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April 6, 2022

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NRHA announces 2022 Rural Health Award recipients

The National Rural Health Association (NRHA) is proud to announce the association's 2022 Rural Health Award recipients. NRHA's Rural Health Awards are given each year to individuals and organizations in the field of rural health who have dedicated their time and talents to improving the health and well-being of others. The winners will be honored during NRHA's 45th Annual Rural Health Conference May 10-13 in Albuquerque, N.M.

"We're extremely proud of this year's winners, particularly because of the extra challenges rural health care providers have faced since the COVID-19 pandemic began," says NRHA CEO Alan Morgan. "They have each made tremendous strides to advance rural health care, and we're confident they will continue to help improve the lives of rural Americans."

Northern Dental Access Center is this year's Outstanding Rural Health Organization. Located in Bemidji, Minn., this nonprofit community clinic provides dental care to low-income people across dozens of counties in rural northwest Minnesota, including enrollees of three Native Nations in the region.

NRHA is excited to announce a two-way tie for this year's Outstanding Rural Health Program Award. **Healthy Hillsboro**, serving Hillsboro, Ill., is a partnership between Southern Illinois University School of Medicine Department of Population Science and Policy, and Hillsboro Area Hospital, that aims to improve the community's social determinants of health to prevent poor health outcomes by using a systems-of-care approach. **Massachusetts General Hospital Rural Medicine Program** in Boston, Mass., is clinical-academic partnership program between Massachusetts General Hospital and Great Plains health systems that strives to improve access to care and support the Indian Health Service's mission to raise the health of its population to the highest possible level.

Jeremiah J. Hodshire has been awarded the Louis Gorin Award for Outstanding Achievement in Rural Health Care. As president and CEO of Hillsdale (Mich.) Hospital, Hodshire is passionate about creating long-term sustainability for rural hospitals. During the pandemic, he served as an advocate, started a podcast, and created partnerships to help vaccinate rural areas for COVID-19, demonstrating strong leadership, determination, and vision.

James Ellis Green, MD, is NRHA's Rural Health Practitioner of the Year. A family and general physician running a solo practice in Gainesville, Ga., Green has been a respected and loved member of the Northeast Georgia Latinx community for more than 30 years. He is known for his

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appreciation of Latin culture and compassionate care of immigrants, and his pandemic response has been equally noteworthy, with roughly 30 percent of his 3,000 patients diagnosed with COVID-19 from May to June 2020.

Curt Mueller, PhD, is NRHA's Outstanding Researcher Award winner. In his role as a senior fellow in public health at the NORC Walsh Center for Health Services Research in Washington, D.C., Mueller has been a dedicated rural health services researcher whose work has had a direct influence on public health policy for more than 35 years. He is also considered a key expert in Medicare reimbursement and its impact on rural communities.

Katy Backes Kozhimannil, PhD, is NRHA's Outstanding Educator Award winner. Her tireless work on and commitment to teaching and mentoring about health equity and rural health issues is apparent in her role as professor at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. As director of the University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center, she also helps lead, energize, and support rural health research with a policy-relevant focus across a range of issues.

Rebekka Delgado is this year's NRHA/John Snow Inc. Student Leadership Award winner. A fourth-year medical student at East Tennessee State University Quillen College of Medicine, Delgado has been an advocate for migrant, underserved, and rural populations since her time in undergraduate studies. Multiple populations, regions, and individual patients have already benefitted from her many contributions to rural medicine.

Julia D. Interrante has earned the NRHA/John Snow Inc. Student Achievement Award. A doctoral student and researcher at the University of Minnesota Rural Health Research Center, Interrante is nearing the end of her doctoral studies with a dissertation on postpartum health and a particular focus on rural residents. Her work exemplifies the power of student-led innovation that shapes the work of a research center.

Carrie Henning-Smith, PhD, is NRHA's Volunteer of the Year. Henning-Smith serves as chair of NRHA's Journal of Rural Health and a member of the Health Equity Council. She is a former Rural Health Fellow and always willing to present to new classes. She reviews abstracts for, presents at, and helps plan NRHA events, including the association's Health Equity Conference, Rural Health Policy Institute, and Annual Rural Health Conference. She also serves on NRHA's Nominations Committee and Government Affairs Committee.

Dale Quinney is the recipient of this year's President's Award. Selected for the award by NRHA President Beth O'Connor, Quinney was executive director of the Alabama Rural Health Association and has dedicated his career to educating and saving rural areas of the state. "Dale impressed on me the need to convey information to our elected officials regarding everything rural communities do to support the United States as a whole," O'Connor says. "He helped me understand how rural communities need to stop begging for resources that came from our land and start communicating how rural supports urban."

About NRHA

NRHA is a nonprofit organization working to improve the health and well-being of rural Americans and provide leadership on rural health issues through advocacy, communications, education, and research. NRHA's membership is made up of diverse individuals and organizations, all of whom share the common bond of an interest in rural health.

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