



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 7, 2007

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North Carolina's Top Towns, Counties Awarded for Healthy Living *Leading N.C. communities receive second annual Fit Community award designations*

RALEIGH, N.C. – Five North Carolina municipalities and two counties were awarded the Fit Community designation today to recognize their success in promoting healthier lifestyles among their residents.

The Fit Community designations were made by Fit Together, the statewide initiative by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC) and the N.C. Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF) to combat obesity and excessive weight. Lt. Gov. Bev Perdue, chair of the HWTF, and Bob Greczyn, president and CEO of BCBSNC, presented the awards, which are in the second year. Thirty cities, counties and towns applied for the designation.

The following communities received the Fit Community designations: Town of Carrboro, Town of Cary, Town of Edenton, Mecklenburg County, Pitt County, City of Salisbury and the City of Shelby. The designation rewards communities for supporting healthy eating, physical activity and tobacco-free living through policy and community infrastructure.

“The health of our people is the foundation for the well being of our communities,” said Lt. Gov. Perdue. “These communities are making a real difference for their residents by promoting healthy living.”

Mayors, county officials, school superintendents and local representatives from across the state accepted this honor on behalf of their communities. **To download a photograph of the mayors or county officials, receiving their awards, please visit www.FitTogetherNC.org at 5 p.m.**

“How we live has a real impact on our health. Leaders in these North Carolina communities have made it easier for residents to adopt good habits by providing farmers markets, bike trails and other opportunities for healthy living,” said Greczyn. “By creating healthy environments and fitness-friendly policies, these communities serve as examples for all of North Carolina.”

All North Carolina municipalities and counties were eligible for the Fit Community designation. Applications were judged based upon objective criteria collected from peer-reviewed studies and national programs, and the selection process was managed by Active Living by Design a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, located in Chapel Hill.

Communities chosen for the Fit Community designation received a highway sign for their community's entrance; a plaque for their mayor's office; recognition on the Fit Together Web site, www.FitTogetherNC.org; and use of the Fit Community designation logo for all communications.

Obesity has emerged as a major threat to children and adults across the United States, and especially here in North Carolina. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 61 percent of North Carolina adults are overweight or obese, and 25 percent reported no exercise in the prior 30 days. Fit Together's mission is to support programs and initiatives that address this growing problem.

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About NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund

The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund makes North Carolina stronger, both physically and economically, by funding programs that promote preventive health. Created by the General Assembly in 2000 to allocate a portion of North Carolina's share of the national tobacco settlement, HWTF has invested \$143 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$102 million to fund prescription drug assistance programs. For more information, please visit www.HealthWellNC.com.

About Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina is a leader in delivering innovative health care products, services and information to more than 3.5 million members, including approximately 820,000 served on behalf of other Blue Plans. For 74 years, the company has served its customers by offering health insurance at a competitive price and has served the people of North Carolina through support of community organizations, programs and events that promote good health. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. Access BCBSNC online at www.bcbsnc.com.

About Active Living by Design

Active Living by Design is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, established to create, enhance and promote environments that make it safe and convenient for people to be more physically active. The goal of Active Living by Design is to encourage changes in design, transportation and policies to cultivate and support active living. The \$15.5-million program is based at the School of Public Health at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. For more information, please visit www.activelivingbydesign.org.

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