



AzRHA 2020 Annual Report

The Arizona Rural Health Association is pleased to provide this year's annual report. AzRHA is committed to sharing information and updates with our membership, partner organizations and rural communities throughout our great state. Our hope is that by highlighting our activities and accomplishments we will encourage people to join us in our quest to enhance the health of our rural communities. We welcome your comments, questions and suggestions. Please contact us at info@azrhassociation.org, www.facebook.com/azhassociation or www.azrhassociation.org, where you can join us as an AzRHA member.

Greetings from AzRHA President

As President of the Arizona Rural Health Association I'm very pleased to present this report summarizing our activities and accomplishments over the past year. Partly through the Wild Apricot member management system and our Facebook page, we have experienced significant growth despite the many barriers due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, we stepped up to the challenges through our advocacy, educational and information sharing efforts. Working closely with the National Rural Health Association and other advocacy groups, we believe significant impact was had through coordinated contacts with policy makers at state and federal

levels. We hope that this report will interest the reader in joining us in addressing our mission of improving the health of rural and underserved communities throughout the state. Sincerely, Jack Beveridge, President, Arizona Rural Health Association.

Membership Update

As of August 1, 2020, AzRHA's total membership was 240. Due to postponement of the annual Rural Health Conference and other organizational challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, members were offered extended dues-free individual membership for our fiscal year, August 1-July 31, 2021. Despite this offer, many members chose to continue paying dues as a donation. We are truly grateful for this continued support.

Activities and Accomplishments

In partnership with the Center for Rural Health we co-sponsored the annual Rural and Public Health Policy Forum at the Arizona State Capitol in Phoenix last February. More than 120 people attended. Along with other advocates AzRHA presented our 2020 advocacy priorities. Yavapai County Attorney Sheila Polk was recognized as AzRHA's Policy Maker of the year.

We also co-sponsored the Arizona Rural Health Conference August 1-2, 2019 in partnership with the Center

for Rural Health. It was attended by over 200 health providers, educators, administrators and leaders. As mentioned earlier, the 2020 conference was postponed until next June due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

AzRHA sponsored the 2019 Mid-Year Rural Health Policy Roundup with NRHA CEO Alan Morgan, in partnership with the Arizona Telemedicine Program and the Center for Rural Health. The Webinar drew participants from Arizona and surrounding states. This year's Roundup with Alan Morgan was held on November 19, 2020, in conjunction with National Rural Health Day. We had over 300 participants.

We established priorities and conducted advocacy activities with state and national elected officials in partnership with NRHA and others to advance access to quality rural health care. In addition to addressing Covid-19 issues, our priorities include: Healthcare Workforce, Broadband Technology, Child and Family Health, Behavioral Health, and Tribal Health. Our contacts were met with significant favorable responses from many public officials, including: Senator Kyrsten Sinema, State Senator Heather Carter, Az Department of Health Services Director Dr. Cara Christ and AHCCCS (Medicaid) Director Jodi Snyder. Governor Ducey agreed to issue a

proclamation recognizing National Rural Health Day on November 19, 2020. Special thanks to all of the public health leaders and policymakers who are listening, hearing and responding to the issues we identify.

We maintained an active Wild Apricot member management system/website and Facebook page to represent and communicate the interests of rural health providers, health care organizations, and social

service organizations throughout the state.

In 2020 AzRHA participated in NRHA's annual Policy Summit, Leadership Conference, Annual Meeting, monthly State Association calls, and ongoing advocacy forum communication. We also helped organize and attended a rural health "listening session" with Senator Kyrsten Sinema as well as telephone calls with both she and Senator Martha McSally regarding implemen-

tation of the CARES Act. AzRHA was well represented and participated in many other statewide advocacy efforts: Az Council of Human Service Providers Advocacy Committee, Children's Action Alliance Cover Kids Coalition, Arizona Public Health Association Legislative Committee, Az Telemedicine Program Broadband Action Team, Arizona Commerce Authority Small Business Bootcamps, Vitalyst CoverAz Initiative and Center For Rural Health conference planning and Roadmap webinar series.

