



Geiger Gibson Program Names 2011-2012 Distinguished Visitor in Community Health Policy

WASHINGTON, DC – Rachel A. Gonzales-Hanson, Chief Executive Officer of Community Health Development, Inc. (CHDI), has been named the 2011-2012 Geiger Gibson Distinguished Visitor in Community Health Policy at the George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services, Department of Health Policy. The Distinguished Visitorship is awarded annually to recognize a leader in the community health centers movement and is a central part of the Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy.

Ms. Gonzales-Hanson is a life-long resident of Uvalde, Texas. Her involvement in the health center movement began in 1983 as an administrative assistant at CHDI; within three years, she took the helm as CEO of the organization. For nearly three decades, Ms. Gonzales-Hanson has led the health center through remarkable growth and development. Today the health center serves almost 11,000 patients, offering comprehensive, integrated care in four locations throughout Uvalde, Real, Edwards, and parts of Zavala Counties. In addition, CHDI is deeply involved in community-based efforts to develop health professions careers in area students.

Ms. Gonzales-Hanson has been recognized for her commitment and leadership in advancing the philosophy of community health both locally and nationally. Her recognition extends to the highest level of government, national philanthropies, and her peers. She was appointed by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to the National Advisory Committee on Rural Health and has served as an Ombudsperson for Migrant Health Issues for the Associate Administrator of HRSA's Bureau of Primary Health Care. She currently serves on the Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans' Rural Health Advisory Committee.

Ms. Gonzales-Hanson also has been awarded the Community Health Leadership Award by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (one of ten given nationwide) and has received honors and awards from the American Legion Post 476 Auxiliary, the State of Texas, and the US Congressional Seal. Ms. Gonzales-Hanson also served as a member of the National Advisory Committee for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Allies Against Asthma Program as well as Chair of the National Advisory Committee for RWJ's Health Disparities/Finding Answers Program. She has served as an officer of the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) and was the first Hispanic female to be elected and serve as Chair of the NACHC board.

About the Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy

The Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy is a special initiative of The George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services. Housed in the Department of Health Policy, and named after Drs. H. Jack Geiger and Count Gibson, pioneers in community health practice and tireless advocates for civil and human rights, the program aims to develop the

next generation of community health leaders by offering education, research and training in community health practice and leadership. The program's research and educational activities seek to advance the education and policy development in the fields of health centers, primary health care for medically underserved populations, and health disparities reduction. The Program is supported through grants and gifts, as well as a generous sustaining gift from the RCHN Community Health Foundation. For more information on the Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy, visit

<http://www.gwumc.edu/sphhs/departments/healthpolicy/ggprogram>