



MILLER-KEYSTONE

BLOOD CENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Residents Encouraged To Give Blood This January During National Blood Donor Month

LEHIGH VALLEY, PA – Miller-Keystone Blood Center – exclusive blood supplier to our regional hospitals – has announced the kick-off of **National Blood Donor Month 2011**. Together, blood banking organizations across the country are appealing to all eligible blood donors to donate the gift of life this January – a time when blood supplies across the nation are traditionally in short supply. As part of this month-long event, the names of all individuals registering to donate at any MKBC donor center, including Allentown (1255 S. Cedar Crest Boulevard), Bethlehem (1465 Valley Center Parkway) and Easton (2925 William Penn Highway), between **January 1-31, 2011**, will be entered into a raffle for a **\$500 Visa gift card**. Blood donations can also be at any of the Center's community blood drives held during January.

"Donating blood is a simple, safe, life-saving, and selfless gift that millions of Americans can do," Springel continues. "As we celebrate the New Year, we're asking people in our region – and across the Country – to remember to give thanks, and give the gift of life by donating at least twice in 2011."

During this annual, month-long observance, the blood banking community is encouraging healthy individuals to donate in January, and to pledge to donate at least one more time during 2011. January is usually a difficult month for blood centers to collect blood donations due to holidays, busy travel schedules, inclement weather and winter illnesses.

"The winter season can lead to a reduction in donor turnout, which can put our nation's blood inventory at a critical low," states Springel. Therefore, she notes the Center is encouraging donations at this time.

"Blood is needed every day to care for premature infants, people with cancer and other diseases; for burn victims, surgery patients or organ transplant recipients; and to save the lives of accident victims," she adds. "Our mission

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is to ensure that these blood products are readily available to patients at our regional hospitals whenever needed.”

“We encourage individuals throughout the region to schedule an appointment to donate,” concludes Springel. “Blood has a shelf-life of only 42 days, which means it constantly needs to be replenished. Donors can give whole blood every 56 days, and platelets on a more frequent basis, up to 24 times per year.”

Additional donor promotions will take place throughout the month of January. For a full list of giveaways and other promotions, visit the Blood Center’s web site at www.GIVEaPINT.org. To schedule an appointment to donate, call Miller-Keystone Blood Center at 610-691-5850; or refer to the Center’s web site for the most up-to-date listing of drives being held in the region.

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