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For Immediate Release

NEARLY HALF OF ARIZONANS GIVE BLOOD IN TIME OF DWINDLING SUPPLIES

Almost half of Arizonans have donated blood at some time in their lives, and most blood donors in Arizona have donated blood multiple times within the past five years, according to findings from a recent *Grand Canyon State Poll*.

The *Grand Canyon State Poll* was conducted by the Social Research Laboratory at Northern Arizona University. Calling took place between February 27 and March 3, 2004. Four hundred and ten randomly-selected Arizonans participated in the survey and results are accurate within a +/- 5 percent margin of error, at a 95 percent confidence level.

GENEROUS WITH BLOOD

Nearly half (49%) of Arizonans have donated blood some time in their lives. More men than women have donated blood (53% vs. 44%) and young people are more likely than older people to have donated (66% versus 51%). Those with a college degree were more likely to have donated blood (57%) than those without a college degree (44%). The national average donor looks much like the typical Arizona donor – a college-educated, white male, between the ages of 30 and 50.

Of those who gave blood, nearly one-quarter (24%) said they did it to ease a shortage or a need for blood; 20 percent donated in order to save lives and 15 percent donate out of duty or a sense of charity. Nearly two-thirds (61%) of Arizona blood donors have donated within the last five years; many of these donors have given several times. Eleven percent of donors gave once in the last five years, 33 percent donated 2-5 times, and 15 percent gave more than 5 times.

These findings match national data that indicate blood donors are often committed donors who give frequently.

One-third (34%) of Arizonans who did not give blood say they have a medical condition that prevents them from donating, while 15 percent report being “scared of needles.” Many Arizonans would like to donate but are unable because they have been restricted from giving (11%) or “don’t have the time” (7%).

NATIONAL BLOOD SHORTAGE

The American Red Cross and America’s Blood Centers are asking for more blood donations across the country in an effort to increase critically low blood supplies. According to Tommy G. Thompson, Secretary of Health and Human Services, “The nation is facing critical shortages in communities across the country.”

The American Association of Blood Banks (AABB) estimates that eight million Americans donate blood each year. Unfortunately, this number represents less than five percent of healthy Americans who are able to donate. Across the state, emergency blood drives are being held to try and increase dwindling reserves. Increased hospital needs and winter weather are cited as the reasons state blood supplies are at a crisis level.

According to the National Blood Data Resource Center, 29 million units of blood components are transferred in a given year. Blood has a shelf life of only 42 days and must be constantly replenished. Healthy donors can donate up to six times a year. Blood banks around the nation stress that with the continued aging of our population the need for blood transfusions will continue to rise. Kristi Hagen, associate director of the *Grand Canyon State Poll*, notes that “Arizona will face a particular challenge with a population that is older than average and has a larger percentage of retirees.”

To learn more about blood donation or find out where you can donate blood, please contact the American Association of Blood Banks (www.aabb.org), the American Red Cross (www.redcross.org), or America’s Blood Centers (www.americasblood.org).



Social Research Laboratory, Northern Arizona University

April 19, 2004

**GRAND CANYON STATE POLL
BACKGROUND MEMO**

Spring 2004

The *Grand Canyon State Poll* was conducted between February 27 and March 3, 2004. A random sample of 410 adult residents of Arizona was asked questions regarding blood donation. Survey question results are subject to a sampling error of +/- 5 percent at a 95 percent confidence level. Sampling error is the probable difference in results between interviewing everyone in the population versus a scientific sample taken from the population. Sampling error does not take into account additional sources of error inherent in any study of public opinion. The data referred to in this release are presented below.

Now I'd like to ask you a few questions about health issues in Arizona.

Have you ever donated blood?

	Yes	No	Count
Total	49%	51%	(405)
Female	44%	56%	(205)
Male	53%	47%	(204)
18-34 years	66%	30%	(325)
35-59 years	50%	45%	(74)
60+ years	52%	48%	(117)
Very religious	51%	49%	(129)
Somewhat religious	48%	52%	(176)
Not very religious	48%	52%	(82)
Less than high school	20%	80%	(15)
High school degree	42%	58%	(84)
Some college	47%	53%	(150)
Bachelor's degree	54%	46%	(91)
Post-bachelor's degree	62%	38%	(61)

[If yes] About how many times over the past 5 years have you donated blood?

0	37%
1	11%
2-5	33%
6-10	5%
11-20	5%
Over 20	4%
Don't know	6%
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Total	101%
(N = 212)	

What was the main reason you chose to donate blood?
[Open-ended responses recoded into categories]

Shortage of blood	24%
To save lives / help people who need blood	20%
Charity / humanitarianism / to do a good deed	15%
Convenience/ blood drive nearby	10%
Friend / family member / self needed blood	8%
Other reason	23%
Don't know	1%
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Total	101%
(N = 212)	

[If no] What was the main reason you chose not to donate blood?
[Open-ended responses recoded into categories]

Medical reasons / Underweight, anemic	34%
Fear of needles/ disease	16%
Restricted from giving blood / medication / tattoos	11%
Don't have the time	7%
Other	18%
No reason / don't know	15%
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Total	101%
(N = 210)	