COMMUNITY STARS

August 3, 2021

Thank you for submitting a nomination for Kelley Withy, MD, PhD.

Overview

Thank you for your 2021 Community Star Nomination. Here is a copy of the nomination for your records. If you have any questions, please reach out to NRHD Community Star Project Coordinator, Brea Corsaro at bcorsaro@powerofrural.org.

Your Information

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Community Star Nominee: (Individual)

Kelley Withy, MD, PhD

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COMMUNITY STARS

Which best describes the organization your nominee is associated with?

Academic Institution

Please describe your connection to the individual or organization you are nominating.

When I joined the Hawaii State Office of Primary Care and Rural Health in 2012, Kelley Withy, MD, was the current President of the Hawaii State Rural Health Association (HSRHA). At the time, the HSRHA was undergoing a visioning process to determine how best to move the organization forward. I was impressed with Dr. Withy's governance and leadership ability to motivate and inspire board members to reimagine how the Association could best serve Hawaii's rural communities.

Please explain the individual's or organization's connection to or interaction with their State Office of Rural Health.

Being new to rural health, Dr. Withy saw a timely opportunity to better position the Hawaii State Office Primary Care and Rural Health to become a key partner of HSRHA as it was going through its reorganization process. Dr. Withy continued to encourage me to become more involved in the Association and to help build leadership capacity at the board level while providing the HSRHA with opportunities to amplify the voices of Hawaii's rural communities

The Community Star Recognition Program is designed to honor those whose contributions are making a difference in rural through collaboration,

education, innovation, and communication. What do you believe to be your nominee's "star" qualities? Provide examples of how your nominee demonstrates these qualities in their work and service.

In 2014, the HSRHA was well equipped with a newly developed strategic plan and by-laws. The time was right to prioritize goals and objectives and translate this into a plan of action. HSRHA board members had identified mental health as a critical issue and charged the Association to improve access to behavioral health care for Hawaii's rural residents. As an initial first step, Dr. Withy invited Sanjeev Arora, MD, to present the Project ECHO model at the HSRHAs 2014 Annual Meeting. The presentation was resoundingly met with positive responses from partners and stakeholders. Fast forward a year, Dr. Withy assembled a team of Hawaii stakeholders and coordinated travel to the University of New Mexico, School of Medicine, to participate in the Project ECHO® orientation and immersion training in the summer of 2015. Next, equipped with this knowledge, a steering committee was formed and charged with planning and launching a Project ECHO teleclinic that would strengthen Hawaii's behavioral health infrastructure. Led by Dr. Withy, the HSRHA was identified as the lead agency, plans were made, resources were placed, and in January 2016, Project ECHO Hawaii's Behavioral Health series was launched. Over the years, Dr. Withy mentored her University of Hawaii colleagues and provided technical assistance and support to launch two new series (Geriatric Medicine and Pediatric Care) under the Project ECHO Hawaii umbrella. Today, Project ECHO Hawaii has 1,200 (unduplicated) individual participants and has hosted 360 tele-clinics, providing medical education and training to 13,500 (duplicated) participants.

The 2021 Community Star Selection Committee will review and evaluate nominations, making recommendations for which stories to include in this year's book and other NRHD activities based on the following merits. Please review these and select all that apply to your nominee.

Cultivates a vital, innovative rural health landscape and infrastructure. , Develops leadership capacity to grow rural population health and health equity.

Describe in as much detail as possible, examples of your nominee's work and accomplishments that correspond with your selections to the question above.

In response to a growing opioid epidemic that was negatively impacting rural communities across the nation, Dr. Withy demonstrated her leadership ability by writing and submitting an application on behalf of the Hawaii State Rural Health Association for a Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) Planning grant. The HRSA grant was awarded in 2019, and under Dr. Withy's guidance, the Hawaii Opioid and Prevention and Education (HOPE) Program was established. Then in 2020, equipped with a new comprehensive strategic plan, Dr. Withy was once again awarded a three-year RCORP Implementation grant that would empower Hawaii's rural communities to collaboratively implement culturally appropriate evidence-based programs for the prevention of, treatment for, and recovery from opioids and substance use disorders.

I can confirm that the individual or organization is making a difference in rural through collaboration, education, innovation, and communication, and is located, working, or volunteering in a designated rural area.

Yes

I can confirm that I have notified the nominee of their nomination, and the nomination will be accepted.

Yes

How did you learn about the 2021 Community Star Recognition Program?