

quick connections

August 11, 2000

Online services ease access to employment information

You now can access more employee services and information online through the Human Resources Services Group Intranet site.

Here's a look at what's new:

- *The Employee Services page includes frequently used forms, information about our Automated Employment Verification Infoline, and key Human Resources contacts.*

- *A Career Opportunities page links to our current job postings.*

- *A new Corporate Development and Delivery page provides information on Leadership and Management Development, Business & Professional Skills Development, and guidelines to help design your individual development plan.*

- *The HR Policies & Manuals area contains many important documents, including the Employee Handbook, HR Policies & Procedures, and the HRMS User's Manual.*

- *Compensation Central contains current Compensation Program Information Guides.*

- *The Employees' Club page contains updated information on employee discounts, events and employee services.*

Add the HRSG Intranet site to your list of "favorites" and look for more improvements to come soon. Go to Corporate Information/Human Resources.

Quick Connections is available online at Corporate Information/Blue Views on the company Intranet.



Members rate BCBSF favorably

Among our members, BCBSF's favorable rating stands at 84 percent, which is consistent with the 82 percent rating we received in January, according to the results of our June image tracking survey.

BCBSF members give Prudential a 40 percent favorable rating, while ranking Aetna (which has acquired Prudential) fourth at 24 percent. Metropolitan held third-place with a 30 percent favorable rating.

Among the general public, BCBSF's favorable rating—which reached an all-time high of 75 percent in January—returned to normal levels. Our favorable rating among the general public stands at 67 percent, which is considerably better than our all-time low of 60 percent in August 1999; the 67 percent rating is consistent with results prior to last August.

Though competitors also experienced highs and lows during the last several months, BCBSF has always ranked much higher than other health care coverage companies. Prudential consistently places a distant second behind BCBSF. The June monitor indicates the Prudential rating is at 47 percent (down from 57 percent in January). Aetna ties Cigna for fourth place with a 34 percent rating, while Humana ranks third with a 36 percent rating.

Health care costs continue to be a serious concern. The percentage of respondents who say health care costs are "not that difficult" to pay has dropped from 55 percent to 43 percent. Despite the current health care issue environment, there is no great call for increased federal involvement. In fact, most Floridians believe government involvement would result in higher costs.

BCBSF forms E-vision team

In recognition of the increasing value and importance of our Internet presence, BCBSF is working to strengthen our E-business capabilities. As part of our E-commerce strategy, the company is forming an E-vision team with membership from sectors throughout the corporation to help the rollout of capabilities via the Internet, Intranet, Extranet and Electronic Data Interchange.

The team will:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of E-commerce capabilities and manage necessary change;
- Align E-based capabilities to our Health Business strategies;
- Develop a master plan, or blueprint, for our web presence; and
- Create a forum to raise issues and barriers.

Members of the E-vision team are: Jack Bradley (chairman); Ashley Allen, E-business; Glenn Baker, NGBU; Carol Cox, Corporate Communications; Dave Dingfield, Human Resources; Michael Emamdie, IT Strategy & Architecture; Earnie Franklin, IT Marketing; Jean Hull, Individual Under 65 Business Unit; Barbara Hunter, GBU Operations; Deanna McDonald, Finance; Gordon McDonald, IT—EC Systems; Sidney Ough, Diversified Business; Margie Pace, Business Research Information Center; Catherine Peper, Information Management; Dave Pizzo, Advertising and Market Communications; Cindy Tanton, Marketing—Direct; Maggie Thoeni, Computer Security; and Craig Thomas, Health Business Policy & Development.



Customer Satisfaction



Market Leadership



Financial Strength



Public Understanding



Org. Effectiveness



Delivery Systems



National Association

Success is never a matter of chance.—Anonymous

Platform expands product offering

The Product Simplification team has been hard at work to streamline our portfolio and make our offerings easier to administer and understand. The result is a new platform of PPO products offered under the name BlueChoice.

BlueChoice features include a variety of plan options, enhanced benefits, user friendly contracts and consistent benefits across product platforms. BlueChoice will be available to group members in October, with individual sales to follow.

The three major products are the BlueChoice PPO Health Plan, the BlueChoice PPO Family Physician Plan and the BlueChoice PPO Physician Co-payment Plan.

The Product Simplification team says more details on BlueChoice will be available soon.



BlueCross BlueShield of Florida

An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

Recognizing the value of service

As a company employee, you're important. In fact, you are the most important company asset, not only at work, but in your community as well because you are the face of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida. You embody our company promise to provide caring solutions.

What better way to live the promise than to join together and apply our strength, commitment and caring attitude to our communities. By focusing our corporate contributions and volunteer efforts as a team, we can champion causes that have the greatest impact on our communities, our members and ourselves.

In that spirit, the company is proud to launch the Blue Community Champions program in August. The new employee volunteer program is designed to build a cohesive, branded team addressing strategic community initiatives.

Blue Community Champions will recognize and support employee volunteer efforts focused on health education, reducing health care costs and corporate citizenship. You will be able to get information on current and ongoing community projects and participate in company-sponsored volunteer activities in your area.

Getting the recognition you deserve

Many of our employees have a long history of volunteerism, in groups or individually taking the time to help worthy organizations and causes that benefit the community. So, in addition to offering employees company-sponsored volunteer activities, BCBSF will recognize employees not only for their team efforts but for their individual community service as well. And we will share your stories with others in our communities.

