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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PRIMARY CARE ASSOCIATION

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District of Columbia Primary Care Association Celebrates 25 Years of Community Health Center Excellence

December 1, 2021— The District of Columbia Primary Care Association (DCPCA) will celebrate "*25 Years of Community Health Center Excellence*" in Washington, DC, Thursday, December 9, 2021, at 5:30 PM in the Mayflower Hotel, District Ballroom. The celebration brings together health center leaders and staff, government officials, community partners, and other health care stakeholders in the District.

DCPCA has selected several individuals to receive the “*DCPCA 25th Anniversary Health Care Hero Award*” which includes, Councilmember Vincent Gray, Chair of the Committee on Health, Dr. LaQuandra Nesbitt, Director of the DC Department of Health and three retiring health center executives who have been trailblazers in the District of Columbia advocating for the uninsured, homeless, immigrants, people of color and the LGBTQIA community. Also, Vincent Keane, an award recipient, will retire from Unity Health Care after more than 30 years of service. He was an advocate for the homeless and runs one of the largest federally qualified health centers in the nation. Maria Gomez, CEO of Mary’s Center will retire after 35 years as one of the few Latina women who have changed the healthcare landscape in the District of Columbia. Don Blanchon, former CEO of Whitman Walker Health and Health System will retire after more than 15 years at the helm. The celebrations will include health center exhibits, a reception, and an awards ceremony. The program will start promptly at 6:30.

"The Primary Care Association’s 25th Anniversary Celebration is a tribute to all of the health care heroes who have been on the front lines of the COVID epidemic for the last two years and who have passionately provided health care and support services to hundreds of thousands of District residents over the last 25 years. We will honor the leaders, staff, government and community partners who are committed to providing outstanding health care services and to removing the barriers to optimal health. Collectively, we have changed the health care landscape and will continue to transform the health care delivery system in the District of Columbia,” says, Tamara Smith, President and CEO of the DC Primary Care Association.

DCPCA exists to support community health centers – providing health information exchange, hosting their electronic health records, providing training and technical assistance, chronic disease management support, advocacy support and leading coalition-building efforts to promote health and racial equity. District health centers serve one-in-four District residents providing almost a million health care visits annually. In addition, health centers provide behavioral health care, dental care, housing and legal support, social services and educational programs. Health centers are located in every Ward of the city and are available to all individuals regardless of their ability to pay.

About District of Columbia Primary Care Association. Founded in 1996, DCPCA works to

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About District of Columbia Primary Care Association. Founded in 1996, DCPCA works to create healthier communities through advocacy and the development of the infrastructure to support high quality, equitable, integrated health care system that gives every DC resident a fair shot at a full and healthy life. Our collective action and innovation foster the creation of an integrated health system that: 1) Respects and embraces people throughout the continuum of care; 2) Empowers patients to fully engage in their health and well-being; 3) Is value-based and patient-centered, and; 4) Commits to achieving equity and optimal levels of health for all.

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