



Media Contacts:
Marilyn Haese
Bobbi Rubinstein
Haese & Wood
(310) 556-9612
mhaese@haesewood.com

WellPoint Foundation Awards Grant To Pioneering Nonprofit to Run Uninsured Help Line

Foundation for Health Coverage Education Simplifies Enrollment Process for Nation's 15 Million Uninsured Who are Eligible for Government Programs

San Jose, Calif. – August 20, 2009 – Citing studies indicating that nearly 33 percent of the 47 million uninsured in America are eligible for government-sponsored health insurance but aren't signed up, the Foundation for Health Coverage Education (FHCE) www.coverageforall.org, has been awarded a grant in the amount of \$178,000 from the WellPoint Foundation, www.wellpointfoundation.org, a private, non-profit organization wholly funded by WellPoint, Inc. The grant will help support the operations of the FHCE's free, 24/7, multi-lingual *U.S. Uninsured Help Line*, (800-234-1317), assist in maintaining its up-to-date private/public program data in each state's *Health Care Options Matrix*, and fund a new verification and monitoring process to account for those who actually get enrolled.

“The WellPoint Foundation is dedicated to working with organizations to identify and target public health concerns in the communities we serve,” said Caz Matthews, president, WellPoint Foundation. “We are pleased to support the work of FHCE's U.S. Uninsured Help Line. Through its efforts, uninsured American who are eligible for public programs, but not enrolled, have the resources to learn about their eligibility status and enroll in already established government programs, thereby increasing access to health care coverage.”

To identify what they qualify for, website visitors can first take the simple 5-Question Eligibility Quiz online, or they can phone the U.S. Uninsured Help Line and talk with a live counselor who will review the questions with them. This eligibility review is a starting point with the Fresno, California-based call center's staff who will then guide each caller through their options and to the appropriate state-sponsored program.

“As the ranks of the uninsured grow in this economic downturn, it is all the more important that information about available government programs is easy to access for those in need,” said Phil Lebherz, founder of the pioneering nonprofit. “Getting people enrolled will lessen the strain on the already overburdened health care delivery system.”

Providing access to online applications for every state in the country is another one of the nonprofit's services, offering practical, easy-to-access tools to educate those who are eligible about their coverage options. Visitors can go to the www.coverageforall.org website and click on the State by State application link. Here, they can identify government health coverage offerings and applications for the three federal programs (Medicaid, Medicare and Veterans) in addition to each state's individual program applications. Some programs have applications that can be printed out and others have links to the correct municipal program.

Through this grant from the WellPoint Foundation, the FHCE has centralized the health coverage information system and become a resource in making quality health care accessible to all.

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About the WellPoint Foundation

The WellPoint Foundation, Inc. is a private, non-profit organization wholly funded by WellPoint, Inc. Through charitable contributions and programs, the Foundation promotes WellPoint's inherent commitment to enhance the health and well-being of individuals and families in communities that WellPoint's affiliate health plans serve. The Foundation focuses its funding on strategic initiatives that address and provide innovative solutions to health care challenges, as well as promoting the Healthy Generations Program, a multi-generational initiative that targets specific disease states and medical conditions. These disease states and medical conditions include: prenatal care in the first trimester, low birth weight babies, cardiac morbidity rates, long term activities that decrease obesity and increase physical activity, diabetes prevalence in adult populations, adult pneumococcal and influenza vaccinations and smoking cessation. The Foundation also coordinates the company's annual associate giving campaign and provides a 50 percent match of associates' campaign pledges. To learn more about the WellPoint Foundation please visit www.wellpointfoundation.org.

About the Foundation for Health Coverage Education:

The Foundation for Health Coverage Education is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 public organization based in San Jose, California dedicated to reducing the ranks of the uninsured. For more information, please visit the website at www.coverageforall.org or call the U.S. Uninsured Help Line at 1-800-234-1317.