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HHS AWARDS \$416,503 TO MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA TO SUPPORT LOCAL RESEARCH TO PREVENT ILLNESS AND IMPROVE HEALTH

HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson today announced that Medical University of South Carolina will receive \$416,503 to fund community-based research into local disease prevention and health promotion needs. The grant will support Health-e-AME Faith Based Physical Activity Initiative, which will evaluate a church-based physical activity program involving members of over 600 churches in South Carolina. The program's goal is to increase each participant's physical activity level by at least 15 percent.

"This grant will help identify critical health research needs in throughout South Carolina so that we can better target community efforts to promote good health and prevent illness," Secretary Thompson said. "By supporting such local projects across the country, we are helping to develop and implement effective local strategies to improve the health of residents."

The grant is one of 25 similar HHS awards across the country to support research in a variety of areas such as physical activity, diabetes, youth and school-based health, nutrition, obesity, asthma, drug prevention, tobacco prevention and violence/injury prevention. Findings from these research projects should assist communities develop public health policies and practices designed to promote health and reduce disease, disability and injury among specific populations.

The awards are being made under the extramural prevention research program at HHS' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Grantees were chosen from more than 300 applicants.

"Community-based, peer-reviewed research is the foundation of the public health system. This program signals CDC's commitment to strengthen infrastructure and community public health capacity through peer-reviewed research that has immediate relevance to the needs of public health practitioners, community policymakers and concerned citizens," said Dr. Julie Gerberding, CDC director.

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Note: HHS press releases, fact sheets and other press materials are available at www.hhs.gov/news.