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**Community Health Centers Recognized for Excellence in Midst of COVID**  
*Individuals or Teams at Five Community Health Centers Recognized for Their Contributions*

**Portland, OR** – The Oregon Primary Care Association (OPCA) is pleased to announce its 2020-2021 Awards of Excellence achieved in a year when much of the focus of community health centers (CHCs) has been responding to COVID-19 and the Delta variant surge.

Every year, individuals and teams are nominated by their peers for outstanding work achieved in support of underserved and marginalized patients and communities in Oregon.

More than 65% of patients seen in CHCs identify as black, indigenous, or person of color (BIPOC) which is far greater than Oregon's general population comprised of less than a 25% BIPOC population, according to the 2020 census. CHCs work tirelessly toward health equity and innovations in healthcare delivery throughout communities across the state.

OPCA received 15 nominations and awarded five Annual Awards of Excellence honors and a Lifetime Achievement Award to:

**Access and Sustainability Award**

**Amy McClung and Victoria Cordy, Practice Managers, La Clinica's Phoenix Health Center**

Amy McClung and Victoria Cordy, Practice Managers at [La Clinica's Phoenix Health Center](#), were nominated for their tireless efforts in assisting their staff and patients through the devastation left behind by the Alameda fire. These efforts included their plan to set up shop at nearby Birch Grove Health Center following the event. Their team called patients to better understand their situations, made appointments, helped get lost medications refilled and sometimes delivered to patients, and they also connected their patients with community resources. In addition to this work, Amy and Victoria made room to talk about hard emotions and space to grieve. They have also provided a shining light toward the future to help staff overcome their own shock and grief as well so they could all rally around the community that depends on them. Work continues today to help the approximately 700 fire victims who continue to be without long-term housing. Many at La Clinica, including most employees at Phoenix Health Center, continue work to support people whose lives may never be the same.

*"Amy and Victoria's compassion and grace have brought hope to many." - Brenda Johnson, La Clinica Chief Executive Officer*

**CHC Advocacy Award**

**Chris Hecht, Executive Coordinator, White Bird Clinic**

Chris Hecht, Executive Coordinator at White Bird Clinic, has been nominated for his exemplary advocacy efforts towards the Health Center Movement. Over the course of the last 18 months, Chris has used his voice to benefit his community with local leaders and has taken his advocacy all the way to Capitol Hill and the White House.

In January 2020, Chris submitted testimony to the legislature in support of critical funds for supportive housing programs after it was requested of him with little notice. He understood the value and impact his voice could have on a policy that had the potential to reach far beyond his community. Then in the

Summer, following the devastation surrounding George Floyd, Chris worked with Sen. Wyden to introduce the CAHOOTS Act (S.764). The Act allows state Medicaid programs to cover certain community-based mobile crisis intervention services for individuals experiencing a mental health or substance-use disorder crisis outside of a facility setting. He was also quick to reach out to OPCA to keep us in the loop as the Act gained traction and attention. Chris saw the opportunity and he capitalized on it to elevate health centers' visibility with local and federal elected officials. As vaccine efforts ramped up in early 2021, White Bird Clinic was quick to lead the mass vaccination efforts for Lane County. Their focus on vaccinating not just their patients but communities across the County drew attention from the White House as White Bird hosted the Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff, Governor Kate Brown, and Representative Peter DeFazio at their vaccination clinic to learn about the organization's work advancing COVID-19 vaccination equity by forming innovative partnerships with community-based organizations. Chris again reached out to OPCA asking for guidance so that his conversations with these three elected officials would align with OPCA and NACHC's policy and advocacy goals. Chris clearly understood the tactical value of sharing the same message time and again through different channels. This is another example of his advocacy prowess and his commitment to the greater health center movement.

