

March 16, 2007

Health Disparities Grantees Explore the Impact of Diabetes on NC's Underserved Populations

(Chapel Hill, NC) — On Monday, March 19, 2007, the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF) and its Health Disparities grantees along with local community leaders, members, and health professionals will have the opportunity to receive information and useful tools to increase their capacity in eliminating health disparities especially as it relates to diabetes.

During Monday's meeting, Maurice Madden, filmmaker and producer of *THE DEBILITATOR*, an eye-opening 30-minute health education docudrama exploring the impact of diabetes and its complications on communities, will provide his nationally recognized *Debilitator Training* to attendees. HWTF hopes that Madden's presentation will inspire honest discussion about how to better promote early diabetes detection and preventative health regimens in their communities.

THE DEBILITATOR premiered on WPBA 30 (Public Broadcasting of Atlanta) in 2005 to over 12,000 households. *The film* was screened, last year, during the National Conference of Black Mayors in Columbus, Ohio and at the NAACP National Convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Madden was also invited to keynote the Congressional Black Caucus Health Brain Trust in Washington, D.C. last year. In addition, Madden was selected by dLife, a national television program as one of the Top Ten motivational and inspirational visionaries that made an impact on Diabetes education in 2005.

In light of Mr. Madden's contribution to national diabetes awareness and health disparities, HWTF will also announce their support and participation in National Diabetes Alert Day in collaboration with the N.C. Diabetes Prevention and Control Branch on March 27, 2007 in Raleigh. Activities for that day will include a diabetes fitness walk, press conference, exhibits and medical screenings at the Legislative Building in Raleigh.

During the March 19 Health Disparities meeting, grantees will also be provided with strategies to help them combat disparities related to other chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular disease and cancer, which their grants are addressing. At the conclusion of the meeting, grantees will have the tools necessary to help them build infrastructures within their communities allowing them to sustain the efforts put forth by their programs.

WHAT: Health and Wellness Trust Fund – Health Disparities Initiative March Grantee Meeting

WHEN: Monday March 19, 2007 (10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)

WHERE: UNC Friday Center – 100 Friday Center Drive, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-1020

MEDIA INTERVIEWS: Mr. Maurice Madden will be available for interviews immediately following the keynote address starting at 11:40 a.m. – 12:00 noon. He will also be available between 2:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

BACKGROUND: The 2003 Racial and Ethnic Disparities Report Card, published by the North Carolina Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities, reported that African Americans, Native Americans and the Latino population experience the greatest disparities in most areas of health status. The March Meeting will bring together community members and leaders, and health professionals to be trained to focus on community capacity building and partnerships.

The keynote speaker will be Maurice Madden, creator, producer, director and winner of the dLife TV Award for the film, *The Debilitator*, a public television docudrama developed by, Millennium Filmworks.

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 \$143 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$102 million to fund prescription drug assistance programs. For more information, please visit www.HealthWellNC.com.

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