

Petaluma Health Care District Honors Community Leader and Two Nonprofits with First Annual Community Health Awards

PHCD Also Celebrates 70 Years Serving Southern Sonoma County with Official Health Care District Month Declaration and Participation in Community Events

PETALUMA, Calif., May 11, 2016 – [Petaluma Health Care District](#) (PHCD) is pleased to announce the recipients of its inaugural Community Health Awards, recognizing outstanding service benefitting the health and wellness needs of Southern Sonoma County residents. The two awards – the Health Care Hero Award, honoring an individual, and the Nonprofit Equity Award, honoring a nonprofit – were established by PHCD as a new recognition program in celebration of Health Care District Month in May. The Petaluma City Council and Sonoma County Board of Supervisors issued its Health Care District Month declarations on May 2 and May 4 respectively, 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 is proud to honor Petaluma Police Corporal William Baseman as its 2016 Health Care Hero. As well, PHCD is thrilled to award the Nonprofit Equity Award to two organizations in recognition of the impact of three critically important programs – Petaluma People Services Center's (PPSC) Meals on Wheels program and United Way of the Wine Country's Schools of Hope and School Readiness Backpacks programs. The Nonprofit Equity Awards include a direct donation from PHCD to the honorees. Meals on Wheels, earning the top prize, will receive \$5,000, and the Schools of Hope and School Readiness Backpacks programs will collectively receive \$1,500. PHCD will formally present these recipients with their awards at PHCD's Community Partner Appreciation breakfast on May 26.

The Health Care Hero Award was created to recognize 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. Corporal Baseman is credited for bringing attention to the public health issue associated with chronic inebriants and those suffering from mental illness and homelessness. His active engagement and partnership with community stakeholders and agencies led to the development of [Petaluma Sober Circle](#), a newly-launched services program that addresses the needs of the city's homeless population through outreach, transportation, and access to programs and housing to support recovery and sobriety.

The Nonprofit Equity Award honors an organization making extraordinary contributions to eliminate health disparities within the local community. PPSC's Meals on Wheels program provides home-delivered hot meals to Petaluma's most economically vulnerable senior population. Meals on Wheels is a care-oriented program that includes health assessments and counseling, dietary accommodations and nutritional food.

United Way of the Wine Country's Schools of Hope program is an early-grade literacy initiative that helps children build the reading and critical thinking skills they need to become productive, educated adults. Launched in 2010, the initiative currently has 58 volunteer tutors serving approximately 50 students at six different Petaluma school campuses. The School Readiness Backpacks program provides backpacks containing more than 80 activities for parents to teach essential school subjects, such as reading and math, to their child at home. The program, which serves over 300 Petaluma children annually, has distributed 2,500 backpacks throughout Sonoma County since September 2015.

”Corporal Baseman and the PPSC Meals and Wheels, Schools of Hope and School Readiness Backpacks programs embody the core purpose behind our award program’s mission – which is to recognize those who identify and address health discrepancies and lead-by-example in making health a priority,” said Ramona Faith, CEO of PHCD. “Southern Sonoma County is a place of true community that is fostering creative and innovative services and programs to improve the health – and lives – of our homeless, aging seniors and low-income children.”

Celebrating 70 years and in honor of May being declared as Health Care District Month, PHCD is sponsoring and exhibiting at various local events. These events include:

- [Petaluma Kids Gran Fondo](#) – May 7
- Community screening of documentary film [Paper Tigers](#) – May 12
- [Sonoma County Backroad Challenge](#) – May 22

PHCD will culminate this month-long celebration with a breakfast in appreciation of its community partners. The breakfast will be held on May 26 at Hotel Petaluma. PHCD will also share information throughout the month on social media via its [Facebook page](#).

“It’s an honor to receive this formal Health Care District Month recognition for the second year in a row. We see this proclamation as a platform to remind the community that we are here every day advocating for the health and well-being of Petaluma-area residents,” said Faith. “For 70 years, we have believed and still continue to believe that good health is a state of complete physical, mental and societal well-being, and that it takes a collaborative effort to keep people educated on healthy habits and choices, as well as to provide access to high-quality medical care. We hope that Health Care District Month will encourage our residents to learn more about our District’s work, as well as look into options for furthering personal and broader community health and wellness.”

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.

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