*"No matter the context, Chris goes above and beyond and looks to find the best outcome for all involved – truly exemplifying the core values of his health center and OPCA." – Marty Carty, OPCA*

### **CHC Advocacy Award Eva Galvez, MD, Virginia Garcia Memorial Foundation**

Eva Galvez, MD at [Virginia Garcia Memorial Foundation](#), has been nominated for her advocacy work relating to COVID-19's disproportionate impact on communities of color – and more specifically, the Latinx population. In March 2020, the New York Times reached out to Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center to learn more about the 40% positive COVID rates within the Latinx population across Oregon and California. Along with this topic was the fact that migrant and seasonal farmworkers were being denied easy access to PPE, testing services and financial support programs that would have allowed them to remain safe while continuing to work in the fields, nurseries and canneries that ensured the food chains we all relied on stayed open. Eva was ready to tell their story. Meeting with the reporter from the newspaper, she walked them through the numbers, emphasizing not only the barriers this population faced around accessing testing, but also the stigma that surrounded the virus and their community, the fear of getting the test, and the devastation that would surely follow when they received the positive result. The story, published in April 2020, was picked up nationally as far as Baltimore, MD and ultimately resulted in an interview with Telemundo. Eva has continued to lend her voice at every opportunity, appearing on PBS News Hour and speaking to the Washington Post, Oregonian, Pamplin Media, La Campeona, Univision, KGW, KPTV, KOIN, KATU, Street Roots, OregonLive, the Lund Report and even for CHC Chronicles – being interviewed over 150 times between March 2020 and June 2021. She was also the voice for the organization's public service announcements that ran on Spanish radio stations across the region. In addition to these impressive accomplishments, Eva has also partnered with the Oregon Law Center by signing on to a petition to OSHA requesting an amendment to administrative rules amidst the pandemic related to the working and housing conditions of migrant and seasonal farmworkers, and she continues to advocate whenever the need arises.

*"Eva understands the importance of the message and does not hesitate to use her platform to make sure the message is heard far and wide". – Kasi Woidyla, Virginia Garcia Memorial Foundation*

### **Health Equity and Social Justice Award Gladys Rivera, Preventative Health Manager, One Community Health**

Gladys Rivera, Preventative Health Manager at [One Community Health](#), has been nominated for showing the incredible ability to step into a leadership role and adapt the organization's preventative health program to meet the ever-changing needs of our community. Leading a team of Community Health Workers, Gladys has focused One Community Health's outreach efforts to ensure the most vulnerable in our community have knowledge of and access to healthcare and resources. This was evidenced clearly this year through COVID vaccination efforts. Gladys and her team worked closely with growers and food

processors to host onsite vaccine education and testing events. Partnering with one local packinghouse, Gladys and her team, along with our clinical operations staff, hosted vaccinations onsite at the packing house location, inviting growers and their staff to join the event. One memorable day this spring the team vaccinated over 600 farmworkers in an afternoon! Through mid-July, 56% of the vaccines delivered by One Community Health have been administered to BIPOC community members, beating the national average by more than 30%. In addition, more that 70% of COVID vaccine doses delivered by One Community Health went to traditionally underserved populations. Vaccine equity didn't happen without a tremendous effort from Gladys and her team. Throughout the 2021 harvest season in the Gorge, our Outreach Team has held over 50 events and are now predictably out at community sites Monday – Thursday afternoons meeting farm workers at locations they frequent such as our local mercado. Through those events and door to door efforts, Gladys and her team have spoken in person with over 3,000 people about the COVID vaccine. Through radio promotions and weekly radio programs hosted by One Community Health staff, they have reached another 15,000+ community members. Gladys has also partnered with local growers to participate in new hire orientations for seasonal farm workers, offering information about One Community Health services including heat-related illness prevention and COVID education and vaccination information.

*“She demonstrates calm competence in the face of new challenges and uses her professional and lived experiences to plan and lead outreach events that ensure the most marginalized members of our community receive accurate COVID-19 education and resources”. – Jennifer Griffith, One Community Health*

