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### **Quad City Health Initiative Celebrates 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

The Quad City Health Initiative (QCHI) is celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary today. The Quad City Health Initiative is a community partnership formed to create a healthy community. The Initiative seeks to create collaborative action on health issues and thus improve the health status and quality of life in the Quad Cities.

This evening, the Initiative is marking the occasion with a community celebration highlighting the accomplishments and volunteers who have made the first decade of the Initiative a success. The Initiative is currently a partnership with outreach to over 2,600 individuals and is led by a 35-member community board representing local health departments, providers, insurers, social service agencies, educators, businesses, media, law enforcers, foundations and governments. Over 237 volunteers from about 135 organizations participate in the Initiative's work.

The Initiative is an umbrella organization for the facilitation and management of community project teams addressing issues of access to dental care (Smiles For All), nutrition and exercise patterns (Wellness Champions), and behavioral health (QC Hearts and Minds). In addition, the QCHI is affiliated with the Tobacco Free QC, Activate Quad Cities and Kids HealthNet projects. The QCHI is also a key partner in broader community collaboratives such as the Health Facts Card Task Force, the Community Vitality Task Force and the ILLOWA Partners in Nursing.

The 10<sup>th</sup> year celebration will also recognize the achievements of QCHI's Founding Board Chair, Dr. Richard L. "Bud" Phillis. After a successful 36- year career practicing Internal Medicine, Dr. Phillis partnered with Board Members from Trinity Regional Health System and Genesis Health System to establish the Quad City Health Initiative. Dr. Phillis, who has served as Board Chair since 1999, is retiring the position at the end of this year.

"Ten years after we began the Initiative, it is more successful than I even hoped it would be," says Richard L. "Bud" Phillis, M.D. (Retired) and QCHI Board Chair. "It is truly a community effort and we have more people every day who are getting involved and investing in a healthy community. Involvement is critical because we need to leverage all the resources we have locally to meet our community's challenges."

Selected accomplishments of the Quad City Health Initiative and its affiliate projects and partners include:

- Establishing the Choose Health Live Well campaign which promotes healthy living and cardiovascular disease prevention and has been a resource for more than 60 employers and churches seeking to create wellness;
- Hosting the annual Moon Walk walking competition which over four years has engaged more than 12,000 people in regular exercise and three spirited victories over other Illinois communities;
- Creating the Volunteer Care Network which matched over 60 dentists with patients in need of care and provided over \$380K of free care to 350 patients over 5 years;
- Establishing a Dental Loan Forgiveness Program which raised more than \$115K to attract and retain dentists in practice at Community Health Care;
- Co-authoring the 2007 Quad City Community Vitality Scan and annual Community Vitality Snapshots, a comprehensive analysis of the health status and quality of life of Rock Island and Scott counties;
- Presenting tobacco education to thousands of area students and providing advocacy for Smoke Free Acts in IA and IL;
- Advocating for healthy workplaces through policy and built environment changes;
- Providing continuing education programs to physicians, behavioral health and social service professionals on the value of behavioral health care including creating the innovative Service Trailblazing continuing education sessions;
- Partnering to establishing the ILLOWA Partners in Nursing coalition to address nursing workforce development; and
- Promoting health literacy through the distribution of thousands of Health Facts Cards.

The Quad City Health Initiative won the prestigious NOVA award from the American Hospital Association in 2004 and has been recognized many times at the local, state and national levels for its collaborative efforts to improve health status and quality of life. "We are very appreciative of the many volunteer individuals and organizations that help every day to make our efforts successful," says Nicole Carkner, QCHI Project Coordinator. "The spirited collaboration and cooperation in the Quad Cities truly has transformed the health of our region."

Major financial support of the Quad City Health Initiative is currently provided by the generous direct and in-kind investments of Genesis Health System and Trinity Regional Health System. In 2009, additional financial support is provided by Alcoa, McLaughlin Family Foundation, Orthopaedic & Rheumatology Associates P.C., Cleaveland Insurance Group and Trinity Lutheran Church Endowment (Moline). Support is also provided by QCHI Board members including the following member organizations: QC Medical Societies, Community Health Care, Rock Island County Health Department, Scott County Health Department and United Way of the Quad Cities Area.

For more information or to join the efforts of the Quad City Health Initiative, please call 563-421-2826 or visit our website at [www.qchealthinitiative.org](http://www.qchealthinitiative.org).

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