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**LAWRENCE, MASSACHUSETTS RECEIVES RWJF CULTURE OF HEALTH PRIZE
FOR INNOVATIVE EFFORTS TO HELP RESIDENTS LEAD HEALTHIER LIVES**

*Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Recognizes Lawrence, Massachusetts for
Using the Power of Collaboration to Transform Health*

Lawrence, Massachusetts—Lawrence, Massachusetts is one of eight winners of the 2015 *RWJF Culture of Health Prize* awarded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The Prize celebrates the strides communities have made to ensure good health flourishes for all. Announced today at RWJF headquarters in Princeton, New Jersey, the Lawrence community will receive a cash prize of \$25,000 in recognition of its commitment to building a Culture of Health.

Lawrence is being recognized for leveraging its unique strengths and rallying community partners around a shared vision of health.

Efforts include:

- Linking parents to workforce development opportunities and other community services that contribute to a family's well-being and success through the Family Resource Center.
- Recruiting and educating family physicians through the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center's physician residency program – an innovative 4-year program that has led to a significant number of doctors remaining in the community after graduation.
- Revitalizing the landscape by restoring old textile mills along the Merrimack River into affordable family homes and transforming a trash-strewn riverfront into the Spicket River Greenway—a multipurpose path connecting some of the city's poorest neighborhoods to parks, downtown and other critical amenities.
- Investing and empowering a new generation of young leaders through various programs including the Mayor's Health Task Force's Lawrence Youth Council, the Groundwork Lawrence's Green Team and Lawrence CommunityWorks' Movement City.

Lawrence's application for the highly competitive *RWJF Culture of Health Prize* was submitted by the YWCA of Greater Lawrence in partnership with the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center, Groundwork Lawrence, and the ValleyWorks Career Center. The community was selected from more than 340 prize applications across the country. The other seven winning communities are Bridgeport, Connecticut; Bronx, New York; Everett, Massachusetts; Kansas City, Missouri; Menominee Nation in northeastern Wisconsin; Spartanburg County, South Carolina, and Waaswaaganing Anishinaabeg (Lac du Flambeau Tribe), Wisconsin. **Tune in to rwjf.org/Prize today at 12pm ET/9am PT for a live webcast of the Prize announcement ceremony.**

Our Mission

"To develop healthy public policies and activities that accommodate the changing conditions of the total community, and promote improvement in the quality of life of its community members."

“This year’s *RWJF Culture of Health Prize* winners are inspiring examples of communities that are weaving health into everything they do,” said Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, RWJF president and CEO. “These eight communities, and our 12 previous winners, are connecting to like-minded people across the country to build a Culture of Health movement fueled by bold ideas, collaboration, and solutions so that everyone will have the opportunity and means to live the healthiest life they can.”

Building a Culture of Health means creating a society that gives every person, no matter who they are, the opportunity to be as healthy as they can be. To become an *RWJF Culture of Health Prize* winner, Lawrence had to demonstrate how it excelled in the following six criteria:

- Defining health in the broadest possible terms.
- Committing to sustainable systems changes and policy-oriented long-term solutions.
- Cultivating a shared and deeply-held belief in the importance of equal opportunity for health.
- Harnessing the collective power of leaders, partners, and community members.
- Securing and making the most of available resources.
- Measuring and sharing progress and results.

“Health is in all policies. When you truly understand that, then you can create a Culture of Health,” said Vilma Lora, who coordinates the City of Lawrence Mayor’s Health Task Force in her role as the YWCA Director of Social Justice Initiatives. “Lawrence’s Prize-winning efforts illuminate the importance of collaboration—without it, you can’t influence change. Here everyone matters and everyone has a voice.”

A celebration event is currently being planned for early December to bring together all the community partners who have made building a Culture of Health in Lawrence a priority.

About Lawrence’s Culture of Health Journey

The Culture of Health that is flourishing in Lawrence has been several decades in the making. Local government, health care providers, schools, non-profits, religious organizations and others were working from their unique vantage point on intractable community challenges including poverty, chronic disease and crime. It became apparent that no single sector would be able to tackle these issues without leveraging the knowledge, talents, and resources of others. Today, under the umbrella of The City of Lawrence Mayor’s Health Task Force, the community is committed to exploring creative strategies on a variety of fronts to advance progress and improved health for all residents.

About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

For more than 40 years the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has worked to improve the health and health care of all Americans. We are striving to build a national Culture of Health that will enable all Americans to live longer, healthier lives now and for generations to come. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org. Follow the Foundation on Twitter at [www.rwjf.org/twitter](https://twitter.com/rwjf) or on Facebook at [www.rwjf.org/facebook](https://www.facebook.com/rwjf).

About the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute

The [University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute](http://www.uwhealth.edu/population-health-institute) is the focal point within the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health to address questions of what it takes to improve health across the population. The Institute advances health and well-being for all by developing and promoting evidence-informed approaches to policy and

practice at the local, state, and national levels. The Institute leads the work on the *County Health Rankings & Roadmaps* and manages the *RWJF Culture of Health Prize*. For more information, visit <http://uwphi.pophealth.wisc.edu>.