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Healthy Living Collaboration Announces Healthy Living Heroes

The greater La Crosse community nominated 7 organizations and individuals to be recognized as Healthy Living Collaboration Heroes. “From the field of 7 nominations, the Hero Review Committee selected 5 to receive awards,” said Jason Bertrand, Review Committee Chair.

The Heroes include a Large Organization Hero: Mayo Clinic Health System- Franciscan Healthcare “You Matter Program”. The You Matter Program is an employee health promotion program coordinated for Mayo Health System employees affiliated with Franciscan Healthcare. The Review Committee noted that the program was replicable, offered great motivation for employees, included partnerships with local health and wellness organizations and had a positive impact on overall employee health.

The Review Committee selected a Small Organization Hero: Old Oak Family Farm. The Review Committee noted that Old Oak Family Farm partnered with the Harvest of the Month Program and took the business risk of providing produce to downtown La Crosse on Wednesday afternoons. Old Oak made purchasing local produce easy by conducting weekly produce stands that were open to anyone in the downtown community, including WIC participants. Old Oak Family Farm also accepted EBT/Debit tokens at the Cameron Park Farmers’ market.

The Hero Review Committee selected Kwik Trip, Inc for Honorable Mention in the Organization category for their Eat Smart Menu Guide and affiliation with the Gundersen Health System 500 Club.

Several Individual Hero nominations were received. The Review Committee selected the Healthy Living Individual Hero award winner to be Jodie Visker, garden coordinator at three Onalaska Public Elementary Schools. The Review Committee noted the hundreds of youth and families exposed to gardening and produce because of Jodie’s efforts and the organized and systematic approach Jodi takes to school and community gardening.

Honorable Mention Individual Hero award recipients were also selected. They include JoEllen Blegen, Nancy Kroner and Linda Mader, Coordinators and Instructors of the Strong Senior’s Weight Training Program for the Town of Greenfield in St. Joseph. The Review Committee noted the growth of the Strong Seniors program in the Town of Greenfield. These three women started off as participants, received training as Strong Senior instructors and are now leading and sustaining the class of over 20 participants in rural La Crosse County

Heroes will be awarded with a breakfast and plaque at the La Crosse Healthy Living Collaboration meeting on Jan. 10th at 7:30 am at the Black River Beach House. The La Crosse Healthy Living Collaboration is part of the effort of the Community Transformation Grant received by the La Crosse County Health Department.