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AVON FOUNDATION BREAST CARE FUND AWARDS GRANT FOR BREAST CANCER AWARENESS PROGRAM TO SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Local Organization Recognized With Support From National Program

POCATELLO, ID/ FEB. 13, 2007– The Avon Foundation Breast Care Fund has awarded a \$40,000 one-year grant to the Southeastern District Health Department to increase awareness of the life-saving benefits of early detection of breast cancer. It is the sixth year that the program has received Avon Foundation funding to support its work on this important health issue, and in recognition of the excellence of the program.

The breast health program, Women's Health Check at the Southeastern District Health Department will educate Southeast Idaho-area women and refer them to low-cost or free mammograms and clinical breast exams in their own communities. Women's Health Check will also provide education to the community to increase awareness and knowledge about the benefits of screening, and aims to improve the skills and motivation of women to overcome any barriers to receiving screening services.

Since January 2002, the Women's Health Check program at the Southeastern District Health Department has reached more than 30,000 women with information about the importance of early detection of breast cancer and has referred over 2,000 women for mammograms and clinical breast exams.

Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer in women in the U.S., and the leading single cause of death overall in women between the ages of 40 and 55. According to the American Cancer Society, 780 new cases of breast cancer will be detected in Idaho this year and 180 lives will be lost. Nationwide, there is a new diagnosis every three minutes and a death from breast cancer every fourteen minutes. While advances have been made in prevention, diagnosis, treatment and cure, early detection still affords the best opportunity for successful treatment. Programs such as Women's Health Check help ensure that all women

have access to early detection information and options, even poor and medically underserved women.

“We are proud that the Avon Foundation shares our mission and has chosen to support our program. With these funds we will be able to provide more information and resources to women and their families,” says Dana Bezdeka, RN, Coordinator of Women’s Health and Reproductive Care Services at the Southeastern District Health Department.

Since 1993, the Avon Foundation has awarded more than 1,000 grants to community-based breast health programs across the United States, including Women’s Health Check at the Southeastern District Health Department. These programs are dedicated to educating underserved women about breast cancer and linking them to early detection screening services.

The Avon Foundation and Breast Cancer Crusade

The Avon Foundation, an accredited 501(c)(3) public charity, was founded in 1955 to improve the lives of women and their families. Now past the half century milestone, the Foundation brings this mission to life through the *Speak Out Against Domestic Violence* program and the *Avon Breast Cancer Crusade*, which raises funds and awareness to advance access to care and finding a cure for breast cancer, with a focus on the medically underserved. Since 1992 the *Avon Breast Cancer Crusade* has raised and awarded more than \$450 million worldwide for medical research; access to care; support services; screening and diagnostics; and education and awareness. The largest fundraising program in the U.S. is the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer series.

The Avon Foundation Breast Care Fund

The Avon Foundation Breast Care Fund is administered by Cikatelli Associates Inc. to support community-based, non-profit breast health programs across the country. The Fund's National Advisory Board selected Women’s Health Check at the Southeastern District Health Department as one of 122 new grant recipients nationwide in the 2007 cycle of Avon Foundation Breast Care Fund grants. These organizations were chosen based on their ability to effectively reach women, particularly minority, low-income, and older women, who are often medically underserved.

For more Information

For more information on Women’s Health Check at the Southeastern District Health Department please call Katina at 208 239-5290. For more information about breast cancer, contact the American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345 or www.cancer.org, or the National Cancer Institute at 1-800-4-CANCER or www.cancer.gov.

To learn more about the Avon Foundation, call 1-866-505-AVON or visit www.avonfoundation.org, where you can also access the free printable *Breast Health Resource Guide* in English and Spanish. For information or to register or support the *Avon Walk for Breast Cancer* events, visit www.avonwalk.org or call 1-800-510-WALK.

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