## Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Partners with The Massachusetts Coalition of Taft-Hartley Trust Funds To Promote Health And Wellness

**Participants walk more than half way around the earth during 12-week walking challenge**

**BOSTON — August 28, 2013 —**Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA) today announced the winners of the Massachusetts Coalition of Taft-Hartley Trust Funds, Inc. pedometer challenge, a three month walking contest pitting seven teams — made up of 77 individuals — in a friendly competition to improve their health and wellness. BCBSMA created the wellness competition for The Massachusetts Coalition of Taft-Hartley Trust Funds, which is made up of unions that represent over 100,000 members, as a way to help them promote a healthy, active lifestyle for their members.

The winning team was a combination of walkers from the Boston Plasterers & Cement Masons Local 534 and International Union of Operating Engineers Local 4. They were awarded the grand prize — a $5,000 scholarship from BCBSMA. Other teams included:

- International Union of Operating Engineers Local 98
- New England Carpenters Benefit Funds
- Roofers Local 33
- Teamsters 170
- Teamsters Local 25 Health Fund
- BCBSMA

"There was a huge incentive for the teams to participate in this walking challenge — the partnership with Blue Cross along with the $5,000 scholarship really motivated our staff to participate and keep walking," said Gina Alongi, Executive Director of The Massachusetts Coalition of Taft-Hartley Trust Funds. "Since our union members are spread all over New England, we wanted to see if this competition could be rolled out to the members to help improve their health and wellness. We are so proud of how seriously each team took the competition and the tremendous progress they made. BCBSMA is a valuable partner that is committed to helping us improve the health of our members."

**Challenge results include:**

- Participants racked up over 25.6 million steps over the 12-week period, which is equivalent to walking halfway around the Earth. It takes 49.8 million steps to walk all the way around the globe.
- Each contestant walked an average of 8,068 steps daily. The winning team, Boston Plasters & Cement Masons Local 534 and International Union of Operating Engineers Local 4, walked an average of 11,063 steps daily.
- Participants lost weight, with one participant losing over 14 pounds during the challenge.
- Even after the challenge, pedometers have become an essential part of the team members' daily lives and are helping them to stay motivated. Many have recruited their family members to walk with them.

"Blue Cross has seen a great deal of success with previous walking challenges and we knew that this would be an effective way for The Massachusetts Coalition of Taft-Hartley Trust Funds to engage their employees in a fun way to encourage them to get walking and lead an active lifestyle," said Steve Shay, Director of Labor Affairs for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. "The results speak for themselves and it's great to see that the team members are continuing to take fitness seriously even after the challenge is over."

**Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts** (www.bluecrossma.com) is a community-focused, tax-paying, not-for-profit health plan headquartered in Boston. We are committed to working with others in a spirit of shared responsibility to make quality health care affordable. Consistent with our corporate promise to always put our 2.8 million members first, we are rated among the nation's best health plans for member satisfaction and quality. BCBSMA is proud to provide health coverage to more than 112,000 union members and their families.

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