



# Winter 2024 Quarterly Newsletter

*Published February 2024*

## Celebrating CHAMPS 2023 Awardees



On January 22, 2024, CHAMPS was pleased to recognize five individuals for their exceptional contributions and unwavering dedication to the health center community. These awardees exemplify the essence of the Community Health Center Movement in Region VIII for their impactful advocacy and inspiring leadership.

*Congratulations to the 2023 CHAMPS Awardees!*

### **Exceptional Administrative Leadership Award**

Betsy Seglem, Chief Executive Officer,  
[Glacier Community Health Center](#), MT

### **Exceptional Board Leadership Award**

Arthur Yarbrough, Jr., Board Member,  
[Pueblo Community Health Center](#), CO

### **Exceptional Clinical Leadership Award**

Stephanie Low, MD, Chief Executive & Medical Officer,  
[Community Health Service Inc.](#), MN/ND

### **Outstanding Advocate of the Underserved Award**

Ross Brooks, Former Chief Executive Officer,  
[Mountain Family Health Centers](#), CO

### **Stanley J. Brasher Legacy Award**

John Felton, Retired Chief Executive Officer,  
[RiverStone Health](#), MT

*To learn more and view recordings from the virtual ceremony, visit the [CHAMPS Awards](#) webpage. A Call for Nominations for the 2024 CHAMPS Awards Ceremony is anticipated to open in early summer.*

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### Honoring Maureen Hong

On Saturday, February 17, 2024, Maureen Hong passed away peacefully in her home. Maureen was the Executive Director of [Community Health Association of Mountain/Plains States](#) (CHAMPS) and [Colorado Community Health Network](#) (CCHN) from 1991 until her retirement in 1996. Maureen was steadfast in her belief that access to health care is a right, not a privilege, and used her clinical expertise (as a certified/licensed NP and PA) and administrative acumen for the betterment of Region VIII Community Health Centers and the patients and communities they served. Maureen will be remembered for her many contributions to the CHC Movement and Region VIII, and her commitment to improving people's lives and ensuring their wellbeing. She will be greatly missed.



Read [Maureen's obituary](#) to learn more about her life.

### CHAMPS Board of Directors Meeting Highlights

The annual CHAMPS Board of Directors meeting was held on Monday, January 22, 2024. Attendees were joined by Jim Macrae, Associate Administrator of the [Bureau of Primary Health Care](#) (BPHC), and Dr. Kyu Rhee, President and CEO of the [National Association of Community Health Centers](#) (NACHC), who provided federal and national updates and answered participant questions. During the meeting, CHAMPS leadership and members of the [CHAMPS Executive Committee](#) provided progress reports and discussed happenings of the past year. Thank you to those who attended this year's meeting; we are grateful for your continued support.

To view the Board Meeting Packet, please visit the [CHAMPS Board Resources](#) webpage.

#### Thank You, [CHAMPS Members](#)!

CHAMPS would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the Region VIII health centers and State Primary Care Associations (SPCAs) for their support of CHAMPS through 2023-2024 Organizational Membership, enabling us to deliver high-quality programs and services.

Learn more about the [Benefits of CHAMPS Organizational Membership](#).  
The CHAMPS 2024-2025 membership year begins April 1, 2024;  
more information coming soon.

### Now Available: NWRPCA/CHAMPS Fall Conference Session Recordings

The [2023 NWRPCA/CHAMPS Fall Primary Care Conference](#), held in October 2023 in Seattle, WA, brought together hundreds of individuals from across Region VIII, Region X, and the nation. Session materials and recordings of all conference sessions, including the Opening Plenary and Lunch Plenary, are now available to conference attendees in the [NWRPCA Learning Vault](#).



To review highlights from the Fall 2023 Annual Conference, please visit the [CHAMPS Annual Primary Care Conference](#) webpage.

**Save the Dates:** The [2024 CHAMPS/NWRPCA Annual Primary Care Conference](#) will be held in Denver, CO, October 26-29, 2024.

### 2023 Region VIII T/TA Needs Assessment Results

CHAMPS sincerely appreciates the 426 Region VIII health center leaders who took the time to complete the Fall 2023 Region VIII Health Center Training & Technical Assistance (T/TA) Needs Assessment. This valuable data, representing 100% of the region's health centers, will help CHAMPS and the five Region VIII State Primary Care Associations (SPCAs) gain a greater understanding of the region's top concerns and challenges, the most needed T/TA topics, and other relevant T/TA information.

