



Contact: Jessica Badger, 202-690-6343
Brian Wesolowski, 202-414-0779
Release Date: October 24, 2005

HHS Prevention Luncheon Honors Seattle's EnhanceFitness Program For Helping Create A Healthier U.S.

Health and Human Services Secretary Michael Leavitt announced today that Senior Services of Seattle/King County is one of ten nationwide winners of the Third Annual Innovation in Prevention Awards for EnhanceFitness, a program dedicated to improving health and physical performance in older adults. Secretary Leavitt will present the awards on October 24th at a luncheon in Washington, DC.

The award was created as part of President Bush's *HealthierUS* initiative and HHS's continuing focus on preventing chronic disease and improving Americans' lives. The awards highlight businesses and organizations that are leading efforts to promote healthier lifestyles in seven different areas. The EnhanceFitness program was honored in the Non-profit category.

"The EnhanceFitness program shows that people of all ages, including our seniors, can benefit greatly from improved fitness and nutrition," said Secretary Leavitt. "The Senior Services of Seattle/King County has developed a model program for improving the health of our nation's seniors in simple and sustainable ways."

Based in Seattle, WA, EnhanceFitness' goal is to increase the exercise vigor of senior citizens with a focus on aerobic activity, strength conditioning, balance, and flexibility. The program has group exercise sessions, which also provide the added health benefit of social interaction. EnhanceFitness has received an overwhelmingly positive response from participants, and scientific study results showed that the group improved in every dimension tested, from physical and social functioning to levels of pain and depression.

"Senior Services is delighted to receive this award as it is a testament to the strengths of EnhanceFitness," said project director Susan Snyder. "This program is integral to our mission of promoting the emotional, social and physical well being of senior citizens. With the help of our local partners and long-time funder, Aging and Disability Services, we hope to continue spreading this program to older adults."

EnhanceFitness, formerly known as the Lifetime Fitness Program, was designed by researchers at the University of Washington and Group Health Cooperative. It has grown from one pilot program in 1993 to 82 sites nationwide.

###

Note: All HHS press releases, fact sheets and other press materials are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/news>. To request an interview or additional information, contact Jessica Badger at 202-690-6343, Jessica.Badger@hhs.gov or Brian Wesolowski at 202-414-0779, brian@susandavis.com.

For additional information on EnhanceFitness or Senior Services (Seattle, WA), contact:

Susan Snyder at 206-727-6297, SusanS@seniorservices.org

or

Susan Compton at 206-727-6265, SusanC@seniorservices.org