

**UNM Foundation
For Immediate Release**

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**Partnering for Health: Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico and the
University of New Mexico
Children's Health, Cancer Research, and New Mexico's Nurses Benefit**

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. – Can New Mexico's children see health benefits through improved nutrition, participation in sports programs, good prenatal care, and fetal alcohol prevention education? Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico (BCBSNM) believes they can, and has partnered with several programs of the University of New Mexico's College of Nursing, School of Medicine, and UNM Children's Hospital over the last year selected to improve the health of New Mexicans. Children with asthma, autism spectral disorders, and infants and expectant moms in underserved communities benefit from this support.

“During our more than 70 years of serving New Mexico, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico has built a culture and a legacy of caring for our members, our employees, and the communities we serve,” President Liz Watrin noted.

Two additional UNM programs supported through BCBSNM are the UNM Cancer Center's *Breast Clinical Working Group*, conducting research to identify new therapies to fight breast cancer, and the College of Nursing's *Statewide Nursing Consortium* that establishes parallel nursing curriculum across universities and community colleges in an effort to develop more nurses.

Connecting Corporate Caring to the Local Community

“There is a clear theme for some of the choices BCBSNM makes in determining how to best target our support: the health and wellness of New Mexico's people and improvements in research and patient care are paramount,” said Dr. Matthew Fontana, BCBSNM Vice President and Chief Medical Officer.

At the College of Education, the *Summer Youth Sports Program* supported by BCBSNM for youth who are economically disadvantaged provides transportation, medical screenings, nutrition and physical activity. In partnering with the School of Medicine, BCBSNM's support of the *Child Health Initiative for Lifelong Eating and Exercise (CHILE)* childhood obesity program has helped target Native American and Hispanic children enrolled in Head Start programs in rural New Mexico. UNM Hospital's *Children's Departments* receive BCBSNM support for items they need to provide the highest level of care to all patients served.

An Inspiring Diversity of Support

BCBSNM also helps the College of Nursing to support *Asthma Camps for Children* that offers classes on symptoms, medication, exercise, and triggers. The Center on Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Addiction's *Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Prevention* program is an educational program supported through BCBSNM, targeting teenagers. The School of Medicine's *Camp Rising Sun* provides a welcoming atmosphere for children with autism spectrum disorders.

“The diversity of ways BCBSNM has supported the work of UNM departments, schools, and colleges that impact the well-being of many New Mexicans is inspiring and a valuable contribution to all of us who live here,” said Deborah Breitfeld, Director of Corporate Relations of the UNM Foundation. “We very much appreciate their support.”

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