Highlights of the region-wide results include:

#### Top Five Challenges/Concerns:

- ★ Retention of Staff
- ★ Recruitment of Staff
- ★ Competitive Compensation Packages
- ★ Staff Burnout
- ★ Financial Sustainability

#### Top Five Factors Impacting Health Centers in 2023:

- ★ Escalated Cost of Living
- ★ Competition for Qualified Staff
- ★ Staff Resignations
- ★ Housing Shortage
- ★ Financial Stability

#### Top Five Needed T/TA Topics:

- ★ Burnout Prevention/Resiliency Training
- ★ Leadership Development/Staff Empowerment
- ★ Supervisor/Manager Skills Training
- ★ Leadership Development/Relationship & Trust Building
- ★ Funding to Support Staff that Address SDOH

Questions? Contact the CHAMPS [Workforce Development and Member Services Director](#).

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEWS

*Encouraging successful careers and strong, cutting-edge organizations by providing live and archived continuing education, recruitment, and retention tools, and the latest information on current trends and statistics. Learn more [here](#).*

### Coming Soon: 2024 Region VIII Health Center Salary Survey

Every two years, CHAMPS and the Region VIII State Primary Care Associations undertake the Region VIII Health Center Salary, Benefits, Turnover, and Vacancy Survey. Planning for the 2024 iteration of this project is underway, and data collection will begin on Wednesday, March 13, 2024. Those who will be filling out the survey are encouraged to register for the free CHAMPS [How to Complete the 2024 Region VIII Salary Survey Tool](#) webinar scheduled for Thursday, March 14, 2024 from 12:00-1:30 PM MT / 1:00-2:30 PM CT (a recording will be made available as soon as possible after the live event). More information is being emailed to salary survey contacts at all Region VIII health centers, and additional details about the survey and resulting reports can be found on the [CHAMPS Publications](#) webpage.

Questions? Contact the CHAMPS [Workforce Development and Member Services Director](#).

#### Is your Region VIII health center or Primary Care Association (PCA) hiring?

Post your open positions on the free CHAMPS [Job Opportunities Bank \(JOB\)](#).

To advertise an opening or update a current position, please contact the CHAMPS [Programs Coordinator, Health Center Workforce](#).

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEWS, *Continued*

### Register Now: CHAMPS 2024 Next Level Skills Training

Registration is now open for the [CHAMPS 2024 Beyond CORE Competencies: Next Level Skills for Health Center Supervisors and Managers](#) training (Next Level Skills). This six-week virtual program will be facilitated by Lisa Mouscher, CEO and Lead Consultant at Sogence Training and Consulting, and is designed to foster a highly interactive learning experience with a dynamic, hands-on approach. Sessions will cover a variety of topics, allowing attendees to dive deeper into the best practices, knowledge, and skills needed to be a great manager. This training is intended for managers and supervisors with a minimum of 18 months of supervisory experience or as a follow-up for those who have attended the CHAMPS Core Competencies for Health Center Supervisors and Managers training.

The course will take place over six Wednesday mornings from April 24-May 29, 2024, meeting from 9:00-11:30 AM MT / 10:00 AM-12:30 PM CT; the first meeting on April 24 will last 30 minutes longer, until 12:00 PM MT / 1:00 PM CT. Registration will close on Monday, March 25, 2024, or when the course is full. A limited number of registration scholarships are still available for participants from Utah and Wyoming.

Save the Dates:  
**BEYOND CORE COMPETENCIES: NEXT LEVEL SKILLS FOR HEALTH CENTER SUPERVISORS & MANAGERS**

Lead Trainer: Lisa Mouscher, CEO & Lead Consultant, Sogence Training & Consulting

The "Next Level Skills" training is a step up from the CORE Competencies Training, allowing health center managers and supervisors to delve deeper into the best practices, knowledge, and skills needed to be a great manager. This six-part, virtual course begins with a review of crucial skills needed in the world of hiring, coaching, retaining, and managing teams. Then, participants will move to higher-level topics relating to conflict mitigation, engaging with a diverse workforce, and strengthening decision processes.

**Wednesday Mornings Online**  
April 24 - May 29, 2024

For more information, including registration opening in early 2024, please visit:  
[www.CHAMPSonline.org/events-training/leadership-learning-opportunities#NL3](http://www.CHAMPSonline.org/events-training/leadership-learning-opportunities#NL3)

"It was excellent!"  
"I loved the content overall, but the breakout groups were so nice to hear that the challenges I am having are the same as other areas in other states. It was comforting in a strange way."  
"Tina pulls the course together well. Her presentation is clear and moving and she is a great role model."  
"This course would have really helped me avoid a lot of initial management mistakes had I been offered the chance prior to being in the managerial role."

