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viaLanguage Donates Capital and Services to Help Improve Minority Health

viaLanguage, a leading language translation and localization agency, today announced it has donated \$30,000 in capital and services to the Health Plan of San Mateo (HPSM) in support of its efforts to address childhood obesity in the Latino Community.

PORTLAND, OR, October 08, 2008 **/24-7PressRelease/** -- viaLanguage, a leading language translation and localization agency, today announced it has donated \$30,000 in capital and services to the Health Plan of San Mateo (HPSM) in support of its efforts to address childhood obesity in the Latino Community.

The donation is being used to implement the SHAPEDOWN Spanish Translation Project, aimed at translating the materials of a successful family-based weight management program for children and teens. SHAPEDOWN, developed and tested at the University of California, San Francisco has been shown to be effective in helping children, teens and their parents make the difficult lifestyle changes necessary for long-term weight loss and management. Children that have participated have in fact decreased their body mass index (BMI) and increased their level of fitness. viaLanguage has donated its services to translate the course material, a six book series, into Spanish.

"Childhood obesity continues to be a rising concern in the United States," said Chanin Ballance, CEO of viaLanguage. "Facilitating better health through language access is at the core of viaLanguage's mission. \$30,000 is a small price to pay for the potential millions of dollars in health care savings from the prevention of health care issues like diabetes and heart disease."

According to recent reports, obesity is a chronic disease that currently affects nearly one-third of the adult American population, 15.5% of adolescents (ages 12-19), and 15.3% of children (ages 6-11). Obesity in children and adolescents has many health and social consequences that often continue into adulthood; the increase in obesity rates for children has been especially significant, rising from 5-7% to more than 15% in just two decades.

Latinos and their children have been particularly affected by the growing prevalence of obesity. In 2005, at least one in four Hispanic adults living in the U. S. was obese. More than one in six (16.8%) Hispanic high school students are overweight. Hispanics' rates of being overweight are significantly higher than White high schoolers (11.8%) and about the same as Blacks (16.0%) of the same age. An additional 16.7% of Hispanic high school youth are at risk of becoming overweight. This trend continues among even young Latinos. HPSM currently offers the SHAPEDOWN Program, in conjunction with the San Mateo County Department of Public Health's Family Health Services, to any of its members who meet age and body weight requirements. However, because the program's materials are available in English only, the significantly large proportion of Spanish monolingual families among HPSM's member population (33 %) are not able to participate.

"We've seen great success with the SHAPEDOWN Program for English speaking children and their parents," said Mary D. Giammona, M.D., M.P.H, Medical Director at HPSM. "Providing health and nutritional education programs to limited English speaking communities, especially Latino children and their parents is key. However, quality translation is expensive and we've been waiting for this. Now we can move forward with the help from viaLanguage."

About viaLanguage

viaLanguage is a leading provider of online language translation and localization services. Through the unique combination of its Online Language System (OLS), expert linguists and integration capabilities, viaLanguage offers organizations a comprehensive, affordable solution for meeting today's increasing need for effective multilingual communications. viaLanguage services are designed to help clients quickly and easily develop the very best multilingual Web sites, software applications, marketing materials and other global communications. Since 2000, the company has earned a reputation among its clients for reliability, quality and professionalism. Corporate Headquarters are located at 309 SW 6th Avenue, Suite 1200, Portland, OR 97204. For more information, call us at 503-243-2007.

About Health Plan of San Mateo

HPSM is a managed care health plan with over 60,000 members that puts better health within reach. They fight to make a difficult process easier, and to improve the quality of life in their community. They also have a vision, that "healthy is for

everyone." And they fight to make that possible.

If your organization would like to join HPSM's efforts by donating to the HPSM SHAPEDOWN Spanish Translation Project, please contact Liliana Ramirez, M.P.H. Health Educator at (650) 616-2170.

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