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**NATIONAL FOUNDATION MARKS CHILDREN'S HEALTH ANNIVERSARY WITH
GRANT TO HELP COVER MORE OREGON KIDS**

*Packard Foundation Cites Children First for Oregon's Critical Role in
Continued Progress*

Portland, OR- February 4, 2011- Today, Children First for Oregon announced its receipt of a \$120,000 grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation under the Foundation's Insuring America's Children: Getting to the Finish Line initiative. This grant coincides with the two-year anniversary of the reauthorization of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and will support Children First in their work to advance policies and best practices that can help cover Oregon children and their families.

Health insurance coverage through Oregon's Healthy Kids program allows children to get the preventive care they need to stay healthy and see a doctor when sick or injured. Benefits of quality health care for kids extend well beyond a child's health, affecting a child's performance in school and a family's economic stability.

"Children First has helped to deliver real wins for Oregon children, and because Oregon has strengthened Medicaid and CHIP, thousands of Oregon children can get the care they need." said Carol S. Larson, president and CEO of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

The number of uninsured children in Oregon has dropped from 117,889 in 2008 to 90,527 in 2009. As the economic downturn has cost working families their health insurance along with their jobs, Medicaid and CHIP (Healthy Kids, in Oregon) have protected children from becoming uninsured. Oregon has improved coverage for children through a set of cost-effective policy and practice changes, including:

- Expansion of eligibility to 300% of FPL (A family of four making \$66,000 annually is eligible for no-cost or low-cost coverage.)
- Use of existing data from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for citizenship and income verification, reducing the number of

- pending applications and the amount of additional information requested from applicants.
- Reduced amount of supplemental income documentation required, decreasing the number of eligible children denied enrollment due to missing documents.
 - Simplified the application, making it easier for families to understand what information DHS is requesting.

As a result of these changes, the state received a \$15 million performance bonus from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in 2010. These improvements have helped thousands of Oregon families to ensure that children get the care they need.

“Oregon has shown that children not having health insurance coverage is a problem we can solve. And our kids, our families, and our state are stronger as a result. This grant and new federal tools and resources can help Oregon reach the finish line and cover every uninsured child,” said Children First Executive Director, Robin Christian.

The 2009 CHIP reauthorization law strengthened the partnership between the federal state governments on children’s health coverage. As a result, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has distributed more than \$280 million in performance bonuses to support state efforts to cover more uninsured kids. The CHIP reauthorization law also provides incentives and support for states committed to making CHIP and Medicaid even more effective.

“There is no better way to mark the anniversary of the CHIP reauthorization law than to recommit to covering uninsured kids. With new national resources and tools and smart, dedicated advocates to work with, Oregon can get the job done,” said Joan Alker, co-executive director at the Georgetown Center for Children and Families (CCF).

CCF an independent, nonpartisan policy and research center based at Georgetown University's Health Policy Institute, provides policy and communications support to Children First and other Getting to the Finish Line grantee organizations. Getting to the Finish Line grantees will work closely with state policymakers to identify and advance opportunities to cover additional uninsured children and keep them insured, by eliminating administrative barriers and improving the effectiveness and reach of CHIP and Medicaid.

Since 2007, the Packard Foundation’s insuring America’s Children: States Leading the Way grantmaking strategy has invested in state-based children’s health advocacy organizations. Children First has received Packard Foundation grant funding for children’s health advocacy since 2007. Advocates in nine other states also received 2011 Finish Line grant awards.

“This is a tough budget year, but it’ll be even tougher for Oregon families struggling to stay afloat through the worst economy in decades. If our leaders in Salem maintain their bipartisan commitment to covering uninsured kids, we can keep children healthy and families strong,” said Christian.

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Children First works to make Oregon a place where all children are healthy and safe, and struggling families have the support they need to thrive. Our mission is to make long-term systemic change by advocating for the adoption of policies and programs that keep children healthy and safe and strengthen families. KIDS COUNT is a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, a private charitable organization that funds a nationwide network of projects that support disadvantaged children and families.
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The David and Lucile Packard Foundation is a private family foundation created in 1964 by David Packard (1912–1996), cofounder of the Hewlett-Packard Company, and Lucile Salter Packard (1914–1987). The Foundation provides grants to nonprofit organizations in the following program areas: Conservation and Science; Population and Reproductive Health; and Children, Families, and Communities. The Foundation makes national and international grants and also has a special focus on the Northern California Counties of San Benito, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and Monterey. Foundation grantmaking includes support for a wide variety of activities including direct services, research and policy development, and public information and education. The Foundation does not make grants intended to influence legislation or support candidates for political office. Foundation grant awards totaled approximately \$234 million in 2010. The Foundation expects grantmaking awards of up to \$232 million in 2011.

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