



March of Dimes taps Barkley

BY MARC LONGPRE

KANSAS CITY, MO: March of Dimes, the nonprofit working to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth, and infant mortality, has awarded Barkley Public Relations its cause branding assignment after a three-month review.

Doug Staples, SVP of strategic marketing and communications for March of Dimes, said Barkley was chosen because of its strong record in cause branding, including work with Lee Jeans and the Susan G. Komen for the Cure on Lee National Denim Day.

Barkley, which has also done work for the Family Violence Prevention Fund, was selected from among four agencies.

Mike Swenson, president of Barkley, acknowledged that de-



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spite the name recognition March of Dimes enjoys, it has been a challenge for the organization to get people to under-

stand exactly what it does.

The most immediate campaign focuses on the escalating number of premature births in the US, but Barkley will also provide brand research, analysis, and the development of an integrated communications plan in the upcoming months.

Staples added that the organization is seeking help on its corporate sponsorships.

Swenson said the agency would help develop a campaign that can aid the organization across the board in its efforts.

“The key to a great cause campaign is [creating] an emotional connection between a brand and its core audiences,” explained Swenson. “It’s creating an emotion that gets people engaged, whether it’s by volunteering or writing a check.” ■