

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Truman Medical Center Lakewood Unveils Mobile Dental Coach**

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**Kansas City, MO** – [Truman Medical Center](#) Lakewood (TMC) unveiled the Mobile Dental Coach at Blackburn Elementary School today. The Mobile Dental Coach is the culmination of more than two years of work to raise the nearly \$500,000 necessary for purchase, outfitting and operation of the 40 foot, fully equipped vehicle.

“TMC is dedicated to improving the health of the community we serve and there is no more efficient and effective way to accomplish this than to move into the community and provide the care and services needed where the people live,” said Charlie Shields, TMC Lakewood Chief Operating Officer. “The dental coach is a tangible demonstration of TMC and our caring and dedicated supporters and donors’ investment in the community, our school and especially our children.”

Tooth decay is the single most common chronic disease children face today. Untreated these conditions can lead to severe pain, infections and cause difficulty eating and speaking. Poor dental health also has a detrimental impact on academic performance of young students. TMC Lakewood Dental began a partnership with the Independence School District in late 2011 to provide dental screenings and basic services to students “most at risk” of dental disease. The program has utilized borrowed dental equipment and existing, available space within the schools served, often times gyms, stages or unused office space. The coach provides two, clean, accessible, full-service areas for dentists to work providing top quality dental screenings, x-rays and treatment for students.

“This dental mobile unit will take student dental health care to a new level in our district. It removes many of the barriers that might keep students from seeing a dentist, and could affect our students’ dental health for years to come. As you might imagine, a student with dental pain is less focused on academics so we expect to see multiple positive outcomes from this,” said Dr. Dale Herl, Independence School District Superintendent. “We are thankful to TMC Lakewood and all of the donors who have made this possible.”

To date, the TMC Lakewood Dental team has screened more than 6,000 students, provided advanced treatments to nearly 850 with a quarter of those returning for follow-up care. Screenings have been provided in 14 of 16 elementary schools in the district. The TMC Lakewood Dental team will complete the remaining two elementary schools by the end of the 2013-2014 school year.

### **About TMC**

**Truman Medical Centers is a not-for-profit, two acute-care hospital health system in Kansas City.** The TMC Health System includes TMC Hospital Hill, TMC Lakewood, TMC Behavioral Health, the Jackson County Health Department and a number of primary care practices throughout Eastern Jackson County. TMC is the primary teaching hospital for the University of Missouri-Kansas City Schools of Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry and Pharmacy and specializes in Chronic Disease Management, high risk pregnancies, orthopaedics, trauma services, and women's health. For more information, please call (816) 404-3785 or visit at [www.trumed.org](http://www.trumed.org) or on [Facebook](#).