



Team/ Organization

Categories

- 1.) **Leader:** Someone that can influence leadership or is in a leadership role within rural Washington; well respected by those that they lead. This individual should have the ability to inspire action to achieve goals to achieve a shared vision and an exceptional ability to be flexible, innovative, and visionary
- 2.) **Team/ Organization-** 3 or more people that pull together to provide exceptional care or drive impactful change to serve rural Washington
- 3.) **Direct Patient Care Provider-** An exceptional healthcare provider/ worker that provides direct patient care for those living in a rural Washington

Criteria

- 1.) **Impactful Commitment:** Demonstrates commitment to bringing impactful changes to rural communities that improve the population health, access to care and health equity in rural Washington communities
- 2.) **Demonstrates Leadership:** Advances leadership capacity in rural communities to improve overall population health and health equity
- 3.) **Fearless:** Shows tenacity and fearlessness in driving change and innovation that positively impacts rural communities
- 4.) **Compassion:** Demonstrates an exceptional level of compassion and generosity for team members and/or patients

Tulalip Health Clinic Staff-Team/Organization

Health System

Tulalip, WA

Criteria Nomination: Impactful Commitment, Fearless and Compassion

How is nominee driving change and going the extra mile?

The health care staff at Tulalip Health Clinic has demonstrated commitment, compassion, and dedication to our community over the past 2 years in adapting to the needs of the community during the pandemic. This was done while being short-staffed but I have never once experienced any wavering of commitment. When we initially started providing COVID-19 vaccinations, a power outage caused our freezer to malfunction. We potentially had 750 Moderna vaccinations that we would have had to waste if not used by the end of the day. We put out notices in the community and out in the county that Moderna vaccinations were available to any residents not just eligible patients. In all honesty, I did not think we would get be able to use up all 750 doses. I thought we would be lucky if we could administer 300-400 doses rather than waste them. This was at a time when COVID vaccinations were hard to come by. We had lines that extended down to the Marina. We had people come who had never visited the Tulalip Tribes and all were very thankful. Even weeks after, our staff got thanks yous, food gifts, flowers and many who offered to volunteer. This was the definition of the community coming together. What I was most proud of is this staff never once complained of how busy they were and the hours they worked. They did it for the people. This was the definition of what community health means and why we got into medicine. Being short-staff throughout, all staff continuously pulled together to serve the community. To me, being in a new job, this motivated me even more of the Mission. the Mission is the people-the patients and the staff. From my perspective our entire population has COVID fatigue or COVID burn out. But the fatigue and burn out affect healthcare workers in a far greater degree. The COVID rates for both disease and death rates are doubled for Native communities and this staff has risen to the challenged presented to them with a smile and a good attitude. What I have learned over the past 3 years here has confirmed a saying I once heard, "There is no higher honor than serving the community." This has been the most challenging role in my career, but my team motivates me. They (not me) are the unsung heroes for their work and their commitment. This staff makes me very happy when I reflect on what they have done together as a team throughout the pandemic for the needs of our Elders, the Tribe and the entirety of this community!

Details how nominee's work and accomplishments demonstrate criteria above:

Tribes historically have had and still experience disparities in healthcare as well as turnover in staff and staff shortages. This health care team has had a tremendous impact of care to the Tribe/community to meet their needs throughout the pandemic. Despite the disparities and what I call excuses, they never once complained or whined. They have always demonstrated 100% commitment and dedication to our community and other team members. Fearless-Early in the pandemic, everyone was fearful of getting COVID. For healthcare workers it was a fear of taking COVID home to their loved ones, their children, spouse, or grandparents. They have demonstrated their own personal strength and unknowingly demonstrated a fearlessness that they are unaware of because they have been so preoccupied with providing care for our community. In being short-staffed and experiencing turnover of various positions and having to take on more duties and responsibilities when they were burned out, fatigued, and worried. They have never one put their needs before the needs of their patients or our community. I am very compassionate about improving healthcare for Native communities and I am a Native doc. This staff demonstrated a different level of compassion working in a challenging environment. This is why I am proud to serve to staff and to serve the Tulalip community!