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In KC, the Blues Backs Same Mission, Different Team

BlueKC teams with Kansas City Royals to promote brand, community service mission

By [Steve Schuster](#), Associate Communications

In Kansas City, there's a different shade of Blue.

As many CareFirst associates have rallied around their beloved Baltimore Orioles this playoff season, so too have employees of the BlueCross BlueShield licensee in Kansas City embraced their Royals. Both companies entertain Spirit Days, during which they encourage associates to dress up in their favorite team's gear.

Both companies also partner with their respective hometown's team to promote the BlueCross BlueShield brand and advance the Blues' mission of providing affordable and accessible health care services throughout the region's they represent.

In Kansas City, BlueKC, the town's Blues affiliate, has three to four features during each home baseball game, including sponsorship of a dance cam, a base stealing game for children, and a health habits quiz where baseball fans guess what players' healthy food choices are a favorite.

The dance cam is part of a wellness initiative sponsored by BlueKC and features fans on camera during games. "It encourages people to get out of their seats and move around during the game," said Staci Schottman, a Senior Account Manager with BlueKC.

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As for the base stealing game, a smaller baseball diamond has been constructed inside the walls of Kauffman Stadium where the Royals play at home in Kansas City. Young fans have the opportunity to win a prize by trying to steal the bases on the smaller baseball field.

The overarching goal of these activities is to promote family engagement in an active lifestyle, said Wayne M. Powell, BlueCross and BlueShield of Kansas City's Vice President of Executive Services and Chief of Staff. Powell said BlueKC is very involved with the Royals and that their relationship benefits not only BCBS members, but the entire community.

"It really enables us to project a strong brand message to the marketplace and focus on our dual missions here. First, to provide affordable access to health care and also to improve health and wellness to members," Powell said.

Members	
3.4 million	1 million
Year Founded	
1937	1938
CEO	
 Chet Burrell	 Danette Wilson (Interim)
Number of Employees	
5,200	1,254
Regions Served	
D.C. Maryland 2 Northern Virginia counties	30 Missouri counties 2 Kansas counties
Team-inspired Hashtag	
#IBackTheBirds	#TakeTheCrown
Stadium	
Camden Yards	Kauffman Stadium
Signature Product	
Healthy Blue	Blue & U
Internal Campaigns (Spirit Day)	
Days when associates can wear O's clothing	Days when associates can wear Royals clothing

BlueKC worked with a nutritionist to review items on the concession stand menus at the Kauffman Stadium. A BCBS logo is displayed next to menu items deemed to be healthy by the nutritionist.

“Healthy” options include a veggie burger, veggie dog, grilled chicken sandwich, garden salad and apple slices.

Since the placement of the BlueKC logo on the menu in 2013, sales of healthier food have doubled and even tripled from the 2012 to 2013 season, according to BlueKC.

In addition to the sponsored game activities and food concession logos, BlueKC also has a large backdrop on display during the regular season. However, like in Baltimore during the postseason that becomes an asset of Major League Baseball. After the regular season, MLB retains the signage rights during the postseason. BlueKC also has a fixed sign, a billboard in the outfield that is prominently displayed throughout the post-season.

“There are longstanding relationships that we try to connect our brand with the strong health and wellness of the community,” Powell said.



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