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### **NRHA proudly honors Cobbs' efforts on behalf of rural Americans**

The National Rural Health Association (NRHA) will honor Hartzell Cobbs with its President's Award at the association's Annual Rural Health Conference May 4.

Cobbs has served as executive director of the Mountain States Group (MSG) for 16 years. The corporation has 115 employees with an annual budget of more than \$13 million.

MSG's rural health focus includes the Health Resources and Services Administration's Rural Hospital Performance Improvement (RHPI) program, the Idaho Area Health Education Center and two National Institutes of Health grants. RHPI has provided tailored technical assistance to 112 rural hospitals. MSG sponsors many additional programs that directly impact the health and well-being of individuals living in diverse rural settings.

"I am humbled and emotional about this selection," Cobbs said. "Since 1974, Mountain States Group has worked in hundreds of communities and rural hospitals both in Idaho and across the nation. Being chosen for this award has caused me to reflect upon how fortunate I am to be a part of an organization like Mountain States Group."

Cobbs is also an adjunct professor at Boise State University's graduate school of health sciences and authored the book *Thanatos and the Sage*, about aging and dying in America.

"Hartzell's leadership with the RHPI program ensures its continuing success in strengthening the Delta region's rural hospitals," NRHA President Beth Landon said. "What many people don't realize is that Mountain States Group is far more than rural health in the Mississippi Delta; Hartzell touches lives locally, nationally and internationally."

NRHA's Annual Rural Health Conference will attract 900 professionals and students to Miami Beach, Fla. In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year, it is the nation's largest gathering of rural health professionals.

NRHA is a nonprofit organization working to improve the health and well-being of rural Americans and providing leadership on rural health issues through advocacy, communications, education and research. The NRHA membership is made up of 18,000 diverse individuals and organizations, all of whom share the common bond of an interest in rural health.

**[www.RuralHealthWeb.org](http://www.RuralHealthWeb.org)**