

**Media Contact:**

Sabrina Written  
504-523-6221, EXT 163  
[swritten@kingsleyhouse.org](mailto:swritten@kingsleyhouse.org)

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Kingsley House Receives Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana Foundation Grant to Develop Talent Pool of Community Health Workers**

Kingsley House has been awarded a grant from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana Foundation to oversee a collaborative workforce development initiative to recruit, train and hire 50 job seekers to work in the healthcare industry. Over three years, individuals in the Kingsley House network will be funded to earn multiple healthcare certifications and gain sustainable employment through a Community Health Worker Apprenticeship Program.

The project is spearheaded by the Kingsley Connections Career Pathways Program, which assists individuals in preparing for careers in leading and emerging industries. Last year, Kingsley Connections helped more than 100 participants complete training and earn certifications that led to employment in their chosen field.

“This grant is a win-win and an example of the type of collaboration that will move New Orleans forward, stronger and better. Through this generous funding opportunity from the Blue Cross Foundation, Kingsley House is proud to partner with Ochsner Health and Delgado Community College to build educational and career pathways that lead to economic security for the families we serve.” said Arnel Cosey, Ph.D., Kingsley House Strategy and Impact Officer.

Enrolled apprentices will earn a starting training wage of \$15.25 an hour, plus benefits from Ochsner Health, receive progressive wage increases as they advance through the program, and, if interested, be hired by Ochsner Health at \$18.75 an hour upon completion and employed as a Community Health Worker.

Community health workers conduct chronic disease care management, offer community health outreach and education, link community members to health and social services, and collaborate both within and between agencies to improve community health outcomes.

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“This program is a crucial and powerful step forward in improving both the physical and economic health of our Louisiana communities,” said Missy Sparks, Vice President Talent Management – Workforce Development, Ochsner Health. “We are proud to play a role in meeting our state’s critical workforce demands while also opening the door to high-wage jobs for so many.”

Ochsner Health’s training partner, Delgado Community College, will provide nationally accredited technical and academic instruction for the 15-month Community Health Worker apprenticeship. DePaul Health Centers, Kingsley House’s partner in its Thriving Families Collaborative, will provide a Community Health Navigator during the training period to address and mitigate barriers to participants’ retention and completion.

“We are grateful to all of the partners in this project for coming together to tackle this shortage in the healthcare workforce,” said Michael Tipton, president of the Blue Cross Foundation. “Kingsley House is demonstrating that collaboration and resourceful thinking can help us make sure there are enough qualified health professionals to provide exceptional healthcare to every Louisianian.”

Upon successful completion of the program, graduates receive a Community Health Worker Certificate of Completion and qualify to test for three nationally recognized certifications: Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA); Certified Phlebotomy Technician (CPT), and American Red Cross – Basic Life Support (BLS).

### **About Kingsley House**

At Kingsley House, we envision a city and region where all young children are ready to succeed, and all citizens are healthy and economically stable. Recognizing that vulnerable families are at risk of being caught in an intractable cycle of poverty, we are committed to ensuring that individuals and families have the support necessary to be successful at all stages of life. To accomplish our goals, we join forces with dedicated community partners. Collectively, we work with families to fuel economic growth and social change in our city, state, and region.

Founded in 1896, Kingsley House’s mission is to educate children, strengthen families and build community. A name change that reflects the organization’s values and vision is forthcoming during its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration this year. For more information, visit [www.kingsleyhouse.org](http://www.kingsleyhouse.org).

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### **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. In 2020, Blue Cross and the Blue Cross Foundation invested more than \$14 million in Louisiana's communities and nonprofits with programs and services reaching 6.4 million Louisianians.

### **About Ochsner Health**

Ochsner Health is a system that delivers health to the people of Louisiana, Mississippi and the Gulf South with a mission to **Serve, Heal, Lead, Educate and Innovate**. Ochsner Health is a not-for-profit committed to giving back to the communities it serves through preventative screenings, health and wellness resources and partnerships with innovative organizations that share our vision. Ochsner Health healed more than 900,000 people from across the globe in 2020, providing the latest medical breakthroughs and therapies, including digital medicine for chronic conditions and telehealth specialty services. Ochsner Health is a national leader, named both the top hospital and the top children's hospital in Louisiana by U.S. News & World Report. As Louisiana's leading healthcare educator, Ochsner Health and its partners educate thousands of healthcare professionals annually. Ochsner Health is innovating healthcare by investing in new technologies and research to make world-class care more accessible, affordable, convenient and effective. Ochsner's team of more than 32,000 employees and 4,500 providers are working to reinvent the future of health and wellness in the region. To learn more about Ochsner Health, please visit [www.ochsner.org](http://www.ochsner.org). To transform your health, please visit [www.ochsner.org/healthyyou](http://www.ochsner.org/healthyyou).

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