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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM LONG DISTANCE LEARNING ABOUT DIABETES**

*Carondelet Health Network, Ha:sañ Education Services & Nogales High School Partner  
To Provide Students with Life-Saving Telemedicine Program*

**TUCSON, Ariz. – (April 8, 2010)** – In the United States today, Type 2 Diabetes is increasingly common among children (ages 6-11) and adolescents (ages 12-19). The disease, which is in large part, the result of poor nutrition, sedentary lifestyles and obesity, accounts for up to 50 percent of new diabetes cases in kids. That's why it is so important to teach children how to manage and monitor their weight, food choices and blood sugar.

Across southern Arizona, Hispanics and Native Americans have been shown to be at highest risk for the development of Type 2 Diabetes. That's why Carondelet Health Network, Ha:sañ Education Services and Nogales High School are partnering to bring a valuable educational opportunity to students of the Tohono O'odham Nation and Nogales Unified School District.

Classes of approximately 20 eighth and ninth graders from Ha:sañ Preparatory and Leadership School in Tucson travel to Carondelet St. Mary's Hospital for diabetes education classes each month. In symphony with those efforts, Carondelet offers the same classes *at the same time* through its telemedicine program to Nogales High School students participating at Carondelet Holy Cross Hospital. The students, though many may potentially be at risk, have not been diagnosed with the disease. They learn together about diabetes prevention from Gwen Gallegos, RN, MS, FNP, CDE, one of Carondelet's Certified Diabetes Educators and share their reactions to the teachings through a live television interface.

"This program is long overdue," states Donna Zazworsky, Carondelet's Vice President of Community Health and Continuum Care. "The kids appear extraordinarily engaged in the process, likely because the classes are fun, the focus is on kids helping kids and it takes place through a medium they are all too familiar with – TV."

“The Tohono O’odham Nation has a very high diabetes rate,” notes Bill Rosenberg, Director of Ha:sañ Preparatory and Leadership School. “I have been told that it is the highest in the world. All the students at Ha:sañ personally know someone in their family that has diabetes, so we want to provide our students with practical tools that will help them avoid and combat this debilitating disease.”

“The Carondelet program is a modern, interactive class that gives students another way to internalize diabetes information they are provided,” adds Fernando Parra, Nogales High School principal. “We hope that through our combined efforts with Ha:sañ and Carondelet, we can help our students and their families lead a longer, happier, disease-free life.”

Beyond this program for students, Carondelet Health Network offers a wide range of care for those with diabetes, including individual consultations, educational classes for adults, self-management programs, insulin pump training and support groups. For more information, go to: [www.carondelet.org/diabetes](http://www.carondelet.org/diabetes).

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*Carondelet Health Network, located in Tucson, Arizona, is a Catholic, non-profit health care system dedicated to responding to the health care needs of Southern Arizonans. With a Mission to Heal, Carondelet was founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet 130 years ago. Carondelet Health Network entities include Carondelet St. Mary's Hospital, Carondelet St. Joseph's Hospital, Carondelet Neurological Institute, and Tucson Heart Hospital in Tucson, and Carondelet Holy Cross Hospital in Nogales, Arizona. Other Carondelet services include twenty primary care and specialty locations, an ambulatory surgery center and outpatient services. Carondelet Health Network is a ministry of Ascension Health, the nation's largest Catholic, non-profit health care system. In FY 2009, Carondelet provided \$43,993,042 or 8.1 percent net revenue in Community Benefit to improve the health of our community and increase access to health care. More information about Carondelet Health Network, Carondelet Medical Group and Carondelet Neurological Institute is available at [www.carondelet.org](http://www.carondelet.org).*