



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Blue Cross Foundation Announces 2018 Angel Award® Honorees**

*Ten individuals to be recognized for outstanding service to children at October event*

(Baton Rouge, LA) — This October, the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana Foundation will honor 10 everyday Louisianians doing extraordinary good for the state's children at the 2018 Angel Award® ceremony.

This year's honorees were chosen from a record number of nominations submitted from across the state, from Gretna to Ruston. All Angels will receive a \$20,000 grant to the charity of their choice to deepen the impact of their work.

While the work of this year's class of Angels touches healthcare, education and more, each Angel is notable for a long-term commitment that has inspired others and built a movement around bettering the lives of children.

"Our Angels are not billionaires or celebrities. They're everyday people who have thrown themselves fully into a life of service and impact," said Foundation President Michael Tipton. "We hold these people up because we want to show how a commitment to everyday goodness takes hold and spreads in a way that completely changes the future for our state's children."

The stories of each Angel will be told at an invitation-only presentation ceremony, which will take place Monday, Oct. 15 at the Hilton Baton Rouge Capitol Center. Receiving the Angel Award this year are:

- **Luis Arocha, Jr. of Gretna**, the executive director of Café Hope, a New Orleans-based nonprofit that trains profoundly underserved young people with skills to begin work in the restaurant and hospitality industries.
- **Fr. M. Jeffery Bayhi of Zachary**,— the founder of Metanoia Manor, a safe place where the female victims of human sex trafficking can live and heal, with a goal of rejoining society.

- **Kacy Edwards and Julie Scott of Baton Rouge**, co-founders of Career Compass, a thriving nonprofit with more than 80 coaches working to remove obstacles between K-12 students and their dreams of obtaining postsecondary education or a high-quality credential.
- **Abram Freeman of Lafayette**, a pastor and founder of Acts of Love, Inc., which helps children whose parents are incarcerated complete school, pursue higher education and start a career.
- **Carolynne Hoyt of Alexandria**, the founder of NextSTEP of Central Louisiana, a leading model of anti-violence education that has reached more than 18,000 middle and high school students.
- **Tanya McGee of Lake Charles**, a lifelong advocate for people with disabilities and vice president of Ainsley's Angels, which provides opportunities for children with disabilities to participate in outdoor, physical endurance activities, such as walks, runs and marathons.
- **Caleb Seney of Ruston**, the executive director of Med Camps of Louisiana, a nonprofit that provides week-long summer camps to children living with chronic illnesses and disabilities.
- **Audry Bernard Spencer of Crowley**, a retired school teacher who used her own money to start Empowering the Community for Excellence, a rapidly growing, free, community-based after-school tutoring program housed in a 5,000 sq. ft. center with nine classrooms and a computer lab.

Each year, the Foundation also honors a "Blue Angel," a Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana employee who has shown extraordinary commitment to children. This year, the Foundation has selected **Phyllis M. Broussard of Baton Rouge** – a longtime volunteer with Capital Area Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) .

This year, the Foundation will give special recognition to **John Maginnis of Madisonville**, who recently retired from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana as the vice president of Strategic Communications. Maginnis founded the Angel Award in 1995, and will be honored for his contributions to Louisiana's children through the program.

More information about the Angel Award is available online at [www.BCBSLAFoundation.org](http://www.BCBSLAFoundation.org)

## **About the Blue Cross Foundation**

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana Foundation works each day to improve the health and lives of Louisianians by empowering everyday people to do extraordinary good. By building and funding coalitions of friends, families and neighbors, the Foundation hopes to build a healthier Louisiana, particularly for its children. The foundation is funded solely by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana, but is a separate 501(c)(3) nonprofit entity. Together, Blue Cross and the Blue Cross Foundation invest \$2.5 million each year into Louisiana's communities and nonprofits.

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