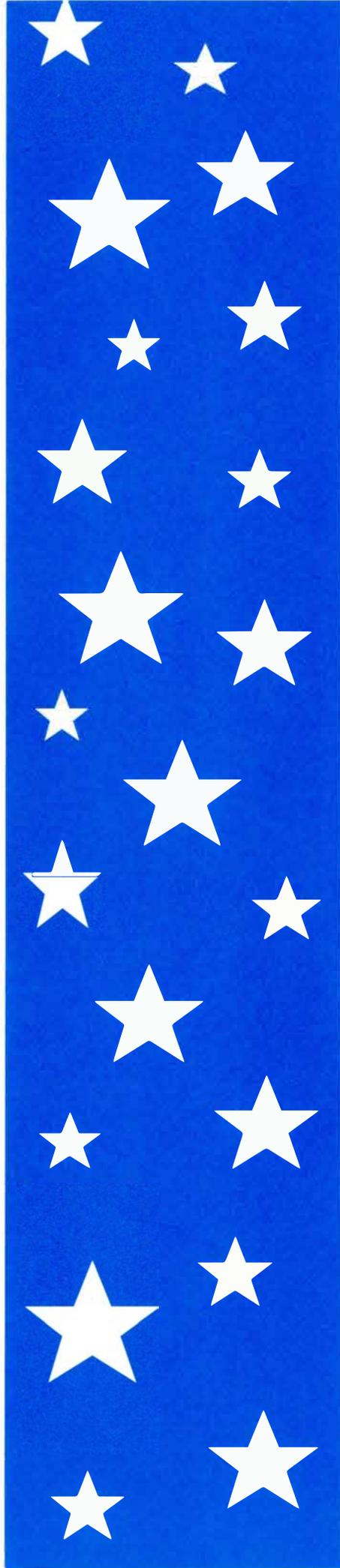
As part of the Blue Community Champions program, employees register their volunteer hours through the company's Intranet site at Corporate Information/Blue Community. Volunteers are eligible for awards and recognition as follows:

Recognition Roll

Each quarter, the names of employees who participated in company-sponsored community service will be included on the Blue Community Champions Intranet site.

Continued

Blue Community Champions
dedicated to providing caring solutions...



Star Volunteer

Each quarter, BCBSF will name individuals and/or teams registering the most volunteer hours for their community. In honor of the individual award recipient, the company will donate \$100 to the individual's designated nonprofit organization that meets program guidelines. The winning team's designated program-approved charity will receive a \$250 BCBSF donation.

Outstanding Achiever

Recipients of the Star Volunteer awards are eligible for the Outstanding Achiever award. This statewide award will be given to one individual or team that displays exceptional efforts on behalf of the community. Award criteria include noteworthy achievements, such as community impact, motivating other volunteers, unique or innovative accomplishments, and strategic importance to the health care business. The company will donate \$1,000 to the Outstanding Achiever's program-approved nonprofit organization of choice.

Sign up to be a champion

In August, you will receive an information packet about the Blue Community Champions program. To add your name to the employee volunteer database, complete the registration form in the packet and return it by Sept. 15. You'll be eligible for prizes as part of kick-off activities and events and receive a Blue Community Champions T-shirt to wear when you volunteer.

Want to know more? Visit the Blue Community Champions company Intranet site. It's your source for information on upcoming Blue Community Champions events in your area and the place to register your volunteer hours. Just go to Corporate Information/Blue Community and add the site to your "Favorites" list. Or send an email to Blue Community Champions.

Please sign up for this important program. When we care for our communities, we live and work in a better place.



Association's new public policy site

The Association's new public policy Web site, www.BCBSHealthIssues.com, is now live and accessible to all BlueCross BlueShield plans and the general public.

- *The site has two levels of registration. In "news registration," visitors sign up to receive information via email (it also permits access to additional media articles). The "activist registration" allows the user to take action on behalf of BCBSA. During registration, users are automatically matched to their congressional and state legislative districts and asked which key issues they find most interesting. The site is set to send "action alerts" or email updates to registered users on key issues.*

- *The site provides information on news stories, health trends, research, Congressional directories, federal bills, state and federal campaigns, assistance in voter registration and a feedback area.*

- *To visit the Web site's corporate area, go to www.BCBSHealthIssues.com/crc.*

BCBSA creates independent pharmaceutical research center

The BlueCross BlueShield Association recently established RxIntelligence, an independent, not-for-profit corporation to conduct pharmaceutical research. RxIntelligence will evaluate the clinical and economic impact of new and existing prescription drugs. The mission is to provide a credible, objective source of pharmaceutical information to promote more rational, appropriate and cost-effective usage of pharmacological therapies.

"What has been missing in the debate about the rising costs of pharmaceuticals is an independent voice to provide the public with information about the health benefit of one drug vs. another," says Scott Serota of RxIntelligence.

RxIntelligence will have in-house research capacity and will work with existing research entities such as BCBSA's Technology Evaluation Center (the nation's leading medical technology evaluation program for both the public and private sectors). A particular area of investigation will be bio-engineered drugs, the result of recent advances in genetic research. "Our concern is that when the real blockbusters hit the market, we won't have the resources available to pay for them," said Serota.

RxIntelligence has already received positive media coverage from The Wall Street Journal, ABC World News Tonight, Modern Healthcare, ReutersHealth, CNNfn, National Public Radio and CNBC.

Getting it right on Sprint PCS

Oops! Because of information provided by the BlueCross BlueShield Association, the last issue of Quick Connections contained incorrect information about the Wireless Blue Program through Sprint PCS. The basic package costs \$19.99 (not \$9.99) per month plus 35 cents a minute. We were able to correct the information in the Quick Connections posted on the Blue Views Intranet site. We regret any inconvenience this may have caused.

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