



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Local Health Center Leader Inducted into National Grassroots Hall of Fame**

*Vernita Largin Todd, Senior Vice President, External Affairs, at Health Center Partners of Southern California, has been inducted into the Grassroots Hall of Fame for the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC).*

Bethesda, Md. – (May 22, 2017) Vernita Largin Todd, Senior Vice President, External Affairs, at [Health Center Partners of Southern California](#), has been inducted into the Grassroots Hall of Fame for the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC). Grassroots Hall of Fame members have made lasting contributions to ensuring the creation, survival and strength of Community Health Centers and the Health Center Movement through their dedicated and tireless efforts over many years. Ms. Todd was presented the Hall of Fame Award at the 2017 NACHC Policy and Issues Forum in Washington, D.C., an event attended by 3,000 health center leaders from around the country.

“Vernita Todd has been a passionate advocate on behalf of health centers and the movement would not be what it is today without her dedication, skilled leadership and tireless energy,” said Tom Van Coverden, President and CEO of NACHC. “She has been on Capitol Hill many times carrying the health center message, and rallying public support and funding in her state. We’re deeply appreciative of her commitment, hard work and leadership in advocacy.”

This is the second time Ms. Todd has won a NACHC award for her advocacy work. She was honored in 2014 with the Elizabeth K. Cooke Advocacy MVP award. Her leadership and focus at Health Center Partners of Southern California ensured community health advocates have a voice in emerging policy discussions that impact primary care at the state and national level. Ms. Todd is a long time veteran of community health and advocacy. She served 10 years as the CEO of Heart City Health Center in Elkhart, IN, and also served as chair of the the board of the Indiana Primary Health Care Association. Todd is a graduate of Murray State University and is originally from Clarksville, TN.

Health centers started more than 50 years ago as a daring experiment in President Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty campaign, which led to the opening of the nation’s first health centers in Boston and the Mississippi Delta. Today, that pilot project has evolved into the largest and most successful primary healthcare system in the United States. Health centers serve 25 million Americans (1 in 13 people), including 300,000 veterans, who live in nearly 10,000 rural and urban communities. Health centers also save the U.S. health care system more than \$24 billion every year in reduced overall costs from preventable hospitalizations and avoidable emergency room visits. To learn more about the mission and accomplishments of health centers please visit [www.nachc.org](http://www.nachc.org).

**About National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC)**

Founded in 1970, the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to enhance and expand access to quality, community-responsive health care for America's medically underserved and uninsured. NACHC represents the nation's network of over 1,400 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) which serve 25 million people through nearly 10,000 sites located in all of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Guam.

**About Health Center Partners of Southern California**

Health Center Partners and its subsidiaries serve as the nexus for its members and partners to transform primary care through the power of innovation and collaboration. Our health policy, public affairs and advocacy efforts enhance the development of and recognition for our members who enrich the patient experience and improve the human condition through access to quality health care and related services for their diverse communities, with an emphasis on low-income and uninsured populations. For more information, visit [www.hcpsocal.org](http://www.hcpsocal.org).

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