representatives of health care facilities, and also have reached out to area pharmacies and medical practices to encourage use of INSPECT and the reporting of diversion crimes. The award funds will be used to support the continuation of the program.

**Large City**

1<sup>st</sup> Place ($10,000): Philadelphia, PA – Mayor Michael Nutter, “Too Good for Drugs”

In response to demonstrated need, Jewish Family and Children’s Services (JFCS), in partnership with the Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services, provides quality social and community services, including those focused on prevention of prescription drug abuse/misuse, to enhance the lives of families, children, and individuals. These include drug and alcohol prevention education and other services in 14 elementary, middle, and high schools; delivery of the evidence-based curriculum “Too Good for Drugs” in select 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms within the School District of Philadelphia; and drug and alcohol prevention education to youth engaged in after school programs in high-risk zip codes, as well as to parents/caregivers of those students. Award funds will be used to support the continuation of the program.
Celebrating Families!™ is a 16-week program for families in which one or both parents are in early stages of recovery from alcohol and/or substance abuse addiction, and there is high risk for domestic violence and/or child abuse. The program’s aim is to help all members of the family heal and build vital healthy living skills. Celebrating Families!™ program participants develop knowledge and skills for achieving a healthy lifestyle free from drugs and alcohol, with the goal of preventing substance use in youth who participate with their parent(s). Weekly sessions begin with families sharing dinner together. Then, families divide into a parent group and age-appropriate child group for 90-minute group sessions about that week’s topic, and come back together following that for a 30-minute activity to practice what has been learned and receive feedback. Themes addressed each week include facts about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs; the disease nature of chemical dependency and its effects on the entire family; making healthy choices; making healthy lifestyle choices; and developing healthy friendships and relationships. Funds will be used to support the continuation of the program.

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The United States Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are more than 1,200 such cities in the country today, and each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. Find us online at usmayors.org, facebook.com/usmayors, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/usmayors.

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