#### **Innovation and Leadership in Transformation Award Gregory Brigham, Ph.C. / CEO, Adapt Integrated Health Care**

Gregory Brigham, CEO of [Adapt Integrated Health Care](#), has been nominated for his deeply held commitment to expanding access to care for low income and medically underserved populations, his insight and innovation for primary care and behavioral health integration, and his advancement of local, state and national cooperation to support equitable access to care. In 2016, Gregory served as the Southwest Oregon Regional Lead on a successful collaboration with non-FQHC clinics and public health authority to address high rates of opioid dependence, opioid-related hospitalizations, and opioid related deaths by establishing office-based medication assisted treatment in critically underserved rural areas of Oregon. Around 2019, and with the support a dedicated Board of Directors, he took steps to reverse engineer primary care into behavioral health at the Adapt's behavioral health campus in Roseburg—thereby increasing access to primary care for individuals at greatest risk of poor health outcomes, including those with trauma histories and/or severe and persistent mental illness. And a year later, under Gregory's goal-oriented leadership, Adapt achieved a significant hurdle in the transition to fully-integrated care with a major technology upgrade to OCHIN/Epic platform to support care coordination and integration of practice management and electronic health record system. He also serves as the President of the Oregon Council of Behavioral Health, Board Chair of the Douglas County Public Health Network, Member of the Roseburg Immediate Needs Ad Hoc Committee, and was involved in the co-deployment of Adapt's Mental Health Crisis Team with the Roseburg Police Department.

*“Gregory is analytical, deliberate and deeply principled. His humility and focused commitment to community service have earned him the trust and respect of many local, state and national partners and a reputation as a catalyst for positive change.” – Janet Tribble, Adapt Integrated Healthcare*

#### **OPCA Lifetime Achievement Award Bob Edward, CFO, Northwest Human Services (NWHHS)**

Bob Edward, CFO of [Northwest Human Services](#), was selected for an OPCA Lifetime Achievement Award due to his unwavering commitment to the advancement of OPCA and development of the new Community Health Center Network of Oregon and has been a leader among health centers in advancing priorities for the benefit of all health centers in Oregon. He has also volunteered his time and energy in serving on a myriad of OPCA committees over the years such as the OPCA Board, Executive, Network Development, APCM Steering, and acting as Chair of the OPCA Finance Committee just to name a few.

In addition to all of his support to OPCA and the health centers of Oregon, Bob serves as CFO of Northwest Human Services, where when the pandemic hit and the future of healthcare was unknown, Bob sought funding sources that could help sustain NWHS in case they had to close. He did this for the employees who work at NWHS and for the community they serve, remarking, "It's what we do, we help those in need." At the FQHC agency level, Bob's abilities to pursue financial goals regardless of obstacles, explain and demonstrate complicated financial models, and support programs and services through multiple emerging payment models has created an environment for the agency to expand services, undertake capital projects, and support their overall mission of creating a healthy community.

*"Bob models behaviors in which we all aspire, as a kind, collaborative, and supportive leader. Bob has been a mentor to our team and has honestly made OPCA a better organization." -Joan Watson-Patko, OPCA*

*"His accomplishments and contributions have improved access to care and CHC sustainability and improved the lives of our patients across the state." - Paul Logan, Northwest Human Services*

### **Honorable Mentions:**

#### **Innovation and Leadership in Transformation Award**

Blain West, CFO / COO, [Neighborhood Health Center](#)

#### **Health Equity and Social Justice Award**

Laura Pedraza, Clinic Manager, [Mosaic Medical](#)

Awardees were unveiled at OPCA's Annual Membership Meeting today. The meeting was held virtually due to COVID-19 related social distancing mandates, but OPCA plans to honor these individuals and teams through additional activities in the coming months.

### **About Oregon's CHCs**

Oregon's community health centers deliver integrated medical, dental and behavioral health services to many of the state's most vulnerable communities through over 270 locations statewide. Over 450,000 Oregonians receive their care at a community health center, including one in six people on the Oregon Health Plan. Over 50% of patients live below the poverty line, and 71% live at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Over 75% of community health centers have clinic sites serving rural communities, 30% of Oregon's community health centers are federally recognized as Health Care for the Homeless locations, and 33% are designated as Migrant Health Centers. Find out more about [Oregon's CHCs here](#).

### **About OPCA:**

OPCA is a non-profit membership association of Oregon's 34 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), including two FQHC Look-Alikes. The organization's mission is to lead the transformation of primary care to achieve health equity for all.