*For more information, please visit the [CHAMPS Leadership Learning Opportunities](#) webpage. CHAMPS thanks [Colorado Community Health Network \(CCHN\)](#), [Montana Primary Care Association \(MPCA\)](#), [Association for Utah Community Health \(AUCH\)](#), and [Wyoming Primary Care Association \(WYPCA\)](#) for their support of this course.*

### Don't Miss: Discounted Employment Screening Services

Region VIII health centers that are current [CHAMPS Organizational Members](#) are eligible to sign up for the [Region VIII Health Center Preferred Pricing Program \(PPP\) for Employment Screening Services](#). This program is offered in collaboration with ScreeningOne, a global background screening company, and provides access to a selection of employment screening services at discounts of approximately 20-25% off regular rates.

*Review the [Program Price Sheet](#) and visit the [CHAMPS website](#) for more details.*

### BPHC Workforce Well-Being TA Opportunities

In late 2022 and early 2023, the [Bureau of Primary Health Care \(BPHC\)](#) conducted a workforce well-being survey with health centers nationwide. Based on results from the survey, BPHC and [John Snow, Inc. \(JSI\)](#) have launched the BPHC [Workforce Well-being TA Initiative](#) which provides a broad range of information including newsletters, webinars, action planning, personalized coaching tailored to your health center's requirements, and more!

*Stay informed about the latest developments and Workforce Well-being Technical Assistance (TA) opportunities by subscribing to the [initiative's newsletter](#).*

#### Need help expanding your organization's social media presence?

View the [Social Media Content Development Tips for Community Health Centers and Primary Care Associations](#) resource on the CHAMPS website.

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## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEWS, *Continued*

### NIMAA Awarded PBHE Grant to Boost Clinical Training in Colorado

*Submitted by Ali Murray, National Institute for Medical Assistant Advancement*



[National Institute for Medical Assistant Advancement](#) (NIMAA) recently received a [Practice-Based Health Education](#) (PBHE) grant through the [Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment](#) (CDPHE). Executed in October 2023, the two-year grant will allow NIMAA to increase clinical, practice-based training opportunities for those looking for a healthcare career as a Medical Assistant in the state of Colorado.

Over the next two years, NIMAA will identify new and existing clinical sites to partner with and expand the placement locations available to students. Through the use of the Readiness to Train Assessment Tool (RTAT), NIMAA will incorporate evaluation into its grant and examine the effectiveness of its program through assessments administered prior and after expansion efforts. NIMAA will strategically enhance the visibility of its educational training program and clinical partners through marketing and communications efforts funded through the PBHE grant.

NIMAA will also develop two training courses for clinical partner preceptors through the PBHE grant. The first will focus on Preceptor Effectiveness and Wellness, with an emphasis on ensuring that preceptors have the skills, knowledge, and abilities to be confident and effective in their roles. The second will emphasize the principles and importance of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) in the role of a preceptor.

Through grants like the PBHE, NIMAA is able to continue to serve students, expand clinical site partnerships, and provide affordable, accessible healthcare training to those seeking healthcare careers.

*To learn more about the Practice-Based Health Education grant, please visit this [CDPHE](#) webpage.*

*To learn more about NIMAA programs and services, please visit the [NIMAA](#) website.*

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## MOUNTAIN/PLAINS CLINICAL NETWORK (MPCN) NEWS

*Providing professional, administrative, and educational support to all clinicians who practice in Community, Migrant, and Homeless Health Centers in Region VIII to ensure the delivery of the highest possible quality of care to poor and underserved populations. Learn more [here](#).*

### Coming Soon: Region VIII PCMH Virtual Training

With support from the [Health Resources and Services Administration](#) (HRSA), the [National Committee for Quality Assurance](#) (NCQA) is offering a virtual training focused on Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Recognition tailored for health centers in Region VIII. This training event, hosted by the [Montana Primary Care Association](#) (MPCA), will consist of two courses: *NCQA's Introduction to PCMH Program: Foundational Concepts of the Medical Home* and *NCQA's Advanced PCMH Program: Mastering the Medical Home Transformation*.

This training will be provided through a series of recorded lectures interspersed with interactive live webinars for Q&A, content review, and engagement with the training faculty. Sessions for each course will take place throughout March, are open to all Region VIII health centers, and there is no cost to attend.

*To view the agenda and register for the introductory course, please visit this [registration](#) webpage. For more information about the advanced course, please visit this [registration](#) webpage.*

### Register Now: CHAMPS 2024 Spanish Language Trainings

Registration is now open for the [CHAMPS 2024 Spanish Language for Healthcare Providers](#) trainings. Four different Spanish language courses will be offered in partnership with Rios Associates. Trainings will be held virtually from 8:00 AM-12:00 PM MT / 9:00 AM-1:00 PM CT each day with optional tutoring offered in the afternoon. The traditional [Medical Spanish Language Course for Beginner and Intermediate Speakers](#) will be held over four half-days: Thursday, April 11; Friday, April 12; Thursday, April 18; and Friday, April 19, 2024.

