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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**AVON FOUNDATION BREAST CARE FUND AWARDS GRANT FOR BREAST CANCER  
ENCOREPLUS PROGRAM TO THE YWCA GREATER PITTSBURGH**

**Local Organization Recognized With Support From National Program**

PITTSBURGH, PA (February 18, 2009): The Avon Foundation Breast Care Fund has awarded a \$50,000 one-year grant to the YWCA Greater Pittsburgh's ENCOREplus Program to increase awareness of the life-saving benefits of early detection of breast cancer. It is the 15th year that the program has received funding from the Avon Foundation Breast Care Fund to support its work on this important health issue and in recognition of the excellence of the program.

The ENCOREplus Program of the YWCA Greater Pittsburgh is a community-based outreach program that provides education, screening, and support services. Since 1994, the ENCOREplus Program at the YWCA Greater Pittsburgh has reached more than 75,000 women with information about the importance of early detection of breast cancer and has referred almost 7,500 women for mammograms and clinical breast exams.

Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer in women in the U.S., and the leading single cause of death overall in women between the ages of 40 and 55. According to the American Cancer Society, 9,410 new cases of breast cancer will be detected in Pennsylvania this year and 2,180 lives will be lost. Nationwide, there is a new diagnosis every three minutes and a death from breast cancer every 14 minutes. While advances have been made in prevention, diagnosis, treatment and cure, early detection still affords the best opportunity for successful treatment. Programs such as ENCOREplus help ensure that all women have access to early detection information and options, even poor and medically underserved women.

Since 1993, the Avon Foundation has awarded more than 1,100 grants to community-based breast health programs across the United States, including the ENCOREplus Program at the YWCA Greater Pittsburgh. These programs are dedicated to educating underserved women about breast cancer and linking them to early detection screening services.

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“We are proud that the Avon Foundation shares our mission and has chosen to support our program,” said Magdeline E. Jensen, CEO, YWCA Greater Pittsburgh. “With these funds we will be able to reach out to more women and link them to vital early detection screenings for breast cancer.”

### **The Avon Foundation and Breast Cancer Crusade**

The Avon Foundation, an accredited 501(c)(3) public charity, was founded in 1955 to improve the lives of women and their families. Now past the half century milestone, the Foundation brings this mission to life through the *Speak Out Against Domestic Violence* Program and the *Avon Breast Cancer Crusade*, which raises funds and awareness for access to care and finding a cure for breast cancer, with a focus on the medically underserved. Since 1992, the *Avon Breast Cancer Crusade* has raised and awarded more than \$525 million worldwide for medical research; access to care; support services; screening and diagnostics; and education and awareness. The largest fundraising program in the U.S. is the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer series.

### **The Avon Foundation Breast Care Fund**

The Avon Foundation Breast Care Fund is administered by Cicatelli Associates Inc. to support community-based, non-profit breast health programs across the country. The Fund’s National Advisory Board selected the ENCOREplus Program of the YWCA Greater Pittsburgh as one of the 144 grant recipients nationwide in the 2009 cycle of Avon Foundation Breast Care Fund grants. These organizations were chosen based on their ability to effectively reach women, particularly minority, low-income, and older women, who are often medically underserved.

### **The YWCA Greater Pittsburgh**

The YWCA Greater Pittsburgh is a women’s membership movement committed to the elimination of racism and the economic empowerment of women and girls. For more information about the YWCA’s programs and services, persons may visit [www.ywcapgh.org](http://www.ywcapgh.org) or call 412-391-5100.

### **For More Information:**

For more information on the ENCOREplus Program at the YWCA Greater Pittsburgh, please call Yvonne Durham at 412-365-1915.

For more information about breast cancer, contact the American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345 or [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org), or the National Cancer Institute at 1-800-4-CANCER or [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov).

To learn more about the Avon Foundation, call 1-866-505-AVON or visit [www.avonfoundation.org](http://www.avonfoundation.org) where you can also access the free printable *Breast Health Resource Guide* in English and Spanish. For information or to register or support the *Avon Walk for Breast Cancer* events, visit [www.avonwalk.org](http://www.avonwalk.org) or call 1-888-540-WALK.

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