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Young Vermonter Receives 2017 Emerging Leader Award



From L: David Reynolds, founding director, Northern Counties Health Care, VT; Dan Hawkins, SVP, NACHC; Sara Rosenbaum, founder, Geiger Gibson Program; Kristen Bigelow-Talbert, Quality Improvement Facilitator, Bi-State Primary Care Association; Tom Van Coverden, President/ CEO, NACHC; Tess Stack Kuenning, President/CEO, Bi-State Primary Care Association.

WASHINGTON, DC April 10, 2017 – Vermont resident and Quality Improvement facilitator at Bi-State Primary Care Association, Kristen Bigelow-Talbert, received the *2017 Emerging Leader Award* from the National Association of Community Health Centers earlier this month. “The Emerging Leader Award is designed to highlight and share the accomplishments of exceptional young members of the community health center movement,” said Sara Rosenbaum, JD, the Harold and Jane Hirsh Professor of Health Law and Policy and founder of the Geiger Gibson Program at the Milken Institute School of Public Health. “This year’s winners represent the next generation of leaders who are advancing the core mission of community health centers.”

Bigelow-Talbert works with primary care practices in northeastern Vermont and the Upper Valley to achieve the rigorous quality standards required for Patient-Centered Medical Home designation by the National Committee for Quality Assurance. Practices are often required to make complex operational and clinical workflow changes to demonstrate the quality of care patients receive and to meet patient health outcomes as required by Vermont’s Blueprint for Health. Additionally, Bigelow-Talbert supports quality improvement, workflow redesign and the implementation of communitywide projects. By opening new lines of communication, Bigelow-Talbert helps practices create a culture of continuous quality improvement. “While it’s truly an honor to receive this award, I cannot take credit for everything the health centers have accomplished,” Bigelow-Talbert said. “Without their hard work and dedication, none of this would have been possible. I was simply the guide and support for their journey forward.”

“In just two years, Kristen has assisted two Federally Qualified Health Centers with eight locations attain Level 3 Patient Centered Medical Home designation and assisted four other primary care practices in the region. Her practice-load is heavier than any other quality improvement facilitator in Vermont,” said Tess Stack Kuenning, president/CEO of Bi-State Primary Care Association. “Just this week, an FQHC in southwestern Vermont petitioned the State to be assigned to Kristen’s already full roster, and, in typical Kristen fashion, she is finding a way to make this request possible, despite the geography and workload.”

“The 15 men and women honored by this year’s award are working on the front lines of the community health center movement nationwide,” said Feygele Jacobs, President and CEO of the RCHN Community Health Foundation, whose ongoing gift supports the Geiger Gibson Program. “We are thrilled to recognize their achievements today and look forward to their ongoing leadership.”

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About Bi-State Primary Care Association Bi-State Primary Care Association, founded in 1986, is a 501(c) 3 nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, serving Vermont and New Hampshire, promotes access to quality, affordable primary health care with an emphasis on reaching underserved populations.