

Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

April 21, 2016

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BHSJ CHA is Recognized as Public Health Champions!

Coldwater, MI. During his proclamation for Michigan public health week, Governor Snyder stated “Every day public health professionals in Michigan work to ensure all residents have the opportunity to lead a healthy life, empower communities with the tools, knowledge and resources to make a difference, and encourage individuals to take charge of their health, by promoting prevention and health equity in the community.” Every day, staff from the tri-county health department strive to meet these high ideals as they work to fulfill their mission of promoting optimal health, preventing disease and protecting the public’s health. They’re hard work and efforts have been recognized.

On April, 13th, the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency received the 2016 Jean Chabut Health Policy Champions Award. This award, along with a special legislative tribute, were presented by State Representatives Aaron Miller (House District 59) and Eric Leutheuser (District 58) during the Michigan Public Health Week Ceremonies held at the Capitol Rotunda. The tri-county health department was acknowledged for their emergency preparedness capabilities as demonstrated by their completion of Project Public Health Ready. According to Rebecca Burns, Health Officer, “Project Public Health Ready is a nationally recognized program which focuses on three goals – all hazards planning, workforce development and demonstrated readiness through exercises and real events. Our health department joins an elite group of health departments that have met these best practice standards.” Since 2004, only 400 local health departments from across the nation have met the standards.

Project Public Health Ready (PPHR) is a criteria-based training and recognition program that assesses local health department (LHD) capacity and capability to plan for, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies. PPHR aims to protect the public's health and strengthen the public health infrastructure by equipping local health departments with

sustainable tools to plan, train, and exercise using a continuous quality improvement model. Meeting these standards helps to assure that when an emergency occurs, public health is ready and able to meet the public health needs of its communities. To learn more about our emergency preparedness program or how you can be prepared in the event of a disaster, check out our website at www.bhsj.org.

Michigan Public Health Week is an annual event that occurs the second week of April. The special recognition week provides local public health departments an opportunity to promote public health awareness and its services within the community.

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From left to right: State Representative Eric Leutheuser (District 58); Rebecca Burns, Health Officer, BHSJ CHA; James Cook, Emergency Preparedness Coord., BHSJ CHA; State Representative Aaron Miller, (District 59).