



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Hunger, poverty, crime and drug addiction the focus of
Florida Blue Foundation's Community Health Symposium**

Symposium and Sapphire Awards to take place May 3-4 in Kissimmee

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – Nationally known speakers will address how communities can work to overcome hunger, poverty, hate, the opioid drug crisis and other problems at the Florida Blue Foundation's "Big Issues in Health" Community Health Symposium and Sapphire Awards. The annual event will take place May 3-4 at the Gaylord Palms Resort in Kissimmee, Fla.

Pat Geraghty, CEO of GuideWell and Florida Blue, will recognize the nine finalists vying for 2018 Sapphire Awards on the first evening of the symposium. The finalists include nonprofit organizations and individuals that are effectively addressing community health issues in their Florida communities.

The symposium and awards are open to anyone interested in learning more about community health issues. Continuing education credits are available to attendees through the University of North Florida. Register at www.FloridaBlueFoundation.com.

Bill Shore, executive chairman of Share Our Strength and No Kid Hungry, will open the symposium with a plenary talk entitled "Saving Lives, Solvable Problems: Creating Community Wealth to Change our World." Shore has led his organization in raising more than \$600 million to fight hunger and poverty since 1984. He is also chair of Community Wealth Partners, a Share Our Strength organization that helps leaders and communities solve social problems. In 2014, congressional leaders appointed him to the National Commission on Hunger, a group tasked with finding innovative ways to end hunger in America. He was named one of America's Best Leaders by *U.S. News & World Report*.

Following Shore's session, Florida Blue Chief Medical Officer Dr. Elana Schrader will lead a roundtable discussion on the opioid crisis in our communities.

The symposium's signature "Small Talk" sessions, covering a range of community health, policy and nonprofit professional development topics, will round out the first day of the symposium and continue on the second. Featured on the agenda for the symposium's second day will be Lecia J. Brooks of the Southern Poverty Law Center speaking on "Principles for Fighting Hate in Your Communities – A Community Response Guide." Other "Small Talk" topics will include big data in health decision-making, disruptive health technology, managing end-of-life care, federal health care reform, oral health and a health care workforce research initiative.

The symposium's closing program and luncheon will feature Orlando's Bob Kodzis of Flight of Ideas. A funny and inspiring speaker, Kodzis is a creative catalyst, master group facilitator and artist.



The 2018 Sapphire Awards finalists are:

Individual Category:

Chad Bernstein, Miami-Dade
Christine Caulfield, Duval
David Lawrence, Miami-Dade
H. Lee Moffitt, Hillsborough

Program Category:

American Association of Caregiving Youth, Palm Beach
Epilepsy Foundation of Florida, Miami-Dade
Florida's Vision Quest, Volusia

Organization Category:

Barnabas Center, Nassau
Daniel Memorial, Duval

About Florida Blue Foundation

Florida Blue Foundation enables healthy communities by making grants, building coalitions and rewarding best practices. More than three million people in Florida have received direct health services as a result of grants made to nonprofit organizations since our founding in 2001. Florida Blue Foundation is a trade name of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation, Inc., an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. For more information about the Foundation, please visit www.FloridaBlueFoundation.com.

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