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NEWS

SEDGWICK COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES
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LOCAL HEALTH ADVOCATES RECEIVE THANKS

(Sedgwick County, Kan.) – For the ninth year, the Sedgwick County Health Department is recognizing and thanking local businesses, groups and individuals who make progress toward better public health. In observance of National Public Health Thank You Day, the health department honors Gary Heath, Cindy Harmon, Karla Stenzel and Kathy Hubka.

Gary Heath has been a dedicated volunteer for the Kansas DUI Impact Center for nearly 20 years. Heath speaks monthly on Victim Impact Panels and assists staff with many other tasks as well, providing opportunities to educate people on how driving impaired affects families. Heath has volunteered more than 2,300 hours for the Kansas DUI Impact Center.

The health of our babies mirrors the health of our community. Cindy Harmon, interim director for Women's, Infants' and Children's Services at Wesley Medical Center helps families by linking them to resources and saving lives. Harmon planned and implemented the Heartbreak and Hope Conference, which has a goal of connecting all health professionals that assist families in our community to resources throughout the state.

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Karla Stenzel has worked in Wichita Public Schools for the past 28 years as the physical education teacher at College Hill Elementary, while also overseeing the physical education programming and staff for USD 259. In 2013, Stenzel assisted in modifying the Walktober program, an effort that helped increase participation in the program. More than 40 Wichita public schools participated in Walktober this year, up from 12 schools in 2012. During the month of October, more than 20,000 students took steps toward a healthier tomorrow.

Kathy Hubka's involvement with the School-Based Dental Sealants collaborative has been instrumental in assisting the group reach its goal of providing sealants in all of the Title I schools in USD 259 during the 2013-2014 academic year. Hubka has helped school staff and administration recognize the importance of these services, and has assisted in scheduling the events.

"The work of promoting wellness, preventing disease and protecting the health of the public is a responsibility shared by many partners in our community," said health department Director Claudia Blackburn. "We are fortunate to live in a community where collaboration is a core value when it comes to achieving public health goals."

The Sedgwick County Health Department thanks these and other local advocates for being partners in the fight for healthier communities and inspiring others to do the same.

To learn more about National Public Health Thank You Day and ways that you or your organization can get involved in the health of the community, contact the Sedgwick County Health Department at 316-660-7300.

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