

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Montana Cancer Coalition honors Alma McCormick with Bette Bohlinger Leadership Award

Montana Cancer Coalition (MTCC) and Montana American Indian Women's Health Coalition (MAIWHC) member Alma McCormick of Hardin was presented with the 2019 Bette Bohlinger Leadership Award Tuesday, May 7 at 10:30 a.m. at the Montana Cancer Coalition (MTCC) Statewide Meeting held at the Delta Hotels Helena Colonial in Helena, MT.

Alma McCormick, executive director of Messengers for Health (MFH), has been recognized nationally for her work to promote health equity and social justice through the Messengers for Health program. "She is being recognized for her exemplary work in health education and health promotion activities that benefit indigenous and non-indigenous communities alike," said Emily Coyle, co-chair of the MTCC Steering Committee, who nominated McCormick for the award.

MFH is a grassroots 501(c)(3) indigenous nonprofit organization located on the Crow Indian reservation that strives to improve the health of individuals through community-based projects designed to reduce the ever-broadening health disparities so prevalent in our communities. MFH utilizes a strong network of Crow women who others turn to for advice and support. Recently, Alma has engaged Crow men to do outreach to other Crow men to increase colorectal cancer screening, quit using commercial tobacco, and get screened for lung cancer, if appropriate.

This program, called Warriors for Health, is an innovative approach to improving men's health and wellness. McCormick explains that MFH's calling is to 'capture the vision of wellness by coupling our traditional (ancestral) means with contemporary preventative and curative medicines.'

"I believe Alma's life works have reduced the incidence and deaths from cancer for the Crow people," said MTCC co-chair Nancy Lee. "She is a worthy recipient of the Bette Bohlinger Leadership Award."

McCormick joins previous recipients: Becky Franks (2017), Jean Raw (2015), the MTCC Early Detection Team (2014), Sarah Porter-Osen (2013), Diana Reetz Stacey (2012), Cheryl Hackett (2011), Dr. Thomas Purcell (2010), Betsy Smith (2009), Sue Warren (2008), Rita McDonald (2007), and Dr. Barbara Lloyd (2006).

Bette Bohlinger died of acute myeloid leukemia in 2006 and following her passing the MTCC created the award to honor an exceptional individual or organization that encourages, inspires, and leads others within the group.

The MTCC, in partnership with DPHHS, was created in 2003 to educate Montana residents about cancer prevention. The coalition is comprised over 200 state health advocates and organizations with the common mission to reduce the overall burden of cancer for Montanans.

The award ceremony was held in conjunction with the MTCC annual statewide meeting Tuesday, May 7th, 2019 in Helena at the Delta Marriot - Colonial Hotel. The meeting focus, Health Equity and our work towards the reduction of disparities in Montana, featured keynote speaker Dr. Donald Warne, MD, MPH, Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Director of the Indians into Medicine (INMED) program at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine & Health Sciences.