

# Press Release

## For Immediate Release

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### **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana Donates \$10,000 to Evergreen's "Better Health...Better Lives Program"**

Evergreen Presbyterian Ministries was recently awarded a \$10,000 grant from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana for its Northwest Louisiana and North Central Louisiana divisional offices and vocational programs located in Bossier City and Minden. The grant will be used to help individuals with disabilities improve their physical health and well being.

An analysis of the National Health Survey data found that people with disabilities are more likely to be obese than people without disabilities. Similarly, data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System shows strong correlations between an individual's disability status and obesity. Studies have also proved that people with disabilities do not have ample opportunities for physical activities thus becoming more vulnerable to obesity and other serious health issues.

Within Evergreen's Louisiana divisions, it was discovered that 400 clients have nutritional plans in place and 296 have exercise plans in place; however, 326 of these clients remain overweight, 155 of them are considered obese, 65 suffer from diabetes, and 130 of them have high blood pressure. Recognizing this need, Evergreen's goal was to seek funding which would help these individuals adopt a healthier lifestyle.

The money used from the Blue Cross Blue Shield grant will allow Evergreen to provide the clients in Louisiana with a more effective exercise program and expanded nutrition awareness. The exercise program will consist of cardiovascular, strength building, flexibility and endurance exercises that clients will participate in at least three times a week. The nutrition awareness portion will consist of working with a licensed nutritionist; and, clients will be taught how to prepare healthy yet simple meals. This program has been aptly titled "Better Health...Better Lives".

Evergreen's mission is helping people with disabilities build better lives. For 50 years, Evergreen has successfully fulfilled its mission. Evergreen is a nonprofit, premier provider of services to nearly 1,000 individuals in six states.



**Mr. Kevin McCotter presents Evergreen with \$10,000 Grant Check**

**(Featured left to right) Mr. James Bustillo of Blue Cross Blue Shield, Mr. John Taylor, President of Evergreen Presbyterian Ministries, Mr. Kevin McCotter, board member for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana, Mr. Bill Sadka and Ms. Lesa Hamilton, Division Directors for Evergreen Presbyterian Ministries.**

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