CHAMPS will also host three courses that will be held over two-half-days each:

- ★ [Spanish Language for Oral Health Providers](#) is intended for dentists, dental hygienists, and other clinical dental personnel with beginner Spanish language skills. This session will occur Monday, April 8 and Tuesday, April 9, 2024.
- ★ [Spanish Language for Behavioral Health Providers](#) is designed for psychologists, psychiatrists, mental health counselors, social workers, addiction counselors, and other behavioral health personnel with intermediate to advanced Spanish language skills. This course will take place on Monday, April 15 and Tuesday, April 16, 2024.
- ★ [Medical Spanish Language for Advanced Spanish Speakers](#) is targeted towards physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and other clinical personnel with advanced Spanish language skills. Sessions for this course will occur on Monday, April 22 and Tuesday, April 23, 2024.

Continuing medical education (CME) credits are available. CHAMPS [Organizational Members](#) qualify for discounted registration fees. Registration will close on Friday, March 29, 2024, or when courses are full.

*For additional course details and registration information, please visit the CHAMPS [Upcoming Live Distance Learning Events](#) webpage. Questions? Contact the CHAMPS [Programs Coordinator, Population Health](#).*

#### Now Available: CHAMPS 2023 Maternal Health Learning Series Recordings

Session I: [Reducing Stigma in Pregnant People with Substance Use Disorders](#)

Session II: [Perinatal Mental Health Awareness, Screening and Treatment](#)

Session III: [The Role of Health Centers in Addressing Maternity Care Deserts](#)

### Stay Connected with Migrant Clinicians Network

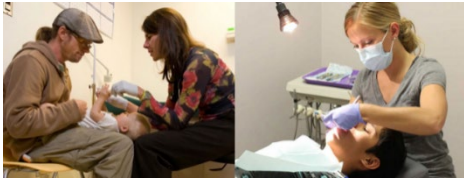
*Submitted by Claire Hutkins Seda, Migrant Clinicians Network*

[Migrant Clinicians Network](#) (MCN) has a vast variety of [resources](#) and [education](#) to support your work as you provide care to diverse underserved patients like migrants and agricultural workers. Here are a few ways to hear about their newest offerings and opportunities:

- ★ [Subscribe](#) to their blog, [Clinician to Clinician](#). Posts are available in English and Spanish.
- ★ [Join their mailing list](#) to receive updates of upcoming webinars and resources. Emails are available in English and Spanish.
- ★ [Subscribe](#) to their free in-print clinical publication, [Streamline](#), which arrives four times a year.
- ★ Connect on social media to learn about emerging issues, upcoming events, and news. MCN is on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [X/Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

### Medical-Dental Integration Possibilities with RoMoNOH

*Submitted by Cherith Flowerday, Rocky Mountain Network of Oral Health*



What is medical-dental integration? According to the [Rocky Mountain Network of Oral Health](#) (RoMoNOH) Project, there are numerous models of medical-dental integration (MDI) because "one size does not fit all." All models aim to "bring the mouth back into the body" and increase medical and dental providers' awareness of the oral-systemic health relationship. RoMoNOH is funded by the HRSA [Maternal and Child Health Bureau](#) and is one of three regional projects that are part of the [Networks for Oral Health Integration](#). All three projects aim to reduce dental decay and promote oral health equity.

Over the last four years, the RoMoNOH Project and State Primary Care Association (SPCA) practice transformation coaches in [Montana](#), [Wyoming](#), [Colorado](#), and [Arizona](#) have been working with community health centers in their states to determine what MDI model is the best fit and help them implement it. All models focus on providing preventive oral health services at the medical visits of young children including caries risk assessment, fluoride varnish application, dental referral coordination, oral health anticipatory guidance, and oral health goal setting. Three MDI models are being implemented including oral health services provided by a medical provider (or delegated team member), a dental hygienist embedded into the medical team, or a hybrid of both. Characteristics impacting which MDI model the health centers chose include clinic size, location, capacity of co-located services, access to outside dental services, reimbursement, dental hygienist scope of practice, and leader/provider preferences.

Over time, an oral health environmental policy scan of each participating state paved the way for changes and new MDI model opportunities. For example, as of 2021, Wyoming medical and dental encounters can now be reimbursed on the same day, broadening the MDI models that are possible. The RoMoNOH Project hopes to raise awareness about the various medical-dental integration models and the potential of change through policy work, while also encouraging health centers to take an initial step to promote oral health for patients.

*For more information about the RoMoNOH Project, please contact [RoMoNOH@dhha.org](mailto:RoMoNOH@dhha.org).*

#### **Don't Miss: Updated Information Available on the CHAMPS [Immunization Resources](#) Webpage**

CHAMPS has compiled a curated collection of resources that address adult and child/adolescent routine vaccinations, the influenza vaccine, the COVID-19 vaccine, and vaccine hesitancy.

