



PRESS RELEASE

HCC of Rural Missouri Celebrates Rural Health Day on November 16, 2017 Event Honors the Late Melanie Corporon with a Day of Service

LEXINGTON, Mo. – November 1, 2017-The Health Care Collaborative (HCC) of Rural Missouri, celebrates National Rural Health Day and the Great American Smoke Out, Thursday, November 16, 2017 with a day of service. This year’s celebration is dedicated to the late Melanie Corporon.

Mayor Jerry Brown will honor Corporon with a Rural Health Day proclamation at noon on the courthouse steps. Corporon passed away August 12, 2017. She was a well-known advocate for the underserved in West Central Missouri. Throughout her career, she championed giving those in need a “hand up” and played a crucial role in connecting individuals with educational opportunities, food, shelter, clothing, and medical assistance. Corporon’s work with Marshall, Mo.-based Missouri Valley Community Action Agency (MVCAA) spanned over two decades before she joined HCC’s team in Lexington.

“Melanie was one of those rare individuals who truly had a heart for service,” said HCC CEO Toniann Richard. “She had a passion for helping individuals find their way out of poverty. Every year, she would lead poverty simulations to teach others what living poor looks and feels like. Her heart, service and genuine goodness has made an indelible mark and won’t be forgotten.”

As for this year’s Rural Health Day, it will commemorate the life and legacy of Corporon with a day of service that includes a food drive. After the proclamation ceremony, a truck will be on hand to collect and deliver donated items to the Lexington Food Pantry. The day also includes activities for students interested in the health professions, and access to HCC’s warehouse where social service providers may collect goods and supplies to distribute to those in need.

In conjunction with Rural Health Day, the HCC is observing the Great American Smoke Out. Every year since 1976, the third Thursday in November marks the American Cancer Society’s Great American Smoke out, a day when smokers are encouraged to quit for the day and make a plan to quit for good.

According to the American Cancer Society, nearly seven out of 10 smokers (68 percent) say they want to quit. In any year, about four in 10 (42 percent) try. But very few, succeed on their own on any given attempt. Studies show that with the aid of medications, as many as 25 percent of smokers can stay smoke-free for over six months, and that combining medication use with counseling increases success.

About Rural Health Day

The National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health sets aside the third Thursday of every November to celebrate **National Rural Health Day**. National Rural Health Day is an opportunity to “Celebrate the Power of Rural” by honoring the selfless, community-minded, “can do” spirit, like Corporon’s, that prevails in rural America. But it also highlights the unique healthcare challenges that rural citizens face – and showcases the efforts of rural health care providers, State Offices of Rural Health and other rural stakeholders to address those challenges.

All 50 states maintain a State Office of Rural Health, each of which shares a similar mission: to foster relationships, disseminate information and provide technical assistance that improves access to, and the quality of, health care for its rural citizens. In the past year alone, State Offices of Rural Health collectively provided technical assistance to more than 28,000 rural communities.

For more information, contact HCC at 660.259.2440 or visit HCCNetwork.org.