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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Drew citizen gets Sunflower County walking

MISSISSIPPI STATE – There is an assumption that one person is not capable of making a difference or changing a common belief alone. It is thought to be too difficult, with too much hard work and very little rewards. This way of thinking has led many people to shy away from creating change. However, one man in Drew, who believes in the importance of health and nutrition has taken a stand and says one person is all that it takes.

Charles Cannon, a citizen of Drew, Mississippi, brought a community together by simply believing in a cause and putting forth the effort needed to see it succeed. His journey started a few months ago when a friend invited him to attend a meeting about the Get Healthy, Trim Down Delta project.

Get Healthy, Trim Down Delta is a project directed by Mississippi State University Extension Service and supported by the Delta Health Alliance through funding from the Office of Rural Health Policy, a branch of the Health Resources and Services Administration.

Cannon said, “I was invited and I decided just to go and see what was going on. I have always been interested in healthy living; it was instilled in me by my father at a young age and then being in the military I had to watch what I ate and stay in shape.”

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The project targeted at Carroll, Holmes, Leflore and Sunflower Counties brought individuals together for forums in each county to discuss the challenges and the positives of living a healthy lifestyle in their area. After the initial forums, community action groups were created. These groups each chose a different focus to fight obesity and promote health in their community.

Cannon chose to participate in the walking programs group for Sunflower County. After making that decision, Cannon was on a mission to bring his city together and get them moving for their health.

Over the next few weeks Cannon made numerous phone calls and brought together a group of people who could help him ensure the success of the program. He also promoted the program everywhere he went. Cannon called local newspapers, television stations, churches and schools. He did the proper planning and had streets blocked to assure safety for the participants. Cannon was ready, but then he anxiously had to wait to see if Drew was ready to walk with him.

On December 4, 2010, Drew held their first community walk and 125 people attended the event. Members of the community from different backgrounds and age groups participated to help make this event a success.

“This walk allowed the community to bond over something really positive,” said Cannon.

Cannon is proud of how the city of Drew came together to participate in the first walk and is now planning two more community walks in the coming months. He also is preparing to begin

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another walking program where he will challenge members of the community to walk 50, 75, or 100 miles within a set amount of time.

There is no doubt that Cannon has great plans for the city of Drew and will continue to work to make his town a healthier place to live.

Cannon said, “It’s just good to be a part of something where we make a difference in our community for the generations to come.”

For more information about Get Healthy, Trim Down Delta or the community action groups contact Bobbie Jo Beach at 662-325-3360 or e-mail bjb248@ext.msstate.edu. Also, check out the Get Healthy, Trim Down Delta Facebook page or project web site at www.msucares.com/trimdowndelta/.

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