

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Awards announced in Governor's Weight Loss Challenge

Topeka – Kansas Governor Sam Brownback announced today that the awards for the winning teams in the Governor's Weight Loss Challenge will total more than \$14,000. The prizes are made possible by two health plans with a presence in Kansas: UnitedHealth Group and Coventry Health Care of Kansas.

"The State of Kansas appreciates UnitedHealth Group and Coventry Health Care for their support of this weight loss competition through their monetary contributions in our upcoming team awards. These two health plans cover services for many state employees, so they play a significant role in the wellbeing of Kansans on a daily basis," said Governor Brownback. "The purpose of this weight loss challenge is to bring awareness to the obesity epidemic in our country and offer a fun way for Kansans to kick off a new lifestyle of healthy habits."

"UnitedHealth Group is grateful for the opportunity to support Gov. Brownback's challenge to encourage Kansans to improve their health and quality of life," said Bill Tracy, CEO of UnitedHealthcare Employer and Individual in Kansas.

"Coventry Health Care of Kansas is honored to sponsor the Governor's Weight Loss Challenge," said Coventry Health Care CEO, Allen Wise. "We believe in the value of wellness programs and benefits and are proud to support the state employees participating in this exciting and fun weight loss challenge!"

Governor Brownback has challenged State of Kansas employees and other interested groups to form teams of five, to start eating healthier and to become more active in an effort to lose a greater percentage of weight than the Governor's team of five. However, only State of Kansas employees are eligible for these monetary awards.

The challenge begins Jan. 15 and ends May 15. Registration for teams is taking place now through Jan. 14.

The following prize amounts have been set for the State of Kansas teams placing in the competition:

- 1st place: \$5,000 dollars (\$1,000 per person)
- 2nd place: \$2,500 (\$500 per person)
- State employee teams—not including 1st and 2nd place—that beat Governor Brownback's team will be entered in a drawing to result in 14 additional teams winning \$500 a team (\$100 per person)

Already, more than 500 teams have signed up to challenge the Governor's team- including 104 non-state teams from local health departments, municipalities, school districts and private industry.

To be eligible for prizes, the initial weight for State of Kansas participants must be validated by a health care professional—nurse, doctor, physician assistant, etc.—through the use of an official form available on the Challenge website. Weight is entered into the tracking system privately by the individual and is combined with the team's weight to be tracked collectively.

Official contest rules and details for weigh-in validation are at www.weightloss.ks.gov.

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