

June 24, 2020



MEMBER UPDATE

Our world turned upside down with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. And now, with the awakening of many in our country to the structural racism and violence African Americans experience daily—and have for generations—our world continues to spin. OPCA is responding to these dramatically changing times by supporting Oregon's community health centers, which are at the forefront of the fight against COVID-19, and stand in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement.

The country received some encouraging signs last week from the Supreme Court that our voices are being heard.

First, DACA was upheld, giving legal protection for the more than 700,000 dreamers in this country who have lived with the constant fear of losing their status to remain in the U.S. Although this does not provide a long-term legislative fix, it is a major victory for immigrant rights.



Following quickly was the decision in support of the LGBTQ community, confirming that they should be included in the civil rights law protecting them in the work place.

We must continue pushing forward, not only as individual CHCs, but as an organization with a singular focus. While these steps may feel like only a start, they are moving the country towards large-scale reforms—giving us signs of encouragement and, most important, hope.

Thank you for the work you do every day in support of individuals and entire communities.

Gil Muñoz, OPCA Board President

See responses from OPCA members in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement in [OPCA's newsroom](#). OPCA will continue to share these statements from members. Contact [OPCA's Communications Team](#) to share your statement.

White Bird Clinic Gets International Attention for CAHOOTS Program

White Bird Clinic in Eugene is receiving increased attention as communities around the world discuss police reform in response to the Black Lives Matter movement. Its CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets) program is being hailed as an example of an innovative community-based public safety system to provide mental health first response for crises involving mental illness, homelessness, and addiction. CAHOOTS launched as a community policing initiative in 1989.

A few days after the horrific killing of George Floyd by a police officer, White Bird Clinic began receiving numerous media requests about CAHOOTS. It now fields 20 to 30 requests a day from national and international media organizations, said Chris Hecht, Executive Coordinator. And, White Bird replies to every request.

"You never know when one article somewhere reaches the right person and suddenly a community can adopt a program that perhaps can prevent a civilian police violent interaction," said Hecht. "Any media attention could be a way to save a life, quite frankly. We're thrilled to support this national conversation and offer a way this can be done differently."

In addition to media, White Bird has seen an increase in communities reaching out interesting in starting something like CAHOOTS. While there have been about 8 to 10 cities interested in the past two years, more than 10 cities have contacted White Bird Clinic in the last two weeks and has entered into contracts with the cities of Olympia, Wash., and Denver, Colo. [Read more about CAHOOTS here.](#)



Here are a few media segments on White Bird's CAHOOTS program:

- **CNN:** [Interview with Ebony Morgan from CAHOOTS about the need to consider unarmed mediation response as we consider police reform](#)
 - **KEZI 9 News:** [CAHOOTS gaining national attention amid calls to defund police](#)
 - **NPR All Things Considered:** ['CAHOOTS': How Social Workers And Police Share Responsibilities In Eugene, Oregon](#)
 - **Los Angeles Times:** [As protesters call for defunding police, Northwest cities seek to reimagine law enforcement](#)
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OPCA Provides REAL D, Telehealth Testimony to Legislature

OPCA provided written testimony on Monday to the Legislature expressing gratitude for the state vision that mandates collection across the system of race/ethnicity data. We also shared some of the concerns around timeline, workflow implementation, alignment with HRSA reporting requirements, and potential staff training that many of you shared with us. OPCA also provided urged the Legislature to extend telehealth parity as part of this [testimony](#). OPCA will continue to monitor and navigate this conversation with OHA and state leadership.

Save Telehealth Payment Parity

Today, Oregon's elected leaders will convene a Special Session of Oregon's Legislature to consider bills on policy accountability, COVID-19 response, and a broadband measure. What's missing? Telehealth payment parity. Throughout the pandemic, health centers have stepped up to meet the needs of their communities through telehealth. Payment parity has made that possible. We need to let lawmakers know that making payment parity permanent will mean health centers can continue to innovate and increase access to care.

Right now, telehealth payment parity is [set to expire](#) at the end of 2020. Please take a few moments to send a message to Oregon's legislative leaders asking them to make telehealth payment parity permanent.

[Take Action](#)

Legislature's First Special Session of 2020 Starts Today

Over the last two days, the Joint Special Session committee met virtually to discuss bill concepts that are up for consideration during the 2020 First Special Session set to convene today and run through Friday. If you'd like to learn more about the measures up for consideration during the special session, click below:

[More on the 2020 First Special Session](#)

Register To Attend National Health Center Week Planning Webinar Today



National Health Center Week is just around the corner. Join the Health Center Advocacy team at **noon (PT) today, Wednesday, June 24**, for the National Health Center Week 2020 Planning Webinar: [Register here to attend](#).

National Health Center Week takes place Aug. 9-15. The theme this year is: Lighting the Way for Healthier Communities Today and in the Future. Find out more about [NHCW here](#).

Neighborhood Health Center Receives \$25,000 Grant To Respond to COVID-19

Neighborhood Health Center has received a \$25,000 grant from the Oregon Community Foundation to help respond to the COVID-19 outbreak.

“We are so grateful for this support from the Oregon Community Foundation, especially at this time when so many in our community are facing extraordinary financial pressures as a result of COVID,” said Jeri Weeks, CEO.



“This grant will help make our work to provide patient-centered healthcare regardless of income or state of wellness possible — something our community is especially in need of during this challenging time,” she added.

[Read the announcement here.](#)

Member Stories: Wallace Program Has Housed 22 Families, Individuals Since 2018

Health is the foundation of all success—the breath that gives life to hope. Yet, most of what affects health happens outside of the doctor’s office. Wallace cares for increasing numbers of people who are homeless or threatened by homelessness. With lives in constant crisis, people can’t focus attention on their health. Existing health conditions get worse. New ones arise.

Housing for Health aims to address the impossible situation of individuals and families attempting to improve their health while homeless. “It all starts with housing,” said Christine Sanders, MSW/CHW, the program’s Lead Navigator. “Take care of that one big stressor, and suddenly everything else becomes fixable.”

Read more about Wallace's Housing for Health program in this [Member Stories blog](#).



This post is part of OPCA's blog that provides space for health center stories told in the words of members.

Have a stor to tell? Email [OPCA's Communications Team](#).

Media & Resources:

- [OPCA's COVID-19 Resources page](#) has the most up-to-date resources such as
 - [Oregon's COVID-19 Weekly Testing Summary](#)
 - [CDC COVID Communication Toolkit for Migrants, Refugees, and Other Limited-English Proficient Populations](#)
- Hear from Leslie Gregory, founder and director of Right to Health in Portland, Oregon
 - [Racism – Public Health Crisis](#)
- OPCA webinars, which provide the latest policy, funding, and other updates:
 - [Slides](#) and a [recording](#) from Tuesday's COVID-19 Member Briefing, which includes a conversation with Matt Hogge of La Clinica, the 2019-20 Annual Awards of Excellence winner for Innovation & Leadership in Transformation. [Read a Q&A with Matt here.](#)