

**Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade
Announces the Winners of the
Second Annual
2010 South Florida Worksite Wellness Forum and Awards**

Miami, Florida, April 9, 2010 --- The Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade, an initiative of the Miami-Dade County Health Department, proudly announced today winners of the second annual “2010 South Florida Worksite Wellness Forum and Awards” at a ceremony at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Miami Beach. Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Alvarez and Lillian Rivera, RN, MSN, Ph.D., Administrator of the Miami-Dade County Health Department presented the awards to the winners in the small, mid-sized and large business categories.

The program honored South Florida companies located in Miami-Dade, Broward, Monroe and Palm Beach Counties that demonstrated a commitment to employee wellness and whose programs produced positive health outcomes. The winner of the small business category – businesses with less than 500 employees, went to Camillus House – a non-profit organization that provides humanitarian services to men, women and children who are poor and homeless with 156 employees. The mid-sized category winner – businesses with 500 to 1,000 employees – went to Henderson Mental Health Center, the largest non-profit behavioral healthcare organization in south Florida with 534 employees. The winner of the large business category – businesses with more than 1,000 employees – went to Baptist Health South Florida, the regions largest not-for-profit healthcare organization, consisting of 5 hospitals and 20 outpatient centers employing over 13,500 people.

“In an era of rising healthcare costs and increased risk for chronic diseases, this program is essential for educating the local business community about the many wonderful benefits that worksite wellness programs provide,” said Dr. Rivera. Business owners, managers, human resource professionals, insurance brokers and those interested in wellness attended the luncheon which featured a corporate wellness expert from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention discussing how current healthcare legislation affects employers and wellness programs, and also aired a short video from Florida’s State Surgeon General, Dr. Ana M. Viamonte Ros congratulating the winners and presenting a proclamation signed by Governor Crist in honor of the Consortium’s efforts to promote wellness to South Florida business.

More than half of healthcare costs are due to unhealthy lifestyles and stress. Tobacco and alcohol use, lack of physical activity and poor nutrition all contribute to increased health costs. Many employers have already experienced the vast benefits of a healthier workforce, including reduced healthcare costs, increased productivity, decreased absenteeism, as well as an overall improvement in staff morale and company loyalty that can be produced with comprehensive worksite wellness programs.

The Miami-Dade County Health Department initiated the Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade in 2003 to address the increasing rates of chronic diseases in the local community. The Consortium is comprised of community agencies that work in collaboration to promote healthy lifestyles including a healthy diet, regular physical activity and not using tobacco products. The Worksite Wellness Committee is a workgroup of volunteers dedicated to promoting healthy lifestyles in the work setting by sharing information on best practices and by creating partnerships to implement worksite wellness activities. For more information please visit www.healthymiamidade.org or contact Gabrielle Solomon at 786-888-5513 or gsolomon@hfsf.org.

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