

*Our mission:
Stop Heart Disease through research,
education and prevention.*



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**For Immediate Release
Local Funding Agencies and Health Services Providers
Join Forces to Save Lives in South Miami-Dade**

Miami, Florida, May 20, 2008—Florida Heart Research Institute, Health Foundation of South Florida, United Way of Miami-Dade, and Community Health of South Florida, Inc. announced today they are joining forces on an innovative project that is projected to save hundreds of lives in South Miami-Dade over the next two years. The project, ***Living for Health in South Miami-Dade***, will provide \$185,000 toward free screenings for more than 4,000 underserved and uninsured residents to identify those at risk for heart disease, stroke, diabetes and obesity and get them into treatment before they suffer a life threatening event.

Typically, Florida Heart Research Institute has found that anywhere from 45 – 60% of those screened require follow up medical care ranging from treatment for high blood pressure, cholesterol, or glucose to immediate hospitalization. Those found to be at risk will be urged to see a physician and counseled on simple lifestyle steps that can reduce or reverse those risks. ***Living for Health*** is a unique community based approach to health because those without a physician or insurance will be referred to Community Health of South Florida, Inc. – a local federally qualified health center that treats the underserved on a sliding fee scale based on their ability to pay. In addition, anyone identified as high risk will be followed by Florida Heart for three months to ensure that treatment was sought, clinical values improved and that changes in diet and physical activity levels are maintained.

“We are proud to partner with the Florida Heart Research Institute on this groundbreaking project” announced Steven Marcus, Ed D., President and CEO of Health Foundation of South Florida. ***Living for Health*** closes the loop because it connects people without access to care to a medical home, saves lives, keeps people out of emergency rooms and saves the healthcare delivery system countless dollars”, adds Kathleen T. DuCasse, Florida Heart’s Chief Executive Officer.

Heart disease is the number one cause of death and disability in the U.S. In 2003, an estimated 65,000 Floridians died of heart related illness (nearly 40% of all deaths), and hospitalization costs to care for Floridians with heart disease exceeded \$4.4 billion.

Health Foundation of South Florida, a not-for-profit grantmaking foundation, is dedicated to expanding access to affordable, quality health care and providing funding

that directly benefits the health and well being of underserved individuals in Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties. Since its inception in 1993, the Foundation has awarded more than \$75 million in grants and direct program support.

Florida Heart Research Institute, an independent 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, was founded more than 60 years ago as Miami Heart Research Institute, an international leader with a mission to **Stop Heart Disease** through cardiovascular research, education, and prevention programs. For more information regarding these and other exciting projects at Florida Heart Research Institute, please contact Tori Gabriel at (954) 261-1479, or visit us at www.floridaheart.org



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