

Petaluma Health Care District Honors Community Leader and Three Nonprofits with Second Annual Community Health Awards

Award Winners and May as Health Care District Month to be Celebrated at District-Hosted Community Partnership Appreciation Event

PETALUMA, Calif., May 23, 2017 – [Petaluma Health Care District](#) (PHCD) is pleased to announce the recipients of its second annual Community Health Awards, recognizing outstanding service benefitting the health and wellness needs of Southern Sonoma County residents. The awards are comprised of three categories – Health Hero, Nonprofit Equity and Golden Heart – and were established by PHCD as a new recognition program in celebration of Health Care District Month in May. For the third straight year, the Petaluma City Council and Sonoma County Board of Supervisors issued its Health Care District Month declarations, recognizing the essential role PHCD plays in Southern Sonoma County and the importance of creating and promoting health and wellness programs, services and initiatives that contribute to the health and vitality of the community.

PHCD will host the upcoming Community Partnership Appreciation Breakfast on May 25 at the Petaluma Women’s Club in gratitude of its local partners, including nonprofits, health and social service providers, community volunteers, businesses, and public agencies. The event will draw more than 100 attendees, including California State Senator Bill Dodd and representatives from the office of Assemblymember Marc Levine.

“The breakfast is our annual event to recognize and celebrate the people and organizations that work tirelessly to address health disparities in our community,” added Faith. “It’s my favorite day of the year at the District because the room is full of our region’s public servants and mission-led organizations proving that Southern Sonoma County makes health a priority and is a place of true community.”

PHCD’s event will also honor the following Community Health Award recipients:

2017 Health Hero Award

Recognizing a person who extends remarkable commitment and exemplary service to benefit the health of individuals and the well-being of communities within Southern Sonoma County.

Winner: Randy Clay, Lead Outreach Specialist, COTS (Committee on the Shelterless)

Clay has played a critical role in the success of Petaluma Sober Circle (PSC), a two-year pilot program that connects residents struggling with homelessness and substance abuse with existing health and social services, such as housing, transportation and behavioral health, to support recovery and sobriety. His capacity to empathize with residents battling chronic inebriation and build lasting and trusting relationships, as well as connect these individuals to local services, has been the key to the program’s success.

Now half-way through its pilot program, PSC has seen tremendous and measurable success, much in part to Clay’s work getting homeless men and women of Petaluma onto the path of sobriety and into housing. Calls for service related to serial inebriates have significantly decreased at both the Petaluma Police and Fire Departments. Transports of chronic inebriates to Petaluma Valley Hospital are down, and dozens of

individuals have completed substance abuse treatment and returned to a supportive shelter or permanent housing site.

2017 Nonprofit Health Equity Award

Recognizing a nonprofit organization making extraordinary contributions to eliminate health disparities within Southern Sonoma County, and honorees each receive a \$5,000 direct donation from PHCD.

Winner: Redwood Empire Food Bank

The Redwood Empire Food Bank's Diabetes Wellness Program (DWP) provides hunger relief by distributing diabetic-appropriate foods, including vitamin-rich fresh fruits and vegetables to low-income adults living at or below the poverty line and who are diagnosed with type-2 diabetes or pre-diabetes. Hundreds of patients access this program, including through referrals from the Petaluma Health Center. PHCD's funds will help DWP purchase nutritious, diabetic-staple foods for the Petaluma residents in the program, supporting their efforts to make heart healthy food choices and regain control of their health.

Winner: Buckelew Programs

Buckelew Programs addresses two critical areas that impact health: behavioral health and the need for affordable supportive housing. Buckelew Programs, which operates the Boulevard Apartments in Petaluma, helps its residents battling mental illness live independently in their home and community by promoting recovery, resilience and hope through services like supportive housing and employment, crisis and ongoing counseling, case management, family support, and wellness programs. The donation from PHCD aims to reduce barriers to maintain and secure housing in Petaluma by covering costs, such as security deposits, one month's rent and other related expenses.

2017 Golden Heart Award

Recognizing individuals or organizations that have taken a "golden" opportunity to promote a HeartSafe Community and save lives.

Winner: Conservation Corps of the North Bay – John Muir Charter School

Cotati-based Conservation Corps of the North Bay, which provides education and job training to local youth in poverty, helped establish John Muir Charter School as a HeartSafe School. In addition to securing an automated external defibrillator (AED) for their campus and certifying staff in CPR, the program offers CPR certification to all its students. The campus also became an American Heart Association Training Site under Healthquest CPR and has certified more than 40 youths this year in CPR/AED and first aid.

Special Recognition: Petaluma City Schools District, Old Adobe Union School District, Cinnabar School District, Waugh School District, Dunham School District, Liberty School District, Two Rock School District, Wilmar School District and Shoreline Unified School District.

Between 2016 and 2017, every school within the PHCD service area and the Shoreline Unified School District became a HeartSafe School. Each campus within the school

districts now have accessible and maintained AEDs, CPR-certified staff and cardiovascular emergency response teams and plans. In addition, every seventh grader in the Petaluma City Schools District receives hands-only CPR training. As Sudden Cardiac Arrest is the number one cause of student-athlete death, partnering with our schools to ensure they are prepared to respond to a cardiac emergency improves safety for all our students and their families.

"We are always impressed by the amazing work of the unsung heroes and nonprofit organizations in our community that are successfully contributing to the health and safety of our residents," said Ramona Faith, PHCD CEO. "Randy and his approach to homeless outreach is absolutely astounding through his way of making connections, giving hope and fueling clients' desires to put in the work to reclaim their lives. The Redwood Empire Food Bank and Buckelew Programs address PHCD community health priorities, such as heart health awareness and education, behavior health, substance abuse, and affordable housing, and their evidence-based programs are showing measurable improvements and are essential in our community. Conservation Corps and all of our school districts have been true HeartSafe Community champions and partners to us in an effort to bring our training and education teams onsite and empower our local youth to learn and implement life-saving skills."

About Petaluma Health Care District

The Petaluma Health Care District (PHCD) is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of the Southern Sonoma County community through leadership, advocacy, support, partnerships and education. Its vision is to foster a healthier community, a thriving hospital and local access to comprehensive health and wellness services. PHCD has served the health and wellness needs of the community for 70 years and is a public agency managed by the community for the community. For more information, please visit www.phcd.org.