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## **Awards Ceremony to Recognize Vermonters for Improving Access to Primary Health Care for the Underserved**

VERMONT – MARCH 2021- Bi-State's 2021 Outstanding Clinician, Public Service, and Board of Directors' Chair awards will be presented to the honorees in a virtual Awards Ceremony that will air on the second day of Bi-State's Primary Care Conference live stream cast on May 19, 2021. The honorees were nominated by a jury of their peers for their exceptional leadership and significant contribution to improving access to health care and food resources during the long first year of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Awards Ceremony video will be hosted on Bi-State's website and social media following its debut at the Primary Care Conference.

**Bi-State's Board of Directors' Chair Award - Hunger Free Vermont and Vermont Food Bank:** "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." Vermont has long recognized the role that reliable access to nutritious food plays in ensuring good health. Hunger Free Vermont and the Vermont Foodbank responded quickly to an 8 million pound spike in demand for food for needy families during the past year. Their "VeggieVanGo" program brought food directly to health care providers. Both organizations are critical allies to Bi-State and Vermont's community health centers and free clinics. They are highly regarded resources and leaders in their field that statewide partners look to in building capacity to overcome hunger in Vermont.

**The Outstanding Clinician Award - Bradley Berryhill, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Community Health:** "Bi-State's 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. Berryhill is the chief medical officer at Community Health, the largest FQHC in VT, serves as the medical director for three skilled nursing facilities, and maintains a primary care practice. His compassionate approach to leadership has been a comfort and bright spot for his colleagues. He works long days and into the evenings to ensure his patients receive primary care throughout the pandemic equitably and safely. Dr. Berryhill is "a true warrior on the front lines and a Samaritan for our community."

**The Public Service Award - Breena Holmes, MD, Senior Faculty at Vermont Child Health Improvement Program at Larner College of Medicine, University of Vermont, and Physician advisor, Maternal and Child Health Division, Vermont Department of Health:** "Bi-State's 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." Between 2010 and 2020, Dr. Holmes served as the director of Maternal and Child Health at the Vermont Department of Health. Dr. Holmes took an active role in Vermont's COVID-19 testing and development of the school reopening plan. Supported by Dr. Holmes' work and strong state leadership, Vermont was able to open schools safely and even develop an algorithm that permitted children with mild symptoms, unlikely to be COVID-19, with an alternative to the 14-day quarantine. Dr. Holmes is a strong advocate for access to primary health care, the role of Vermont's FQHCs within the health care system, and the importance of patient care coordination.

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