



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Charleston Healthy Business Challenge Celebrates Successes at Awards Event**

**New partners and engaged businesses are highlights of 2017 Charleston Healthy Business Challenge, a free program to encourage and assist Charleston area businesses in establishing work environments that promote a culture of well-being.**

**Charleston, S.C. (Tuesday, November 21, 2017)** – On Wednesday, Nov. 15, at 4 p.m. at the Riley Park Club in Charleston, South Carolina, area businesses were recognized for their participation and successes in the third annual *Charleston Healthy Business Challenge*, a collaborative program developed by the City of Charleston and the Medical University of South Carolina with support from presenting sponsor BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina. The purpose of the program is to encourage and assist businesses and organizations in establishing work environments that promote a culture of well-being.

During opening remarks, Brandon Guest, AJG Area President said “The Charleston Healthy Business Challenge provided an environment to learn and share ways to build healthy organizations” and Charleston City Councilman Mike Seekings discussed the importance of healthy businesses to a thriving community and congratulated award winners and participants.

The Challenge is free, voluntary and open to all business in the Charleston metropolitan area. Participants register online for access to the Strategy for Wellbeing Platform, provided by the South Carolina Hospital association which helps employers assess implementation of evidence-based best practices for effective wellness strategies.

Over 300 participants attended networking seminars throughout the year, including *Wellness Challenges that Work*, held at the Charleston Maritime Center, *Lifestyle Management for Total Wellbeing*, held at the Mount Pleasant Waterfront Park Cooper River Room, and *Greening the Workplace*, held at Alhambra Hall in Mount Pleasant, featuring Dr. Ann Kulze and her inspiring presentation about the health benefits of nature.

Sponsors and partners in 2017 include BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina, Arthur J. Gallagher & Co., Charleston Regional Business Journal, Sodexo, Town of Mount Pleasant, NashFm, MUSC, City of Charleston, Founders Hall, & Verde.

“We are changing the norm of the workplace environment to one that embraces a culture of well-being as the new standard operating procedure,” said Dr. Susan Johnson, director of health promotion at MUSC. “By making health a priority at work, we see changes in employees, in their families and in our communities.”

Several organizations attended the awards event to share valuable tools and resources to help participants reach their worksite wellness goals and included Lowcountry Local First, Zipongo, MUSC Business Health, O2 Fitness, Gotcha Bikes, South Carolina Hospital Association’s Working Well and BlueCross BlueShield of SC and graciously provided door prizes while attendees enjoyed delicious, healthy treats catered by Riley Park Club and Merchantile & Mash.

According to Mike Harris, vice president of major group sales at BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina, helping customers achieve improved health status is a long-term commitment. He said, “There are no quick fixes in this effort. Changing behavior and improving health status is a worthy long-term investment. The payoff is an improved quality of life and mitigation in the rise of health care costs. We hope that our participation again this year signals the seriousness of our intent to play a role in improving the health of customers and our communities.”

The following businesses were recognized for their efforts:

#### PLATINUM

1. Charleston County Consolidated Dispatch 9.1.1. Center
2. City of Charleston
4. Equiscript
5. Hubner US
6. Medical University of South Carolina
7. Select Health of SC
8. South Carolina Federal Credit Union

#### GOLD

1. Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.
2. Boeing Company
3. Charleston County Sheriff’s Office - Law Enforcement Center
4. Charleston County Government
5. CPM Federal Credit Union
6. Johnson & Johnson Insurance Manager
7. Kiawah Partners
8. Mount Pleasant Waterworks
9. Move IT! Charleston County Office
10. Sheriff Al Cannon Detention Center
11. Sonepar

#### SILVER

1. Life Cycle Engineering
2. Lowcountry Food Bank
3. NFP Charleston
4. Trident Medical Center

#### Bronze

1. Charleston County Aviation Authority
2. Briteline Extrusions
3. Whole Building Systems

#### Participants

1. BoomTown ROI
2. Charleston Wine and Food
3. The Gotcha Group

Registration for the 2018 Charleston Healthy Business Challenge will begin Jan. 31 and a kick-off event will provide interested businesses with additional information on the program.

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**About MUSC:** Founded in 1824 in Charleston, The Medical University of South Carolina is the oldest medical school in the South. Today, MUSC continues the tradition of excellence in education, research and patient care. MUSC educates and trains more than 3,000 students and residents in six colleges (Dental Medicine, Graduate Studies, Health Professions, Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy), and has nearly 13,000 employees, including approximately 1,500 faculty members. As the largest nonfederal employer in Charleston, the university and its affiliates have collective annual budgets in excess of \$2.2 billion, with an annual economic impact of more than \$3.8 billion and annual research funding in excess of \$250 million. MUSC operates a 700-bed medical center, which includes a nationally recognized children's hospital, the Ashley River Tower (cardiovascular, digestive disease and surgical oncology), Hollings Cancer Center (a National Cancer Institute-designated center), Level I Trauma Center, Institute of Psychiatry, and the state's only transplant center. In 2016, U.S. News & World Report named MUSC Health the No. 1 hospital in South Carolina. For more information on academic programs or clinical services, visit [musc.edu](http://musc.edu). For more information on hospital patient services, visit [muschealth.org](http://muschealth.org).