

Eight exceptional community health center employees recognized at 2026 Beacon Awards

(PROVIDENCE, RI – August 10, 2026) -- The Rhode Island Health Center Association hosted its annual Beacon Awards on August 6, recognizing eight exceptional individuals who represent 2,300 community health center employees caring for more than 200,000 Rhode Islanders from Woonsocket to Westerly.

Each year, health centers across Rhode Island choose one team member whose commitment to patient care and community service reflects the mission of community health centers: to serve as beacons of strength, compassion, and high-quality care.

This year's awardees are: Scott Hewitt, Blackstone Valley Community Health Care; Dr. Rodrigo Nardi, Comprehensive Community Action Program; Kaylee Butler, East Bay Community Action Program; Matthew Blackey, Providence Community Health Centers; Dr. Gabriel Pleasants, Thundermist Health Center; Renay Agli, Tri-County Community Action Agency; Donna Nadeau, WellOne Primary Medical and Dental Care; and Sharon McGuinness, Wood River Health.

The evening's program included remarks from Gov. Dan McKee, Rep. Seth Magaziner, and Rep. Gabe Amo, along with videotaped comments from Sen. Jack Reed and Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse.

Since 1972, the Rhode Island Health Center Association (RIHCA) has been the voice of community-based primary care health programs. Focusing on Rhode Island's community health centers, the Association plays a vital role in educating federal, state and local policymakers about issues relating to health care and the role of the community health centers in the health care continuum.

