



The Foster G. McGaw Prize  
Health Research & Educational Trust  
155 North Wacker Drive  
Chicago, Illinois 60606  
312/422-3932

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Media Contacts:** [Elizabeth Lietz](#), American Hospital Association, (202) 626-2284  
[Elaine Salewske](#), Baxter International Inc., (805) 372-3142  
[Carrie Manders](#), Spectrum Health, (616) 391-1368

### **SPECTRUM HEALTH EARNS NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR EXEMPLARY COMMUNITY SERVICE**

*Grand Rapids, Michigan, healthcare provider selected  
as finalist for 2014 Foster G. McGaw Prize*

CHICAGO, January 15, 2015 – In honor of its broad-based efforts to improve the lives of the most vulnerable members of its community, [Spectrum Health](#) in Grand Rapids, Michigan, was named a finalist of the prestigious 2014 [Foster G. McGaw Prize](#) for Excellence in Community Service, one of the most esteemed community service honors in healthcare.

The Foster G. McGaw Prize is sponsored by The Baxter International Foundation and the American Hospital Association (AHA) and Health Research & Educational Trust. As a finalist, Spectrum Health will receive \$10,000 to support their community health initiatives.

“To achieve the organization’s mission to improve the health of the communities it serves, Spectrum Health leaders believe that every member of their community must be reached,” said John O’Brien, chair of the Foster G. McGaw Prize Committee. “The system’s community health initiatives focus both on targeted populations in need and broader community health issues, including a healthy food partnership aimed at needy individuals, a healthy-lifestyle program, and a school health advocacy program.”

Spectrum Health is a not-for-profit, integrated health system offering the full continuum of care for more than 1.5 million people in west Michigan. The organization has long been committed to learning from population health research showing that prevention, early intervention and increased access to healthcare dramatically improve the health of

individuals and significantly decrease overall healthcare expenditures. With this in mind, Spectrum Health dedicates \$6.5 million each year to its Healthier Communities Department, initiated in 1997 to provide programs and services for the underserved residents of west Michigan.

In 2013, these programs and services connected more than a half-million times with individuals in Spectrum Health's service area. The impact of these efforts can be seen through the lowering of the community's infant mortality rate by 46.5 percent over 10 years, lowering the incidence of heart disease among Hispanic individuals by 33 percent over three years and collaborating with 14 external partner agencies to foster their unique programs and services to improve community health.

"Our Healthier Communities team extends health improvement beyond our hospitals and doctors' offices to our neighborhoods and community clinics because we recognize that vibrant communities encourage people to live healthy, productive lives," said Richard C. Breon, president and chief executive officer, Spectrum Health. "This model of community health improvement is the embodiment of our mission and who we are—a health system striving to improve the health of the communities we serve. We are honored to be recognized as a finalist for this award."

Spectrum Health was recognized for the following innovative community service initiatives:

- **Community Partnership Health Care Programs** – Healthier Communities collaborates with six independent community agencies, including the Asthma Network of West Michigan and Cherry Street Health Services, which are dedicated to improving the health of adults with chronic disease, improving the health of children and reducing infant mortality and morbidity.
- **Community Partnership Programs for Healthy Food** – Healthier Communities has established collaborations with five independent community agencies, including Access of West Michigan and Community Food Club, which provide healthy foods to underserved and impoverished individuals in the communities served by Spectrum Health.
- **Community Partnerships to Create Healthy Lifestyles** – Healthier Communities has established collaborative partnerships with three independent community agencies, including the YMCA and FITKids360, as well as the Kent County Health Department, dedicated to increasing the availability and use of physical exercise

and dietary modifications to lessen the prevalence of risk factors for heart disease, cancer and other conditions.

“The Foster G. McGaw Prize recognizes healthcare organizations that serve as role models for improving the health and well-being of the people in their communities,” said O’Brien. “This year’s winner and finalists exemplify what it takes to meet the unique needs of their communities. Through leadership and collaboration with community partners, they enhance the lives of their vulnerable populations and all those they serve.”

The 2014 winner of the \$100,000 Foster G. McGaw Prize is Palmetto Health in Columbia, South Carolina. It was recognized for its commitment to providing much needed care to underserved populations, encouraging community residents to take charge of their health, and addressing the mental and emotional well-being of its populations.

In addition to Spectrum Health, other finalists include The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia and White Memorial Medical Center in Los Angeles..

**Spectrum Health** is a not-for-profit health system, based in West Michigan, offering a full continuum of care through the Spectrum Health Hospital Group, which is comprised of 11 hospitals including [Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital](#); 169 ambulatory and service sites; 1,150 employed physicians and advanced practice providers including members of the [Spectrum Health Medical Group](#); and [Priority Health](#), a 590,000-member health plan. Spectrum Health is West Michigan’s largest employer with 21,600 employees. The organization provided \$294.6 million in community benefit during its 2014 fiscal year. In 2014, Spectrum Health was named one of the nation’s 15 Top Health Systems® by Truven Health Analytics. Visit [www.spectrumhealth.org](http://www.spectrumhealth.org) for more information.

**The Foster G. McGaw Prize**, celebrating nearly 30 years of honoring excellence in community service, recognizes healthcare organizations committed to community service through a range of programs that demonstrate a passion and continuous commitment to making communities healthier and more vital. The prize, first awarded in 1986, inspires hospitals, health systems and communities to assess and implement programs that improve their communities. For more information, visit [www.aha.org/foster](http://www.aha.org/foster).

**The American Hospital Association** is a not-for-profit association of healthcare provider organizations and individuals that are committed to the improvement of health in their communities. The AHA is the national advocate for its members, which include nearly 5,000 hospitals, health care systems, networks and other providers of care. Founded in 1898, the AHA provides education for health care leaders and is a source of information on health care issues and trends. For more information visitat [www.aha.org](http://www.aha.org).

**The Baxter International Foundation**, the philanthropic arm of Baxter International Inc. (NYSE:BAX), helps organizations expand access to healthcare in the United States and around the world. The foundation, established in 1981, focuses exclusively on increasing access to healthcare particularly for the disadvantaged and underserved in communities where Baxter employees live and work. Baxter International Inc., through its subsidiaries, develops, manufactures and markets products that save and sustain the lives

of people with hemophilia, immune disorders, cancer, infectious diseases, kidney disease, trauma and other chronic and acute medical conditions. As a global, diversified healthcare company, Baxter applies a unique combination of expertise in medical devices, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology to create products that advance patient care worldwide. For more information, visit [www.baxter.com](http://www.baxter.com).

Founded in 1944, the **Health Research & Educational Trust** (HRET) is a private, not-for-profit organization involved in research, education, and demonstration programs addressing health management and policy issues. An affiliate of the American Hospital Association, HRET collaborates with healthcare, government, academic, business, and community organizations across the United States to conduct research and disseminate findings that shape the future of healthcare. For more information about HRET, visit [www.hret.org](http://www.hret.org).

# # #