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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Coconino County Health Department Honored for Excellence in Public Health

Public Health Program is One of 23 Nationwide to Receive “Model Practice Award” in 2009

Flagstaff, AZ – The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) honored the Coconino County Health Department (CCHD) at their 2009 annual conference for implementing a program that demonstrates exemplary and replicable qualities in response to a local public health need. CCHD is one of 23 local public health programs selected from across the nation to receive NACCHO’s Model Practice Award.

The CCHD Williams Community Health Profile prompted this award. This new booklet tells the unique story of a rural community, focusing on health. It was created by involving community stakeholders every-step-of-the-way, in order to “see” from their vantage point, and create a tangible document that could then be a catalyst in making the community’s health wishes come true. Now a myriad of agencies can use the Profile, both as a vital part of their planning efforts and to facilitate the acquisition of grants that will improve life for many local residents.

Preventive health endeavors and service provision within the greater Williams community will be streamlined as a result of this collaboration. The project emerged from an examination of CCHD’s capacity to engage its communities to identify and solve health problems, which was a standard within a NACCHO self-assessment tool that CCHD utilized to enhance its service provision to outlying areas.

“The Coconino County Health Department strives to have a community-driven approach to preventive health care. We’re proud to receive NACCHO’s Model Practice Award. The award is evidence of our commitment to develop responsive and innovative public health programs that improve the health of local citizens,” said Barbara Worgess, CCHD Director.

A committee of peers selected the CCHD Williams' Community Health Profile from a group of 116 local health department applications. The Model Practice Awards program honors initiatives – including programs, resources, and tools – that demonstrate how local health departments and their community partners can effectively collaborate to address local public health concerns. The CCHD Williams Community Health Profile will become part of an online, searchable database of successful public health practices in areas ranging from immunization and maternal and child health to infectious diseases and emergency preparedness. The database will allow NACCHO to share information about what is working across the country in local public health.

Sara Wagner, MPH, CCHD Senior Health Planner, was instrumental in leading and developing this new resource. “It was very rewarding to be involved in such one-on-one collaboration with community members, to help share their story and create something that benefits everyone. The Williams community embraced this project, generating lots of enthusiasm. As a result, persons are seeing more possibilities on the horizon, and proactive steps are being taken, to bring their dreams to fruition,” said Wagner.

NACCHO, in congratulating CCHD on this important recognition, stated that the Coconino County Health Department joins a special group of health departments that exemplify the forward thinking, proactive attitude of our nation's public health system.

For more information about the NACCHO Model Practice Awards, call the Coconino County Health Department at 928-679-7331, toll-free 1-877-679-7331. Information is also available at www.naccho.org or visit <http://www.coconino.az.gov/health.aspx?id=15166>.

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