Partners In Rural Health Advocacy

AzRHA partners and collaborates with many healthcare policy advocacy organizations on various rural health issues:

- ★ Az Center for Rural Health and Area Health Education Centers
- ★ Az Public Health Association
- ★ Az Council of Human Service Providers
- ★ Az Alliance for Community Health Centers
- ★ Childrens Action Alliance
- ★ Az Telemedicine Program and SWRC
- ★ Az Commerce Authority
- ★ AZ@Work WIOA Program
- ★ AHCCCS, ADHS and County Health Depts
- ★ Az Hospital and Healthcare Association
- ★ Vitalyst Foundation
- ★ Regional Center for Border Health
- ★ Empowerment Systems, Inc

Congratulations

- ★ AzRHA Board Member and Past President Amanda Aguirre received the First Things Leadership award earlier this year. AzRHA also wants to thank her for dedicating significant staff time from the Regional Center for Border Health to support AzRHA.
- ★ Will Humble, Executive Director of the Arizona Public Health Association and AzRHA Board Member, was awarded this year's American Public Health Association Vision Award for his contributions to the state and nation in educating public health officials and the population on COVID-19 prevention and risk realities.
- ★ State Senator Health Carter was recognized by AzRHA this year for her many contributions to improve rural health while serving in the state legislature.

Annual Board of Directors Meeting

The AzRHA Board of Directors held its annual board meeting on October 15, 2020. The end of year financial report was presented and approved, showing ending balances on July 31, 2020 of \$37,533 Chase Bank and \$28,385 Wells Fargo accounts for a total of \$65,918. AzRHA appreciates the financial support we received from the National Rural Health Association. The AzRHA Board reviewed our 2017-2020 AzRHA Strategic work plan goals and priorities. It was agreed that current advocacy themes and priorities

remain relevant: Health Workforce & Economic Development, Health-care Technology and Broadband, Child and Family Health, Behavioral Health and Tribal Health. Specific

and equality and 6) employing an administrative consultant.

It was agreed that our Board of Directors and Committees will focus

on fleshing out more detailed plans in the months ahead. It was also agreed to produce and publicize a calendar of future events like: AzRHA's Annual

Special AzRHA Thanks To

- ☆ Regional Center For Border Health staff Mariajose Almazan's long time service as AzRHA Treasurer/Secretary, Silverio Morales & Phillip Gladney for assisting with communication technology development,
- ☆ Carol Lewis for her diligence supporting our Facebook page and serving as Chair of AzRHA's Membership and Communication committee,
- ☆ State Senator Heather Carter for her many contributions to improve rural health as an Arizona state legislator, and
- ☆ Senator Kyrsten Sinema for her help with CARES Act implementation.

annual AzRHA work plan goals and activities are still appropriate but will be updated: 1) integrating and coordinating communication systems, 2) increasing membership, 3) planning and conducting events, 4) maintaining collaborative partnerships, 5) addressing diversity

Membership Meeting, Rural and Public Health Policy Forum-February, 2021; 47th Annual State Rural Health Conference-June, 2021 and NRHA's 2021 Policy Forum, Annual Meeting, Leadership Conference and Rural Health Roundup with Alan Morgan.

Active Committees Hard At Work

Our four standing committees were very active in 2020, meeting regularly each month throughout the year.

Membership and Communication Committee

M&C was active in integrating, coordinating and maintaining our

Nominating Committee

AzRHA welcomed three excellent new board members, Jeff Lee, Amy Snell and Elizabeth Hall-Lipsey, who were recruited through Wild Apricot member communication.

Program and Policy Committee

P&P helped plan the Annual Public & Rural Health Policy Forum, attended the NRHA Policy Institute and worked with other advocacy groups on shared policy issues. The committee continued to formulate up to date priorities, tracked policy issues, informed members about legislative processes and communicated with elected officials and other policy makers on rural health issues.



communication systems: Facebook, Wild Apricot member management and website, Google Drive and G-Mail to inform members and others about rural health issues and AzRHA activities.

Bylaws Committee

AzRHA bylaws were updated and amended for the first time since 2017. Approved by the Board in November, language was added to actively support equality and justice. Amendments also provided clarification and consistency across AzRHA's operation, including that AzRHA's annual fiscal and membership year is August 1st through July 31st.