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## HEALTH EQUITY NEWS

*Assisting Region VIII health centers and Primary Care Associations in pursuing health equity and addressing health disparities by affecting the social determinants of health in their communities. Learn more [here](#).*

### NACHC 2024 Conference for Agricultural Worker Health

The [National Association of Community Health Centers](#) (NACHC) [Conference for Agricultural Worker Health](#), a conference dedicated solely to the health and well-being of America's migratory and seasonal agricultural workers and their families, will be held in Atlanta, Georgia from April 23-25, 2024. This conference brings together leaders in migrant health to learn from each other to improve the health and well-being of this population.

*To register for the event, please visit NACHC's [registration](#) page.*

## HEALTH EQUITY NEWS, *Continued*

### Open Enrollment Closes with Historic Participation Numbers

On January 24, 2024 the Biden-Harris Administration announced 21.3 million people selected an [Affordable Care Act](#) (ACA) Health Insurance Marketplace plan during the landmark 2024 Open Enrollment Period. A breakdown of this number reveals five million new enrollees and 16 million people who renewed their coverage. This year, the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) enabled four in five [HealthCare.gov](#) customers to find health care coverage for \$10 or less per month for plan year 2024 after subsidies. The uninsured rate is at a historic low of 7.9% according to the most recent whole-year survey data from the Current Population Survey, which covers through the end of plan year 2022. Additionally, the administration issued almost \$100 million in Navigator Awards, allowing organizations to hire staff trained to help consumers find affordable, comprehensive health coverage.

*Read the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [press release](#) to learn more.*

### Don't Miss: Upcoming Virtual Health Equity Course with RMPHTC

[Rocky Mountain Public Health Training Center](#) (RMPHTC) is hosting a virtual introductory course on health equity titled *Health Equity: A Guide for Public Health Practitioners*. The course content aims to prepare participants to close gaps in health status that result from systemic, avoidable, and unjust policies and practices that create barriers to opportunity for certain people. This course uses a flipped-classroom approach where participants will work through course content independently and then connect with a small cohort of peers. This course will run from March 5-April 9, 2024, and participants will be required to virtually attend six live sessions on Tuesdays from 2:00-3:00 PM MT / 3:00-4:00 PM CT. The training is free to participants in Region VIII.

*To learn more and register, please visit this [registration](#) webpage.*

### An Upcoming Learning Opportunity & New Resource from HOP

*Submitted by Aba Anison-Amoo, Health Outreach Partners*



[Health Outreach Partners](#) (HOP) is inviting health center employees to join an upcoming online learning collaborative focused on transportation and access to care. Participants will learn how to determine the impact of patient transportation barriers on the productivity and finances of their health center, and how to utilize a quality improvement toolkit to improve on current transportation solutions. Sessions will take place over four Tuesday mornings from March 12-April 2, 2024, meeting from 11:00 AM-12:00 PM MT / 12:00-1:00 PM CT.

HOP recently released a bonus episode to its eight-part podcast series, *The COVID-19 Pandemic and What it Taught Us: Collective Trauma and Moving Forward*. In the bonus episode, *Rising Strong: Community Resilience in the Face of Long COVID*, HOP's program manager, Aba Anison-Amoo, invites four speakers from [MHP Salud](#) to dive deeper into the topic of Long COVID. The speakers discuss the importance of raising awareness about the associated challenges and impacts of Long COVID to promote better health outcomes.

*To learn more and register for the HOP learning collaborative, please visit this [registration](#) webpage.*

*To listen to the bonus episode and other episodes from the podcast, please visit this [HOP](#) webpage.*

**Stay Up to Date on All Things Region VIII – Sign Up for CHAMPS Communications**  
[Health Equity Digest](#) [Monthly JOB Email](#) [MPCN Minute](#) [Quarterly Newsletter](#) [Workforce Focus](#)



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## HEALTH EQUITY NEWS, *Continued*

### NHCHC 2024 Conference & Policy Symposium

The [National Health Care for the Homeless \(NHCHC\) Conference & Policy Symposium](#) is the country's largest gathering of practitioners of homeless health care, medical respite care, advocates, people with lived experience of homelessness, and researchers about homelessness. The conference offers tremendous opportunity to learn, grow professionally, reconnect with colleagues, and make new connections with the community. The symposium will be held in Phoenix, Arizona from May 13-16, 2024. The theme for this year is *Toward Access and Equality: Embracing an Equitable Approach to Health Care*.

