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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund and Duke Global Health Institute announce new health disparities fellowship

Raleigh, NC – The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF) announces the creation of a new fellowship program to focus on health disparities in North Carolina. The fellowship will engage talented public health or social work professionals in ongoing efforts to help close the health disparities gap.

The project is funded and directed by the North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF) as part of its statewide Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative. HWTF has allocated \$21 million towards the overall initiative, which includes 25 community grants and a multi-media campaign. HWTF is partnering with the Duke Global Health Institute to manage the fellowship.

The two-year program will include three weeks of course instruction led by faculty at Duke University and North Carolina Central University during the first year. Faculty mentors will also assist fellows with the development of a community-based project in the second year of the program.

“The fellowship program is another important way that the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund supports efforts to eliminate health disparities in our state,” said Lt. Governor Bev Perdue, HWTF chair. “Partnering with Duke and NC Central will allow us to bring in our best and brightest, who are already working hard in their communities, and train them in new skills that will help them lead more effective community-based and statewide projects.”

The program, directed toward mid- to senior-level public health or social work professionals, aims to increase their awareness of health disparities in North Carolina and to help them develop the capacity to effectively design, implement and evaluate interventions to address health disparities in their communities.

Interested applicants can apply online by going to www.healthwellnc.com. The deadline for applying for the fellowship is October 31, 2008.

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 \$102 million to fund prescription drug assistance programs. For more information, please visit www.HealthWellNC.com.

ABOUT THE DUKE GLOBAL HEALTH INSTITUTE

Duke University created the Duke Global Health Institute in 2006 to address health disparities around the world and in our own community. The Institute works with faculty and students from all nine schools at Duke University (undergraduate, graduate and professional) to study and respond to global health issues from a multi-disciplinary perspective. The Institute considers not only the diseases that cause health disparities, but the social determinants of these diseases, such as poverty, gender, environment and globalization. Dr. Michael Merson, an internationally recognized expert in the study of HIV/AIDS, is the director of the Duke Global Health Institute. <http://www.globalhealth.duke.edu>