



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Award-Winning Vendor Selected to Develop BabysFirstTest.org,
the Nation's First Online Clearinghouse of Newborn Screening Information**

Washington, DC – March 2, 2011 – Genetic Alliance will collaborate with web technology and design firm **Blenderbox** to develop and implement BabysFirstTest.org, a streamlined, customizable, online newborn screening clearinghouse.

“We are proud to partner with such a high-caliber and imaginative firm to develop this urgently-needed resource,” said Natasha Bonhomme, newborn screening project director and Genetic Alliance vice president of strategic development. “Blenderbox has everything we look for in a partner, from their open and collaborative project management style to their staff’s unique blend of design and technology expertise. This collaboration sets us up to deliver a high quality solution to some of the challenges facing the newborn screening system.”

In 2008, the U.S. Congress passed the **Newborn Screening Saves Lives Act** to expand support, research, and education opportunities for newborn screening programs. As a result of this legislation, the Genetic Services Branch of the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, HRSA, HHS **awarded a cooperative agreement** to Genetic Alliance and partners to establish the Newborn Screening Clearinghouse, which will connect parents and healthcare providers with resources and information relevant to the four million newborns screened annually.

Genetic Alliance created a beta version of the awarded a cooperative **agreement Newborn Screening Clearinghouse**, which lays the groundwork for BabysFirstTest.org, in 2010. Currently, the website provides links to partner websites and utilizes interactive features—including a blog and RSS feeds of newborn screening news and tweets—for discussion of key topics and activities in newborn screening.

“My wife and I have sat in the genetic counselor’s office at NYU Hospital trying to understand complex genetic information and how it relates to the health of our daughter,” shared Jason Jeffries, Blenderbox chief executive officer. “We can speak from first-hand experience when saying that the information needs of parents as it pertains to the health of their children, and the capacity of health professionals to meet those needs, should be paramount in good systems of care. We are proud to develop a resource for an organization and a public health system with consistent beliefs.”

Founded in 1999 by husband-and-wife-team Sarah McLoughlin and Jason Jeffries, each of whom has an extensive background with interaction design and technology, Blenderbox specializes in services for education, nonprofit, and mission-driven organizations. The Brooklyn, NY-based firm’s roster of prestigious partners includes **National Geographic, Defenders of Wildlife, The American Association for the Advancement of Science, The Hewlett Foundation, The Atlantic Philanthropies, and The Rockefeller Foundation**. Among the many **awards won by Blenderbox**, in August 2010, one of the firm’s designs won the Interactive Media Awards (IMA) Best in Class Award in the ‘Arts/Culture’ category—the highest honor

bestowed by the IMA.

The anticipated launch date for BabysFirstTest.org is September 1, 2011.

For more information about the Newborn Screening Clearinghouse program, contact Natasha Bonhomme at nbonhomme@geneticalliance.org.

About Genetic Alliance

Genetic Alliance improves health through the authentic engagement of communities and individuals. In this, our 25th year, we celebrate innovation on our journey toward novel partnerships, connected consumers, and smart services. For more information about Genetic Alliance, visit <http://www.geneticalliance.org>.