

RIHCA Hosts 53rd Annual Meeting, Highlighting Key Issues and the Future of Community-Based Primary Care

Providence, RI – October 16, 2025 — The Rhode Island Health Center Association (RIHCA) held its 53rd Annual Meeting on Thursday, October 16, 2025, at the Downtown Marriott in Providence. The event brought together more than 150 attendees, including representatives from RIHCA's member health centers, state legislators, community partners, and key stakeholders from across the state.

This year's Annual Meeting featured two panel discussions led by RIHCA board members and moderated by Elena Nicolella, CEO and President of RIHCA. The panels addressed critical topics: **“Current Issues Facing Health Centers”** and **“The Future of Community-Based Primary Care.”** Panelists provided valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities facing health centers today, including workforce, policy changes, and future innovations in community-based primary care.

As part of the program, RIHCA also premiered a video highlighting leadership from Community Health Centers (CHCs) and their board members. The video highlighted the vital role CHCs play in delivering high-quality, accessible care to Rhode Islanders and emphasized the importance of collaboration with RIHCA in advocating for health centers.

Click [HERE](#) to view the video

The morning closed with the presentation of **RIHCA's 2025 Annual Awards**, celebrating excellence, leadership, and contributions to community-based care.

- **Senator Bridget Valverde and Representative Jon Brien** received the John H. Chaffee Healthcare Leadership Award for their incredible work on the successful passage of the Defending Affordable Prescription Drug Costs Act.
- **Dr. David M. Bourassa** was chosen by his clinical peers to receive the Clinical Leadership Award for his clinical excellence, leadership, and long-time commitment to providing community-based primary pediatric care.
- **William Hochstasser-Walsh** was presented with the Jane A. Hayward Citizens Award for his lifelong commitment to social justice and ensuring accessible access to care for all individuals.

Click [HERE](#) to see more on this year's awardees.

RIHCA extends its sincere thanks to all who attended, our meeting sponsors, and all those who contributed to the success of the event.