

Granite Staters Recognized with Bi-State Awards for Improving Access to Primary Health Care

NEW HAMPSHIRE – MARCH 2021 – Bi-State’s 2021 Outstanding Clinician, Public Service, Community Service, Hunt Blair Leadership, and Board of Directors’ Chair awards will be presented to eight residents in a virtual Awards Ceremony at Bi-State Primary Care Conference on May 19, 2021. The honorees were nominated by a jury of their peers for exceptional leadership and significant impact on health care access. The Awards Ceremony video will be hosted on Bi-State’s website and social media following its debut at the Primary Care Conference.

The NH Board of Directors’ Chair Award – NH Epidemiology Team: Benjamin Chan, MPH, MD, NH’s Epidemiologist; Elizabeth Talbot, MD, Infectious Disease Specialist at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center; and Elizabeth R. Daly, DrPH, MPH, Chief, Bureau of Infectious Disease Control, NH Department of Health and Human Services. “The Board of Directors’ Chair Award honors individuals who have made outstanding contributions to Bi-State’s mission to ensure access to health care for vulnerable populations in Vermont and New Hampshire.” The efforts of the team guided state response to the pandemic, encouraged safety, and guided reopening strategies. Doctors Chan, Talbot, and Daly provided a balanced, moderate course of action that was applauded nationally by their peers.

The NH Public Service Award - Trinidad Tellez, MD, Former Director, Office of Health Equity, NH Department of Health and Human Services: “The Public Service Award honors individuals whose position allows them to make extraordinary contributions in the area of public health and primary care access in Vermont and New Hampshire.” Dr. Tellez addressed workforce shortages with an equity lens during her 10-year tenure at NH DHHS. She facilitated culturally-and-linguistically-appropriate services and led NH’s COVID-19 Equity Response Team. Dr. Tellez made significant strides toward a more equitable system in New Hampshire.

The Community Service Award – Trent Smith, Chair of Harbor Care Health and Wellness Center Oversight Committee, Harbor Care, Nashua, NH: “The Community Service Award honors individuals whose volunteer efforts have made a significant impact on vulnerable populations in Vermont and New Hampshire.” Mr. Smith always distinguished himself as a judicious steward of Harbor Homes/Harbor Care and never faltered when making difficult or unpopular decisions. His relentless energy and enthusiasm throughout his 20-year tenure on Harbor Care’s board had a positive impact. Mr. Smith was an authentic and loyal member and a true champion for the best interests of patients as he supported Harbor Homes’ transition to a Federally Qualified Health Center.

The Hunt Blair Leadership Award - Scott Schuler, PMD (COVID-19 Incident Commander) for the Strafford County and Seacoast Public Health Networks EOPs: “The Hunt Blair Leadership Award recognizes the potential every individual has to improve the lives of many people, as demonstrated by the brilliance, tenacity, and vision of Hunt Blair.” Mr. Schuler took the lead in Strafford and Rockingham counties in the emergency preparedness response to the pandemic. He led an extraordinarily well-coordinated response to the pandemic in the Greater Seacoast region.

The Outstanding Clinician Award - William Gessner, MD, Coos County Family Health Services: “The Outstanding Clinician Award honors primary care clinicians whose exemplary skills and service have made a significant impact on the health of underserved patients and the communities in which they serve.” Dr. Gessner established specialized medical and dental clinics to serve people with developmental disabilities in upstate New York before coming to Family Health Services serving Coos County. He was instrumental in the establishment of Medication-Assisted Treatment, dental programs, and a professional culture built on clinical excellence, accountability, and kindness towards others.

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ABOUT BI-STATE PRIMARY CARE ASSOCIATION: Bi-State promotes access to affordable primary health care with an emphasis on reaching underserved populations. Bi-State is a nonpartisan nonprofit organization that represents New Hampshire and Vermont's 28 Community Health Centers that serve more than 315,000 patients at 143 locations providing access to health care in every county in New Hampshire and Vermont. Bi-State Primary Care Association was founded as a 501(c)3 charitable organization in 1986 with offices in Bow, New Hampshire, and Montpelier, Vermont.