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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MISSOURI CHARITY RECEIVES FRAUDULENT DONATION Targeted In Scam Aimed At Houston Energy Consulting Firm

Springfield, MISSOURI, October 22, 2011 – Everyone knows that scammers are out in force in this current economic climate preying on businesses and private citizens alike. A Missouri charity warns that public non-profit organizations are at risk, too.

Last week a \$1,950 donation was made to HealthCare PSI, a 501c(3) patient advocacy organization working to put a comprehensive childhood asthma screening and education program in K-12 public schools. The donation appeared to come from Purvin & Gertz, a Houston, Texas, based international energy consulting firm. "We have industry contacts in Texas, and the document appeared real," said DK Raymer, Founder & President. "But you still check these things out."

Following their organization's donation protocol, DK contacted the company's home office in Houston to acknowledge their contribution. She spoke with the assistant controller, who told her that the company's bank account had been hacked, compromising their banking information. Since October 4th, private individuals from more than 25 states have received fraudulent Purvin & Gertz checks from a Chase bank account. HealthCare PSI is the first public charity to receive one.

"I have absolutely no idea why we were singled out," said DK. "We're not exactly a high-profile organization like Susan G. Komen or the Red Cross. But I'd be thrilled if *real* donors found us as easily as this scammer did, because we have a lot of work to do to turn the childhood asthma epidemic around."

HealthCare PSI's program, PEAK 4 Kids™ trains school personnel to detect and test children suspected of having breathing-related problems, refers them to local care providers for diagnosis and treatment, and monitors their progress. The program is offered free of charge to K-12 public schools, private schools, and other organizations working with children ages 5-17. PEAK 4 Kids™ also provides expert community asthma education in conjunction with Lincoln University's School of Nursing and Walgreens Pharmacists. Public schools in Missouri are the first recipients of this program, which is scheduled to expand to surrounding states in the 2013 school year.

"In this economy, every donation is a major gift," said Suzette Brawner, HealthCare PSI's Community Relations Director. "It is disappointing to know that there are people out there who choose to spend their days trying to victimize individuals and our charity, just to interfere with the business operations of a private company." HealthCare PSI is working with the Houston company in the fraud investigation which now includes Chase Bank, Fed-Ex and UPS. All of the fraudulent checks have been delivered via overnight courier. The way this particular scam usually works is someone will come forward asking for a partial refund, claiming the donation was in error. But no one has contacted HealthCare PSI's directors.

“This action doesn’t appear to be aimed at extracting money from check recipients,” said Dr. Stan Horner, a Jefferson City Immunology, Asthma & Allergy Specialist and Director of HealthCare PSI’s Health Programs. “It appears that whoever is behind this has an ax to grind with this energy consulting firm, or the energy industry in general. It troubles me that our grassroots organization was targeted. We’re just a group of people trying to help kids breathe easier.”

Asthma Facts: More than 25 million Americans have asthma; 7 million are children. Asthma is the 3rd leading cause of all ER visits and hospitalizations in children under 15, and is a leading cause of school absenteeism. More than 5,000 children and adults die each in the US year from asthma. Missouri’s childhood asthma rate is one of the highest in the nation, and its management efforts are rated Poor by the AHRQ.

“Public charities live out loud on the web,” said DK. “There’s really no way to conceal contact information, nor do we want to. It’s called a public charity for that reason. We just have to remember that not everyone cares that we’re doing good work.”

About HealthCare PSI:

HealthCare PSI is a national 501c(3) patient advocacy organization based in Missouri. Composed of private citizens, business people, doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals, HealthCare PSI works on issues that positively affect patient outcomes, seeks to improve the public health, and educates the public about preventable medical harm. PEAK 4 Kids™ is its first health initiative. The organization’s long term goal is to make PEAK 4 Kids™ the go-to program for any public or private school in the country lacking a comprehensive plan to address childhood asthma.

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