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Contact: Chana M. Doreaux 504.684.4070

**U.S. Department of Health & Human Services awards Louisiana \$30 million for Teen Pregnancy Prevention and Personal Responsibility Education programs**

New Orleans, LA- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recently awarded \$30 million in teen pregnancy prevention grants to six Louisiana organizations. Thousands of applicants applied for the competitive grants which support the replication of teen pregnancy prevention programs that have been shown to be effective through rigorous research as well as the testing of new, innovative approaches to combating teen pregnancy, but nationally only ninety-three were awarded to a diverse set of organizations.

The Louisiana entities selected include: Tulane University, Louisiana Office of Public Health HIV/AIDS Program, Institute of Women & Ethnic Studies, Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals Office of Public Health, Louisiana Public Health Institute, and the Central Louisiana Area Health Education Center. The implementation of the five-year grants is projected to reach more than 20,000 youth.

“Teen pregnancy is a serious national problem and we need to use the best science of what works to address it,” said HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. “Teen pregnancy short-circuits the futures of young parents and their children. It is critical that we work with states and communities to give our young people the tools and information they need to make wise decisions that will ensure their health and success.”

The state of Louisiana currently has the 18<sup>th</sup> highest teen pregnancy rate and ranks 13<sup>th</sup> for teen birth rates in the nation. A significant amount of the programming will take place in New Orleans where research has shown that youth are twice as likely than the national average to have sex before the age of 13.

“The federal government has been a great partner throughout our city's recovery, and we thank the Department of Health and Human Services for supporting our community's innovative efforts to reduce teen pregnancy,” said Dr. Karen DeSalvo, Health Commissioner for the City of New Orleans.

For more information on this project and the specific details on each evidence-based intervention being implemented in New Orleans, Baton Rouge and Alexandria visit <http://stayhealthyla.org/blog/?p=4185>.

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