*To register for the event, please visit NHCHC's [registration](#) webpage.*

### Coming Soon: Virtual Learning Opportunities with NCECE

*Submitted by Arielle Mather, National Center for Equitable Care for Elders*



In the upcoming months, the [National Center for Equitable Care for Elders \(NCECE\)](#) is set to host two virtual events focused on older adult health. The first event, a webinar titled *Navigating Polypharmacy Management in Older Adults*, will take place Tuesday, March 19, 2024, meeting from 12:00-1:00 PM MT / 1:00-2:00 PM CT. This webinar will focus on optimizing medication plans for community-dwelling older adults, particularly those living with multiple chronic conditions. Participants will review person-centered approaches for shared decision-making in the deprescribing process.

NCECE will also be hosting a virtual learning collaborative titled *Leveraging Local Strengths to Improve Older Adult Health & Well-Being*. Sessions will take place over four Tuesday afternoons from April 2-May 14, 2024, meeting from 12:00-1:00 PM MT / 1:00-2:00 PM CT each week. The content of this learning collaborative will highlight the value of partnerships with aging services network agencies to address the support needs of community-dwelling older adults. Attendees will discuss models of collaboration that close related gaps in care and reduce health disparities experienced by older patients. Applications to attend this event are due Friday, March 29, 2024.

*To learn more and register for the webinar, please visit this [NCECE](#) webpage.*

*For more information and to apply for the learning collaborative, please visit this [NCECE](#) webpage.*

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## REGIONAL & NATIONAL NEWS

### Utah Navajo Health System Awarded HHS Funding for New Satellite Facility

In January, the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services \(HHS\)](#), through the [Indian Health Service \(IHS\)](#), awarded \$55 million in funding to 15 tribes and tribal organizations as part of the competitive [Small Ambulatory Program](#); this IHS program focuses on investing in the construction, expansion, or modernization of small ambulatory health care facilities. Of the 15 recipients of this year's award, the list included one Region VIII health center. [Utah Navajo Health System \(UNHS\)](#) was awarded \$3.85 million to be used for construction of a new satellite facility. UNHS currently operates four clinics throughout southeastern Utah. Since its creation in 2001, the Small Ambulatory Program has funded more than 79 projects, totaling more than \$178 million. Ninety five percent of tribally operated health care facilities provide primarily ambulatory services. Ambulatory care facilities managed by tribes and tribal organizations offer increased access to culturally appropriate, quality care.

*To learn more about this program and view other awardees, view the HHS [press release](#).*

## REGIONAL & NATIONAL NEWS, *Continued*

### Updated Federal Poverty Guidelines

On January 17, 2024, the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#) (HHS) announced the annual update to the [HHS Poverty Guidelines](#). The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) has also released an article summarizing the [HHS Poverty Guidelines for 2024](#).

### HRSA Launches New Maternal Health Initiative

On January 25, 2024, [Health Resources and Services Administration](#) (HRSA) Administrator Carole Johnson and U.S. Representative Lauren Underwood, co-chair of the Black Maternal Health Caucus, launched the year-long *Enhancing Maternal Health Initiative*. The initiative aims to enhance, expand, and expedite HRSA's maternal health work, tackling maternal mortality and health disparities through collaboration with mothers, grantees, community organizations, as well as state and local officials nationwide. The initiative will focus its efforts in 11 states, including one Region VIII state (MT), and the District of Columbia, as these areas have been identified as high-need locations with significant opportunities for new partnerships and collaborations. Throughout the next year, HRSA will be bringing grantees from across the states of focus together to foster collaboration and drive progress towards ending the maternal mortality crisis.

*For more information about the initiative, view the HRSA [press release](#).*

### Become a HRSA Grant Reviewer

The [Health Resources and Services Administration](#) (HRSA) is seeking grant reviewers. HRSA selects reviewers based on their knowledge, education, and experience in behavioral, rural, maternal, and child health, as well as workforce training, HIV/AIDS, primary care delivery, and those who provide care to underserved populations.

Register on the HRSA [Reviewer Recruitment Module](#) (RRM) to be considered.

Visit the HRSA [How to Become a Grant Reviewer](#) webpage to learn more.

### HRSA & HUD Regional Offices Partnering to Address the Availability of Housing for Health Care Professionals

*Submitted by Nick Zucconi, HRSA Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs Region VIII*

The availability of housing for health care professionals has been a persistent problem in rural areas, and increasingly in metro areas since the COVID-19 pandemic. In mid-December, the [Health Resources and Services Administration](#) (HRSA) and [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) (HUD) Region VIII Offices partnered to convene two roundtables in South Dakota to introduce HUD's housing-affiliated organizations in the state to key health care organizations, including hospital/clinic systems, the Hospital Association, the [State Primary Care Association](#), health centers, the [State Office of Rural Health](#), and the [South Dakota Area Health Education Center](#), and have an initial discussion about potential solutions.

