



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **AVON FOUNDATION BREAST CARE FUND AWARDS GRANT TO ELLIOT HOSPITAL FOR *REACHING OUT* PROGRAM**

#### **Local Organization Recognized With Support from National Program**

**MANCHESTER, NH / February 22, 2006** – The Avon Foundation Breast Care Fund has awarded a \$20,000 one-year grant to Elliot Hospital to conduct outreach and education about breast health to women who are medically underserved. The target population is Hispanic and Bosnian women between the ages of 40 and 64 and women over 65 who require assistance linking with a healthcare provider. It is the fourth year that the program has received Avon Foundation funding to support its work on this important health issue, and in recognition of the excellence of the program.

*Reaching Out* at Elliot Hospital will educate Manchester-area women and refer them to low-cost or free mammograms and clinical breast exams in their own communities. In particular, the vital program will reach immigrant and refugee women who may otherwise not access the health care system as readily.

Since January 2002, *Reaching Out* at Elliot Hospital has reached more than 1,500 women with information about the importance of early detection of breast cancer and has referred almost 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. Based upon 2005 data from the American Cancer Society, Elliot Hospital anticipates that 890 new cases of breast cancer will be detected in NH this year and 170 lives will be lost. Nationwide, there is a new diagnosis every three minutes and a death from breast cancer every fourteen 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 *Reaching Out* help ensure that all women have access to early detection information and options, even poor and medically underserved women.

“Many factors, such as fear, keep women from practicing good breast health,” says Lise Mendham, Director of Oncology Services, Elliot Regional Cancer Center, Elliot Hospital. “There is a tremendous need to reach women with information and resources,” adds Mendham. “We are grateful that the Avon Foundation shares this mission, and has chosen to support our program.”

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The Avon Foundation has funded more than 1,000 community-based breast health programs across the United States in the past twelve years, including *Reaching Out* at Elliot Hospital. These programs are dedicated to educating underserved women about breast cancer and linking them to early detection screening services.

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

The Avon Foundation, an accredited 501(c)(3) public charity, in 2005 celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary committed to improving the lives of women. The Foundation currently 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 \$400 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 *Reaching Out* at Elliot Hospital as one of 117 new grant recipients nationwide in the 2006 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.

### **For more information**

For more information on *Reaching Out* at Elliot Hospital, or specific questions about cancer and cancer related issues please call the Cancer Resource Line at 663-5787. 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 1-877-WALK-AVON.

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