



July 26, 2021

Thank you for submitting a nomination for Katie Parnell.

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

Natalie Handy

Communications Manager

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Community Star Nominee: (Organization)

Katie Parnell

CEO

CommuniHealth Services

Bastrop, Louisiana

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3182838887

Have Questions? Contact:

powerofrural.org | nosorh.org | bcorsaro@powerofrural.org



Which best describes the organization your nominee is associated with?

Certified Rural Health Clinic

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

On January 15, 2021, Capital Fund, Capital Link's lending affiliate, participated in a financial closing for CommuniHealth Services, to support its \$13.1 million expansion project.

Capital Fund contributed a \$6.5 million New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) allocation for CommuniHealth's new facility. Additionally, Capital Link provided operational facility planning and NMTC technical services to assist CommuniHealth in aligning service delivery objectives with design, preparing financial projections as well as a business plan, and NMTC intake and community impact information, which Capital Link successfully presented to and attracted interest from Federal and State CDE/CDFI Allocatees, source loan providers and two different equity investors (Federal and State).

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

As a rurally-located Federally Qualified Health Center, CHS provides comprehensive medical, dental, and behavior health care services to all who need them, with a special focus on low-income, uninsured, underinsured, Medicaid, Medicare, and vulnerable populations.



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.

To help meet the vast needs of the communities it serves, CHS has embarked on a capital project to

consolidate three of its current stand-alone sites, including a pediatric clinic, a family practice clinic,

and an administrative site, to one expanded clinic in Bastrop. The new two-story, 41,260-square-foot

clinic will be built on land owned by CHS, and will serve Morehouse, Union, and Ouachita Parishes

in north central Louisiana. Construction on CHS' capital project is expected to begin in early 2021

and is slated to be completed in June 2022. The project will allow for on-site access to pharmacy,

radiology, and laboratory services, and community space that can be converted to a 25-bed shelter to

house those in need of low-level medical attention during a community emergency.

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. , Builds capacity for rural data-driven program planning and decision
 making. , Contributes to rural health innovation, education, collaboration,
 and communication.

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

CommuniHealth Services (CHS), a non-profit Federally Qualified Health Center, was established in 2002 under the name Morehouse Community Medical Centers, Inc., in Bastrop, LA, where its principle offices are currently located. Recognized as the local provider of choice, CHS grew from one clinic location in Bastrop to eventually 11 health center sites across Morehouse, Union, and Ouachita Parishes. After nearly 12 years of operation, the health center rebranded to CommuniHealth Services to reflect their broader service area. CHS provides comprehensive medical, dental, and behavior health care services to all who need them, with a special focus on low-income, uninsured, underinsured, Medicaid, Medicare, and vulnerable populations.



According to the 2019 United State Census, Louisiana has the second-highest poverty rate in the

nation (19%)—meaning about one in five people in the state live below the federal poverty level. In the

parishes CHS serves, 34% of residents live below the federal poverty level, and, compared

to state and national levels, they have significantly less access to primary care and behavioral health

services—further emphasizing the overwhelming need for CHS in these communities.

As part of a recent commitment by JP Morgan Chase Bank to provide loans to small businesses

in majority Black and Latinx communities, CHS' expansion and consolidation project qualified

to receive significant additional funding. The bank's new initiative provided the project with an

additional \$327,600, reflective of the fact that the majority of CHS' patients (60%) are Black, and that

the health center is also overseen by a Black-majority Board of Directors.



When completed and fully operational, CHS' expansion project is expected to create 28 new permanent FTE jobs for the community, including six additional FTE providers—increasing from 96 FTEs to 124. The project will allow CHS to see 42% additional unique patients annually (combined medical, dental, and behavioral health), increasing from 13,170 in FY2020 to a projected 18,754 during the first full year of operation, which is predicted to be FY2023. The number of exam rooms will double from 10 in FY2020 to 20, and six dental operatories will be added, of which there were none before. The number of annual health center visits is expected to increase by 38%, expanding from 41,400 in FY2020 to a projected 64,500 in FY2023.

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?



Have Questions? Contact:
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