Health care organizations attending the roundtables gained an understanding of the HUD-supported housing advocacy networks in South Dakota in terms of who to contact and the types of counseling assistance available to them. Some of the health care organizations committed to inviting the housing advocacy organizations to present at their annual conferences. HUD-certified housing counselors at one of the roundtables agreed to provide training to the local health system's HR department to enable them to help health care professionals they recruit navigate their housing assistance options. The HRSA/HUD partnership continues with recent discussions taking place regarding the prospect of additional roundtables in the other five states in the region.

## REGIONAL & NATIONAL NEWS, *Continued*

### HRSA Seeking Nominations for National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice

The [Health Resources and Services Administration](#) (HRSA) is currently seeking nominations of qualified candidates to fill 11 vacant positions on the National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice (NACNEP). NACNEP provides advice and recommendations to Congress and the [Health and Human Services](#) (HHS) Secretary on policy, program development, and other matters related to the nurse workforce, education, and practice improvement. The council meets at least twice a year and individuals serve four-year terms.

*For more information about the application process, please visit this [Federal Register](#) webpage.*

#### Don't Miss: New Patient Handout from HRSA

**Health Centers: A Guide for Patients** was developed by the [Health Resources and Services Administration](#) (HRSA) for prospective health center patients. The document describes what health centers are, what services are provided, and includes a tool to help locate health centers nearby. The guide is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

### 2024 NACHC P&I Awards: Region VIII Recipients

Each year during its [Policy & Issues Forum](#) (P&I), the [National Association of Community Health Centers](#) (NACHC), in collaboration with the Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy at the [George Washington University's Milken Institute School of Public Health](#), announces the recipients of the *Geiger Gibson Emerging Leaders Award*. Established in 2007, this competitive award honors young professionals from Community Health Centers and Primary Care Associations across the country whose accomplishments exemplify the health center mission and the vision of Drs. H. Jack Geiger and Count Gibson, pioneers for community health and human rights.

Out of the 12 individuals honored with Emerging Leader Awards this year, four are from Region VIII: **Courtney Buys**, Director of Quality at [Montana Primary Care Association](#) (MT); **Daniella Rocha**, Integrated Behavioral Health/Substance Treatment Consultant at [Denver Health and Hospital Authority](#) (CO); **Jazmine Cardenas**, Center Director at [Salud Family Health](#) (CO); and **Samantha Stacks**, Advanced Practice Provider at [Fourth Street Clinic](#) (UT).

NACHC also announced the recipients of its two Grassroots Advocacy awards. These honorees consistently go above and beyond to foster a culture of advocacy within their organizations and the Community Health Center Movement. The *Jose E. Camacho Hall of Fame Award* recognizes individuals for their dedication to making notable contributions that ensure the survival and strength of health centers. This year's recipients included two from Region VIII: **Fatima Groom**, Policy and Advocacy Manager at [Sunrise Community Health](#) (CO), and **Jennifer Morse**, Vice President of Development at [Salud Family Health](#) (CO).

The *Elizabeth K. Cooke Advocacy MVP Award* was established in honor of the late Elizabeth K. (Betsey) Cooke and celebrates those who mirror her passion and have made significant contributions to advancing health center advocacy. Three individuals from Region VIII were recognized this year: **Cathy Alderman**, Chief Communications and Public Policy Officer at [Colorado Coalition for the Homeless](#) (CO); **Lexy Eggert**, Chief Development and Strategy Officer at [Horizon Health Care](#) (SD); and **Simon Smith**, President and Chief Executive Officer at [Clinica Family Health](#) (CO).

#### CHAMPS extends sincere congratulations to this year's Region VIII awardees!

*For more details about the 2024 Emerging Leaders awardees, view this [press release](#). To learn more about the 2024 Grassroots Advocacy award recipients, please visit this [NACHC](#) webpage.*

## REGIONAL & NATIONAL NEWS, *Continued*

### Food and Mood Action Points for Health Care Providers

Submitted by Joycelyn Lateef, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

#### Food and Mood Project



Focused on enhancing emotional well-being in K-12 school environments, the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's \(SAMHSA\) Food and Mood Project](#) works closely with regional partners to advance projects that address the intersection of behavioral health and nutrition. In 2023, the team hosted its first annual summit titled *Creating Conversation, Building Connections, and Collaborations*. From this gathering, the team gained useful insights for health and behavioral healthcare providers who want to implement integrative care interventions for children and their families.

There are a range of actions providers can consider, including exploring state specific [Medicaid waivers](#) that address social needs such as housing, food, and education. Providers can also [screen for hunger](#) and make referrals to improve nutrition security for patients. Another option is to consider how [culture works as a protective factor](#) and integrate cultural approaches into the care process. Providers serving Medicaid patients with severe mental health or substance use disorder can explore the [Innovation in Behavioral Health Model](#), which helps bridge the gap between behavioral and physical care. Lastly, developing patient centered one-pagers with easy-to-grasp Food and Mood concepts can be helpful for health education. These action points are part of an [expanded list](#) that interested providers can reference for more ideas related to Food and Mood.

