

News Release



**American
Red Cross**

Media Contact: Sarah Stevermer, (608) 227-1273

givebloodgivelife.org

Big Ten Steps Up to Donate Blood for Patients and Bragging Rights

MADISON, Wis. (January 18, 2010) – This winter, the Big Ten rivalry is moving off of the playing field and into the community with the inaugural Big Ten Blood Drive Challenge. Partnering with the American Red Cross, the goal of the challenge is to have Big Ten students, staff and faculty donate a collective 7,000 pints of blood through the Red Cross during this month-long event.

“We’re excited to be partnering with the Big Ten universities to help patients in need across the country,” said Greg Novinska, CEO of the local Red Cross Blood Services region. “The Big Ten Blood Drive Challenge allows students to show their school spirit and beat their rivals while supporting a great cause.”

The Big Ten Blood Drive Challenge is a national partnership between schools in the Big Ten Conference and the American Red Cross blood services. Each of the 11 schools is working with their local Red Cross to set up blood drives from January 19 to February 19 and compete to be the top school in blood donations while boosting blood supplies during the challenging winter months. This challenge will help meet patient need across the U.S. during this critical time.

How to Donate Blood

Simply call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE (1-800-448-3543) or visit givebloodgivelife.org to make an appointment or for more information. All blood types are needed to ensure a reliable supply for patients. A blood donor card or driver’s license, or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Individuals who are 17 years of age (16 with parental permission in some states), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and other donors 18 years of age and younger also have to meet certain height and weight requirements.

About the American Red Cross

Governed by volunteers and supported by giving individuals and communities, the American Red Cross is the single largest supplier of blood products to hospitals throughout the United States. While local hospital needs are always met first, the Red Cross also helps ensure no patient goes without blood no matter where or when they need it. In addition to providing nearly half of the nation’s blood supply, the Red Cross provides relief to victims of disaster, trains millions in lifesaving skills, serves as a communication link between U.S. military members and their families, and assists victims of international disasters or conflicts.

###

The need is constant. The gratification is instant. Give blood.™