

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund Executive Director Accepts New Position

Nationwide recruitment for new director underway

(RALEIGH, NC) – The North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF) announces the departure of its Executive Director, Vandana Shah, effective Feb. 28. Ms. Shah first began working for HWTF in 2001 as its Policy Director and Attorney and was appointed Executive Director in April of 2007.

Ms. Shah accepted a position with the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids in Washington, D.C. to manage their tobacco advocacy and policy efforts in Southeast Asia. As Director of Southeast Asia programs, Ms. Shah will be leading efforts in the entire region with a particular emphasis on India, Indonesia and Bangladesh.

“Vandana has made a tremendous difference in the wellness of North Carolina’s people,” said Governor Bev Perdue, former Chairperson of the HWTF Commission. “North Carolinians are healthier because of Vandana’s efforts to make schools tobacco free and the other wellness initiatives she has led. Now, we look forward to the difference she will make as she continues this critical life saving work internationally.”

As Executive Director, Ms. Shah oversaw all aspects of program development and operations, including grants management, evaluation, and new program and partnership development for a state agency that awards over \$30 million in grant and contract funding annually to support preventive health initiatives and prescription drug assistance programs. During her time at HWTF, Ms. Shah also led efforts in creating policies and programs to address key public health issues in North Carolina, including tobacco free schools and colleges, obesity prevention, and health disparities. She is a member of the North Carolina Institute of Medicine and served on the Board of Care Share Health Alliance, the North Carolina Network of Grantmakers, the North Carolina Society for Health Care Attorneys, the Triangle Interfaith Alliance, the Indian American Forum for Political Education and on the NC Legislative Task Force to address childhood obesity. Ms. Shah is also the co-founder of KIRAN, a domestic violence and crisis services organization for South Asians in North Carolina and currently serves on its board.

A nationwide search is underway to hire a replacement for Ms. Shah. Interested candidates should visit the “Career” section of the NC Health and Wellness Fund Web site, www.HealthWellNC.com. The application deadline is March 12.

ABOUT THE NC HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRUST FUND

The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund makes North Carolina stronger, both physically and economically, by funding programs that promote preventive health. Created by the General Assembly in 2000 to allocate a portion of North Carolina’s share of the national tobacco settlement, HWTF has invested \$199 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$116 million to fund prescription drug assistance programs. For more information, please visit www.HealthWellNC.com.