To learn more about the project, visit the [Food and Mood Project](#) website or contact:  
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Gina O'Brian, RDN, Regional Senior/Lead Nutritionist, USDA-FNS Mountain Plains Region, [gina.obrian@usda.gov](mailto:gina.obrian@usda.gov)

### AUCH to Host Hybrid HIPAA Compliance Training

The [Association for Utah Community Health \(AUCH\)](#) is set to host a two-day hybrid training focused on Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliance. This event will feature several speakers from Smith + Malek Attorneys and aims to provide a broad level overview of HIPAA, 42 CFR Part 2, information blocking and the CURES Act, and FQHC compliance programs. Through interactive learning and case studies, participants will leave the training with a better understanding of relevant privacy and security laws, how they relate to their organization, and the role a compliance program plays in their organization. The training will take place over two days, March 20 and March 21, 2024, meeting from 8:30 AM-4:30 PM MT / 9:30 AM-5:30 PM CT each day. As a hybrid event, participants have the option to attend virtually or in-person at the AUCH Training Center in Salt Lake City, UT. This training is open to participants from across Region VIII, and there is a cost associated with attending.

For more information and to register, please visit AUCH's [registration](#) webpage.

#### National Funding Opportunities & Closing Dates

- ★ [Vot-ER Community Civic Engagement Program](#) (March 11, 2024)
- ★ [Behavioral Health Integration \(BHI\) Evidence Based Telehealth Network Program](#) (March 22, 2024)
- ★ [Supporting People with HIV as Leaders in HIV Systems of Care](#) (April 1, 2024)
- ★ [State Maternal Health Innovation](#) (April 2, 2024)
- ★ [Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Part C Capacity Development Program](#) (April 16, 2024)
- ★ [Maternal Health Training and Resource Center \(MHTRC\)](#) (May 2, 2024)

# REGIONAL & NATIONAL NEWS, *Continued*

## Region VIII in the News

- ★ Colorado Coalition for the Homeless: ['It's amazing what can be done here.'](#) [Colorado health center offers community for those in recovery](#) (*Direct Relief, December 2023*)
- ★ FourPoints Health: [FourPoints Health opens new medical, dental clinic near Cedar City](#) (*St. George News, December 2023*)
- ★ Horizon Health Care: [Tradition of Caring: Horizon Health Care](#) (*Keloland Living, January 2024*)
- ★ Northland Health Centers: [ND Today Business Highlight: Northland Health Centers](#) (*KFYR-TV, February 2024*)
- ★ RiverStone Health: [RiverStone Health hosts annual Homeless Persons' Memorial Day vigil](#) (*KPAX, December 2023*)
- ★ Sapphire Community Health: [Sapphire Community Health bridging rural health gaps with new mobile medical unit](#) (*KPAX, December 2023*)
- ★ Summit Community Care Clinic: [Summit Community Care Clinic increases service at its Leadville location](#) (*SummitDaily, January 2024*)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### March 2024

#### [CCHN 2024 Policy & Issues Forum](#)

March 13-14

#### [CHAMPS Webinar: How to Complete the 2024 Region VIII Salary Survey Tool](#)

March 14

#### [Today with Macrae: Health Center Program Updates](#)

March 28

### April 2024

#### [CHAMPS Two-Day Spanish Language for Oral Health Providers Course](#)

April 8-9

#### [CHAMPS Four-Day Medical Spanish Language Course for Beginner & Intermediate Speakers](#)

April 11-12 & April 18-19

#### [CHAMPS Two-Day Spanish Language for Behavioral Health Providers Course](#)

April 15-16

#### [NCFH 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Midwest Stream Forum for Agricultural Worker Health](#)

April 16-18

#### [CHAMPS Two-Day Medical Spanish for Advanced Spanish Speakers Course](#)

April 22-23

#### [NACHC Conference for Agricultural Worker Health](#)

April 23-25

#### [ACU STAR<sup>2</sup> Center Workforce Symposium](#)

April 29-30

### May 2024

#### [CHAMPS Next Level Skills for Health Center Supervisors & Managers Training](#)

April 24; May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

#### [NHCHC 2024 Conference & Policy Symposium](#)

May 13-16

#### [CHAD/GPHDN Annual Members Conference](#)

May 14-16

#### [MPCA Workforce & Quality Under the Big Sky Conference](#)

May 21-23

### Looking Ahead

#### [NACHC 2024 Community Health Institute \(CHI\) & EXPO](#)

August 24-26

#### [CHAMPS/NWRPCA Annual Primary Care Conference](#)

October 26-29

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