



2021 CHAMPS Awardees

Virtual Awards Ceremony | Monday, November 22, 2021

Outstanding Advocate of the Underserved Award
Shawna Yates, DO, Chief Executive Officer
Southwest Montana Community Health Center, MT

Throughout her career, Dr. Shawna Yates has embodied the mission of community health by caring and advocating for the most vulnerable patients in her community. During the pandemic, Dr. Yates' early advocacy for nursing home patients successfully led statewide efforts to prioritize and care for this vulnerable population, and nursing home patients and staff were some of the first to be tested in Montana using the resources of health centers across the state. In Butte, Dr. Yates also ensured that nursing home patients and staff were among the first to be vaccinated.

Born in Butte, Montana, Dr. Yates made her way back to her hometown health center as soon as she finished her residency. She began serving at Southwest Montana Community Health Center as the Medical Director in 2007, focusing her practice on geriatric and nursing home patients. In the middle of the pandemic, Dr. Yates stepped up to the role of Chief Executive Officer while continuing to see patients. First and foremost, Dr. Yates is a medical provider which has assisted her as CEO as her perspective has enriched the health center and her work with health centers across the state.

In addition to her advocacy for and work with patients in nursing homes, Dr. Yates led Southwest Montana CHC's efforts to build community partnerships and share responsibilities during the pandemic. The health center took on the role of the community's testing center, allowing the hospital to focus its effort on treating the sickest patients. Also, due to her work, Southwest Montana CHC became the first clinic in the state to integrate pain management and substance use disorder services into primary care. Dr. Yates serves as a clinical faculty instructor for the University of Washington School of Medicine, has been a statewide trainer for Know Your Dose, and has mentored healthcare professionals at health centers across Montana.

For her embodiment of the CHC mission and dedication to serving vulnerable populations, we are pleased to present Dr. Shawna Yates with the CHAMPS Outstanding Advocate of the Underserved Award.