



ProLiteracy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Greg Smith, smithg@floridaliteracy.org
Amy Schmitz, (315) 412-4118, aschmitz@proliteracy.org

November 16, 2011

FLORIDA LITERACY COALITION RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD FOR HEALTH LITERACY INITIATIVE

The Florida Literacy Coalition was recently presented with the United States Conference of Adult Literacy's (USCAL) Award for Program Innovation and Collaboration for the development of the Florida Health Literacy Initiative.

Through the support and collaboration of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida (BCBSF), the Florida Health Literacy Initiative provides community literacy and ESOL programs with the grants, training and resources to develop local health literacy projects using contextualized instruction.

"We truly appreciate this honor that we share with BCBSF," said Greg Smith, Executive Director of FLC. "They have been a great partner and are truly committed to reducing barriers to health care and supporting innovative, grassroots approaches to health education and literacy."

With a pledge of \$360,000 over three years, the Initiative has served more than 4,200 students through grants to 27 local adult and family literacy programs. "BCBSF is proud of its partnership with the Florida Literacy Coalition and the recognition of the Florida Health Literacy Grant Initiative. The Health Literacy Initiative has experienced tremendous results in its three-year inception and the USCAL Award for Program Innovation and Collaboration is validation for the program's success." Said Sharon Hackney, senior manager, Community Affairs.

The award was presented at the USCAL National Awards Banquet on November 4 in Houston Texas. "The work achieved by FLC and the BCBSF is an exemplary model of the important collaborations needed in the adult literacy field," said David C. Harvey, president and CEO of ProLiteracy. "This project has helped shine a light on the

importance of health literacy and reminds us all of what can be accomplished when stakeholders come together to address one of the most pressing social issues in the nation today.”

About USCAL

USCAL, sponsored by ProLiteracy, is a national partnership that spans many sectors, including community colleges, public libraries, community-based organizations, and more. Twenty-six partners from fields such as consumer safety, workforce development, business, workforce development, and English to speakers of other languages participated to help local organizations build new collaborations among different education and social service sectors in order to meet the growing demand for adult basic education support services.

About ProLiteracy

ProLiteracy is the oldest and largest nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing adult literacy and basic education in the United States. With more than 1,000 member organizations, ProLiteracy works in all 50 states in the United States and in more than 30 developing countries to help local organizations change lives and communities through adult literacy and basic education

About Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida is a leader in Florida’s health industry. Since 1944, the company has been dedicated to meeting the diverse needs of all those it serves by offering an array of choices. BCBSF is a not-for-profit, policyholder-owned, tax-paying mutual company. Headquartered in Jacksonville, Fla., BCBSF is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, an association of independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies. For more information concerning BCBSF, please see its Web site at www.bcbsfl.com.

About the Florida Literacy Coalition

Established in 1985, The Florida Literacy Coalition (FLC) promotes, supports and advocates the effective delivery of quality adult and family literacy services in the state of Florida. As a statewide umbrella literacy organization and the host of Florida’s State Adult and Family Literacy Resource Center, FLC provides a range of services to support more than 300 adult education, literacy and family literacy providers throughout Florida. Special emphasis is placed on assisting community-based literacy organizations with training and program development needs.