

**COLORADO
RURAL HEALTH
CENTER**

The State Office of Rural Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Colorado Rural Health Center Encourages Communities in Colorado to Celebrate
National Rural Health Day and Recognize Leaders in Rural Health**

*Colorado Rural Health Center awarded Patricia Brewster-Willeke the 2015 Rural Health
Excellence Award last month - recognizing her significant impact on the quality of
healthcare in northeast Colorado.*

Denver, Colo – The Colorado Rural Health Center (CRHC) encourages its members, supporters, partners and communities throughout Colorado to join other state and national stakeholders to “Celebrate the Power of Rural” during the fifth annual National Rural Health Day celebration on November 19th.

CRHC is a statewide association for rural healthcare facilities and providers, supporting its members with a wide array of services, programs and technical assistance to support the vital and often precarious rural healthcare delivery system and workforce in Colorado.

“Rural communities and healthcare leaders are spearheading cutting edge, resourceful and particularly impactful community health initiatives,” says Michelle Mills, CRHC’s chief executive officer.

“Innovations in the healthcare delivery system are emerging all over the state and widely amongst our members,” adds Mills. “National Rural Health Day is the opportunity

to showcase these efforts, while raising awareness of the unique healthcare issues being faced by rural citizens.”

Colorado’s rural communities are full of amazing stories of individuals and organizations doing amazing things – one such story was recently recognized by CRHC.

Patricia Brewster-Willeke, co-director and one of the founding members of the Rural Communities Resource Center in Yuma, Colorado, was presented the 2015 Rural Health Excellence Award.

This award, presented annually by CRHC, recognizes an individual who has made a notable contribution to health, healthcare or the healthcare delivery system in rural Colorado.

Patricia’s colleagues describe her as an amazing person that has shown by example that hard work and determination can make a difference in people’s lives.

Joined by over 200 healthcare professionals, Patricia graciously accepted the Rural Health Excellence Award during an awards ceremony on October 15 at the Colorado Annual Rural Health Conference in Colorado Springs.

For over 30 years, Patricia led the development and implementation of a wide array of services in Yuma, Colorado. Everything from establishing a birthing bed at the hospital and an oral health program, to successfully writing grants that improve access to care through greater education and awareness.

Patricia’s contributions are countless, never-ending and will be appreciated by her colleagues and community long after her approaching retirement.

National Rural Health Day events are planned throughout the nation. In Colorado, CRHC will mark the occasion by traveling to Estes Park, Colorado on November 19th to

meet with community members and local healthcare providers to discuss innovations in healthcare taking place in the community.

Additional information about National Rural Health Day can be found online at www.celebratepowerofrural.org. To learn more about CRHC visit www.coruralhealth.org.

About The Colorado Rural Health Center

The Colorado Rural Health Center was established in 1991 as Colorado's State Office of Rural Health. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, CRHC serves dual roles as the State Office of Rural Health with the mission of assisting rural communities in addressing health care issues; and as the State Rural Health Association, advocating for policy change to ensure that rural Coloradans have access to comprehensive, affordable health care services of the highest quality. For more information visit coruralhealth.org, call 303-832-7493, or call toll free 800-851-6782 from rural Colorado.

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