

MRHA Presents 2011 Maryland Rural Health Awards

Ocean City, MD (November 9, 2011) - The Maryland Rural Health Association presented its 2011 rural health awards to five well respected rural health leaders and a deserving program on November 4, 2011 during the organization's annual conference. The Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, Dr. Joshua Sharfstein also attended the event and announced November 17, 2011 as Rural Health Day in Maryland. The Awards Dinner was part of a two day statewide rural health conference entitled: Navigating Change by Connecting with Others. The Maryland Rural Health Association is a non-profit organization whose mission is to educate and advocate for the optimal health of rural communities and their residents and is made up of rural community members and organizations. Please contact Michelle Clark at mrha@allconet.org or 410-302-4650 for more details.



Chris Leo (*right, pictured here with Michelle Clark, Executive Director of MRHA*) a dental hygienist with over 35 years of experience from Salisbury, MD was named **Outstanding Rural Health Practitioner**. Chris "has been there, done that, seen that." She continues moving forward telling others about the relationship between oral health to overall health, at whatever age. Chris received support for her award from over a dozen fellow rural health providers and colleagues in oral health.



Dr. James Jarboe (*right, son Tom Jarboe pictured here with Mike Shaw, Calvert Healthcare Solutions*) received the **Outstanding Rural Health Practitioner Award**. Dr. Jarboe practiced as a primary care physician for over 50 years until his recent retirement in 2011. With partners, he helped start Health Share of St. Mary's; Hospice of St. Mary's; and the Get Connected to Health Program. He has drastically helped increase access to healthcare in Southern Maryland.



Holly Emmons (*right, pictured here with Mark Rajkowski, West Cecil Community Health Center*) Food Service Manager, Union Hospital, Elkton, MD received the **Outstanding Rural Health Achievement Award**. With over 23 years of experience in health care food service management she has led Union Hospital in now purchasing 44 percent of their produce, dairy, meat and poultry directly from local sustainable farmers. They are the leading hospital in Maryland in this strategy to improve meals and health of community.



The **Western Maryland Mission of Mercy Program** (*David Stewart, Susan Stewart, and Carol Morgan all partners of program*) was selected to receive the **Outstanding Rural Health Program Award**. The Mission of Mercy program is a two-day free dental clinic for adults in need of oral health care services. In 2010 the program served 810 people from 7 states and 23 counties with the help of 85 volunteer dentists from across the state. In October the event was repeated, in a snow storm, and served 840 patients.



Donna Clark (*right, pictured here with Debbie Goeller, Health Officer Worcester County*) founder of the nonprofit agency H.O.P.E (Help and Outreach Point of Entry) received the **2011 Outstanding Rural Health Volunteer Award**. Donna provides guidance to the homeless and poor through the maze of social and financial assistance programs in Salisbury, MD and the Lower Shore. As the leader in the Tri-County Alliance for the Homeless, she has led a collaboration to provide a one stop location for services to prevent and end the cycle of homelessness.



Senator Richard F. Colburn (*left, pictured here with Rodney Glotfelty, Garrett County Health Officer*) received the **Outstanding Rural Health Legislator Award** for his work in establishing the Senator Richard Colburn Medical Scholar Award. For the past three years Senator Colburn has awarded \$1,000 to a graduating senior in his district that shows interest in the medical profession. The scholarship promotes high school students to think about entering the medical profession, while drawing attention to the public health crisis of rural healthcare.



Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene Dr. Joshua Sharfstein (*right, pictured here with Debbie Goeller, Worcester County Health Officer and MRHA President*) presented a Governor's Proclamation announcing **November 17, 2011 as Maryland Rural Health Day**. MRHA will join the National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health (NOSORH) and the Maryland State Office of Rural Health (SORH) in celebrating the unique needs of rural citizens and their healthcare on this day. To learn more about this day visit: <http://celebratepowerofrural.org/>