

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Beth Fox, Associate VP of Communications
(217) 541-7313
bfox@iphca.org

IPHCA Announces 2024 Awards of Excellence Recipients

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., October 18, 2024 – The Illinois Primary Health Care Association (IPHCA) is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2024 “Awards of Excellence.” Each year, six awards are given to health care leaders recognizing their longstanding leadership to community health centers. This year, due to an outstanding pool of awardees, IPHCA is pleased to present eight awards.

DANNY K. DAVIS ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

U.S. Congressman Danny K. Davis is truly the champion of the community health center movement. This is IPHCA’s most prestigious award, and candidates must have rendered outstanding service to the community health center movement for at least 10 years. The recipient of this award is dedicated, selfless and inspiring as a leader in his or her community.

The 2024 award recipient is [Iris Wesley](#), Chief Executive Officer at SIU Center for Family Medicine.

GEORGE M. O’NEILL LEADERSHIP AWARD

As one of the founders of the Illinois Primary Health Care Association, George O’Neill’s leadership and vision have paved the way for the Association as a strong advocating body that links health centers across the state. His active involvement on the county, state and national levels has set the standard for future leaders. The recipients of this award are visionaries who empower and inspire their employees every day.

The 2024 award recipient is [Terry White](#), Chief Strategic and Operations Officer at Crusader Community Health.

RAMONA LOPEZ COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER EMPLOYEE AWARD

It is highly unusual to find a person who has committed their entire career to one organization and its mission. For this reason, IPHCA proudly recognizes Ramona Lopez who dedicated her 22-year career to furthering the mission of Chicago Family Health Center before retiring in 2000. Beginning as a family nurse practitioner and working her way up to executive director, Ramona fought to assure that quality health care be a right, not a privilege, regardless of an individual’s ability to pay.

The 2024 award recipient is [Tammy Spooner](#), Vice President of Revenue Cycle and Collection Management, VNA Health Center.

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CLINICIAN DEVOTION AWARD

Quality providers are the backbone of any community health center. Every day they must continually balance the pressures of caring for the many in need, while assuring that each individual is treated with respect and provided excellent care. This award recognizes a special individual who faces this challenge every day in an effort to reduce the barriers that exist to health care in his or her community.

The 2024 award recipients are [Alejandro Clavier](#), MD, Site Director at Esperanza Health Centers and [Jacqueline McSparron](#), Site Medical Director at Erie Family Health Centers, Inc.

CONSUMER BOARD DEDICATION AWARD

The Consumer Board Dedication Award is presented to a Community Health Center consumer board representative who exemplifies a high level of interest in, and dedication to, the delivery of primary health care services and the communities in which these services are provided.

The 2024 award recipients are [Mike Chico](#), Board Chair at Esperanza Health Centers and [Rev. Luis Reyes](#), Board Chair at PrimeCare Health.

IPHCA CLINICAL QUALITY CHAMPION AWARD

Under the guidance of IPHCA senior leadership and Board, the IPHCA Clinical Services Team has been instrumental in fostering clinical quality and workforce development infrastructure at IPHCA. Their services have been recognized by the joint commission, UIC School of Public Health and Illinois Academy of Family Physicians. Individuals should be visionaries who empower and inspire their employees/colleagues for accomplishing high levels of achievement of health center's quality improvement goals.

The 2024 award recipient is [Erin Howes](#), Senior Director of Quality and Practice Transformation, PrimeCare Health.

"We are thrilled to recognize these outstanding individuals," said Ollie Idowu, President and CEO at IPHCA. "It is a great honor each year to acknowledge the leadership we witness every day at our member organizations. Congratulations to each awardee."

See the full list of past awardees on the IPHCA website at www.iphca.org/awards/

About Illinois Primary Health Care Association (IPHCA) – IPHCA is a non-profit trade association that represents community health centers throughout the state. Illinois' 55 community health centers provide comprehensive, integrated primary care including medical, behavioral, and oral health care to roughly 1.5 million patients annually across more than 450 service sites in underserved rural, urban, and suburban communities. www.ipcha.org

###