AzRHA Board of Directors

We are very privileged and fortunate to have a great volunteer Board of Directors who actively represent and advocate for rural communities, occupations and professions throughout the state. Thank you all for your dedication and service!

- Jack Beveridge, President, Empowerment Systems, Apache Junction, Pinal County
- Alison Hughes, President-Elect, Retired Rural Health Director, Tucson, Pima County
- Mariajose Almazan, Treasurer/Secretary, Regional Center for Border Health, Somerton, Yuma County
- Sean Clendaniel, Immediate Past-President, Phoenix, Maricopa County
- Amanda Aguirre, Past President, Regional Center for Border Health, Somerton, Yuma County
- Amy Snell, Member At Large, Banner Page Hospital, Page, Coconino County
- Carol Lewis, Member At Large, Yavapai County Community Health Services, Prescott, Yavapai County
- Daniel Derksen, M.D., Member and Designated Representative of Center For Rural Health at University of Arizona, Tucson, Pima County
- Elizabeth A. Hall-Lipsy, Member At Large, University of Arizona Department of Pharmacy Practice and Science, Tucson, Pima County
- Holly Figueroa, Co-Chair, Membership & Communication Committee, Health Choice Arizona, Flagstaff, Coconino County
- Jeff Lee, Member At Large, Navajo County Public Health Services District, Holbrook, Navajo County
- Kevin Driesen, Past President & Legislative Liaison, Health Services Consultant, Tucson, Pima County
- Kristine Erps Stewart, Member At Large, Arizona Telemedicine Program, Tucson, Pima County
- Robert Guerrero, Chair, Program & Policy Committee, Az Department of Health Services Office of Border Health, Tucson, Pima County
- Vijette Saari, Co-Chair, Membership & Communication Committee, First Things First, Lake Havasu City, Mohave County
- Will Humble, Member at Large, Arizona Public Health Association, Phoenix, Maricopa County

GOVERNOR DOUGLAS A. DUCEY

STATE OF ARIZONA
★
PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, rural communities in Arizona and throughout the United States are wonderful places to live and work – they are places where people know each other, and work together to benefit the community; and

WHEREAS, Arizona’s rural population is growing at a rapid rate; and

WHEREAS, rural Arizona is an important economic engine that helps to drive Arizona as a national leader in its recognition and contributions to rural residents; and

WHEREAS, rural residents possess a selfless, creative, community-minded spirit; and

WHEREAS, meeting the unique healthcare needs of those residents is constantly evolving, as rural communities face accessibility issues, a shortage of healthcare providers, an aging population, and larger percentages of uninsured and underinsured citizens; and

WHEREAS, ambulatory and emergency medical services are especially critical in rural Arizona; and

WHEREAS, rural health education services are vital to preparing a rural health workforce; and

WHEREAS, rural hospitals and rural clinics are often the economic foundation of these communities in addition to being their primary providers of healthcare; and

WHEREAS, rural healthcare systems create valuable opportunities that offer more comprehensive, compassionate, patient-centered, and holistic care to patients; and

WHEREAS, the challenge inflicted on Arizona’s rural residents due to the COVID-19 pandemic is being bravely faced in collaboration with our rural healthcare systems and the state of Arizona; and

WHEREAS, the Arizona Rural Health Association plays a distinct and critical role by leading community and state-wide efforts to address the unique healthcare needs of our rural citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Arizona Rural Health Association supports pioneering partnerships that promote the health and well-being of rural Arizona; and

WHEREAS, Arizona’s rural residents, the health care systems that serve them, and the friends who advocate for them are recognized herein.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Douglas A. Ducey, Governor of the State of Arizona, do hereby proclaim November 19, 2020, as

RURAL HEALTH DAY

and encourage citizens to recognize the unique contributions and selfless “can do” attitudes of our rural communities, the unique healthcare needs, opportunities that exist in these communities, and the Arizona Rural Health Association for the valuable representation and support it provides to rural people and rural services.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Arizona

Douglas A. Ducey
GOVERNOR

DONE at the Capitol in Phoenix on this twenty-sixth day of October in the year Two Thousand and Twenty and of the Independence of the United States of America the Two Hundred and Forty-Fifth.

ATTEST:

[Signature]
SECRETARY OF STATE