



NEWS RELEASE

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Media Interview and Photo Opportunity – See Details Below

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American Cancer Society Teams with Quality Quest to Fight Youth Obesity

Local Events such as Relay For Life Make Lifesaving Difference

Peoria, Ill. — As part of its continuing fight against youth obesity, the American Cancer Society has awarded 30 youth obesity prevention community grants to non-profit organizations across the state, including a \$13,400 grant to Quality Quest for Health of Illinois.

The American Cancer Society grant will be used to continue the Healthy Living Program, a wellness program that began as a pilot in 2012. Under the direction of Dr. Amy Christison, M.D., Clinical Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Peoria, a pediatric hospitalist with Methodist Medical Group, and director of the Healthy Kids U weight management program at the Children's Hospital of Illinois, the program features nutrition education once a week coupled with afterschool physical activities for high school students (i.e., Hip Hop dance cardiovascular classes) twice a week, and a gardening component with nutrition education for middle and high school students. A total of 130 students will be reached through the program over the course of three 6-8 week sessions beginning January 2013 and ending November 2013. The program is housed at Manual Academy.

“Obesity, physical inactivity and poor nutrition are the biggest risk factors for cancer following tobacco use,” said Rodger Crawford, American Cancer Society board member. “Because of local events like Relay For Life and the generous support of our donors, the American Cancer Society can make a real difference here in our community.”

According to the Society, obesity has now joined tobacco use as one of the most important risk factors for cancer death, with definite links to various types of cancer, including colorectal, breast, esophageal, kidney, pancreatic, stomach and liver cancer. Studies show that

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50 percent of overweight children, and 70 percent of overweight adolescents, will be overweight as adults. Illinois ranks tenth highest in the United States for children aged 10 to 17 who are overweight and obese.

“We are pleased to partner with the American Cancer Society to address childhood obesity. This grant brings together several organizations – Bradley University, City Dance, Gifts in the Moment, Methodist Medical Center, Manual Academy and Quality Quest – to make a difference in community health,” said Bonnie Paris, program development manager at Quest. “By focusing on childhood obesity, we hope to prevent cancer and other major diseases for future generations.”

The American Cancer Society is providing more than \$360,000 in anti-obesity community grants to 30 Illinois organizations, reaching youth and families through early childhood, after-school and other youth-serving programs throughout the state in 2013.

About the American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society combines an unyielding passion with nearly a century of experience to save lives and end cancer for good. As a global grassroots force of three million volunteers, we fight for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. We save lives by helping you stay well by preventing cancer or detecting it early, helping you get well by being there for you during and after a diagnosis, by finding cures through groundbreaking discovery and fighting back through public policy. As the nation’s largest non-governmental investor in cancer research, contributing more than \$3.8 billion, we turn what we know about cancer into what we do. As a result, an estimated 13.7 million people in America who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will be celebrating birthdays this year. To learn more about us or to get help, call us anytime, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.

About Quality Quest for Health of Illinois

Quality Quest for Health of Illinois is a non-profit regional health improvement collaborative working to transform healthcare in our state. The organization brings physicians, hospitals, health plans, employers, patients, and families together to focus on creating healthier communities with better patient outcomes. Data related to specific Quest projects is collected and publicly reported to the medical community and the public. The information helps providers compare their performance to peers and regional / national benchmarks and gives consumers data to make informed healthcare decisions. For more information, visit qualityquest.org. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [LinkedIn](#).

Media Interview and Photo Opportunity

What: Join us for the after-school cooking class and see first-hand how American Cancer Society and Quality Quest partners are continuing to fight against youth obesity. This is an opportunity to see the program, which brings together nutrition education, afterschool physical activities, and gardening for middle and high school students, in action.

When: Wednesday, Feb. 20. 3 p.m.

Where: Manual Academy, 811 S. Griswold Street, Peoria

Who: Students and representatives from the American Cancer Society, Quality Quest and Manual Academy will be on hand to answer questions.

Photo/B-Roll Opportunities include the cooking class (3 pm - 3:30 p.m) and interviews with students, grant recipients, and American Cancer Society representatives.

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