



**NEWS RELEASE**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 26, 2008

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## **New State Program Keeps Health Care Providers in Colorado** *Student Loan Repayment to Help Health Care Workers*

DENVER— The first recipients of student loan repayment awards from a new Colorado program have been selected. The Colorado Health Care Community Board announced the first awards from the program created in 2007 to make it easier for health care professionals to work in medically underserved areas of the state.

Jason Wray, Physician Assistant, Sunrise Community Health Inc., Evans  
Darryl Lacy, Physician Assistant, Valley-Wide Health Systems, Inc., Alamosa  
Jill Antell, Nurse Practitioner, Northwest Colorado Community Health Center, Craig  
Della Lane, Nurse Practitioner, Denver Health Community Health Services, Park Hill Clinic, Denver  
Kelly McMullen, M.D., Family Physician, Salud Family Health Center, Fort Lupton  
Kelly Colbert, Nurse Practitioner, Spanish Peaks Family Clinic, Walsenburg

The board, appointed by Governor Ritter, awarded a total of \$186,000. The recipients will receive their payments spread over the next two years to assist in paying back the student loans they used to complete their medical educations. Five of the awardees work for Community Health Centers.

The program resulted from legislation, SB07-232, that created a student loan repayment program for health care professionals in medically underserved areas of the state. The program enables up to six health care providers to be placed in medically underserved communities each year by providing student loan repayment assistance. The program was proposed by Colorado Community Health Network (CCHN). Sen. Chris Romer (D-Denver) and Rep. Tom Massey (R-Pagosa Springs) sponsored the legislation. This will help:

- Provide access to care for an estimated 6,000 patients per year.
- Introduce providers to needy communities. These providers often stay beyond their obligations and continue to serve underserved communities for many more years.

The program is funded with a combination of tobacco settlement funds; a contribution from CollegenInvest, the Colorado Department of Higher Education's education financing division; and an expected federal match through the Federal Department of Health and Human Services.

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*For more information about the program or to interview a recipient, please contact Tanah Wagenseller at (303) 861-5165, Ext. 241, or [tanah@cchn.org](mailto:tanah@cchn.org).*

*The Colorado Community Health Network (CCHN) is the collective voice for Colorado's 15 Community Health Centers (CHCs) and their patients. CHCs provide a health care home to more than 500,000 of their community members - one in 10 people in Colorado - from 54 of the state's 64 counties. Without CHCs, hundreds of thousands of Colorado's low-income families and individuals would have no regular source of health care. CCHN's mission is to increase access to high quality health care for people in need in Colorado. For more information about CCHN, please visit [www.cchn.org](http://www.cchn.org).*