



# CHARITABLE HEALTHCARE NETWORK

*Ohio: Stronger. Healthier. Together.*

## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### LOCAL NURSE RECOGNIZED AS 2020 FREE CLINIC NURSE OF THE YEAR AT OHIO FREE CLINIC APPRECIATION AWARDS

Columbus, OH -12/9/2020 – Ohio University Heritage Community Clinic, along with free clinics across Ohio, is celebrating the Sixth Annual Free Clinic Appreciation Month. With the passage of House Bill 320 in 2014, the Ohio Legislature designated December as Free Clinic Appreciation Month. On Wednesday's virtual celebration, Tobie Newberry, DNP, RN, was recognized as Ohio's 2020 Free Clinic Nurse of the Year.

"Our clinic fills a critical need for health care services, particularly for hard-working Southeastern Ohioans struggling to make ends meet," said Carole Merckle. "Free Clinic Appreciation Month gives us an opportunity to celebrate all that we have accomplished, and how we've met the needs of the community during the pandemic."

In 2019, Ohio's free clinics provided more than 150,000 visits to over 55,000 patients, with volunteer physicians, nurses and other healthcare professionals providing nearly 180,000 hours of care to those who have fallen through the cracks of our healthcare system in Ohio. Ohio's free clinics are on track to obtain similar service hours even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, 31 of Charitable Healthcare Network's 52 clinics remained open to provide medical services in a time when their communities needed them most. Heritage Community Clinic was able to expand and adapt their services to continue serving their local community while upholding the safety of their staff and patients.

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"While the ACA and Medicaid Expansion has helped thousands of Ohioans obtain health insurance, gaps still remain," said Deb Miller, Executive Director of the Charitable Healthcare Network. "The pandemic has made the need for our clinics stronger than ever as unemployment and uninsured rates remain high. We are especially excited for the opportunity in 2020 to recognize the work Ohio's clinics are doing to address those gaps."

To learn more about Ohio Free Clinic Appreciation Month, please contact Sydney Hatch (shatch@charitablehealth.org), visit our website [www.charitablehealth.org](http://www.charitablehealth.org) or follow us on Twitter [@CHNetwork](https://twitter.com/CHNetwork), use #ohiofreeclinics and #OhioStrongerHealthierTogether

**To share our social media posts about Tobie, follow these links to our Twitter and Facebook.**

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/CHNetwork/status/1334980806197080064?s=20>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/CharitableHealthcareNetwork/posts/4178660922168183>

### ***About Tobie Newberry from Ohio University's Heritage Community Clinic.***

Tobie Newberry is a Certified Nurse Practitioner with her Doctorate in Nursing Practice. She has worked as the primary practitioner at the Heritage Community Clinic for over ten years. It gives her much joy to work with the underserved population. She collaborates with local pharmacies and providers to provide the best care for her patients. She is a native of Southeast Ohio. She started her nursing career in 1993 as a Licensed Practical Nurse. She continued her education while working full time in local hospitals, a primary care office, and with neurosurgeons. She is dedicated to patient care and is not limited to her full time job. Dr. Newberry also works with the geriatric population at a local nursing home and is adjunct faculty with the School of Nursing at Ohio University.



### ***About Charitable Healthcare Network.***

Charitable Healthcare Network (CHN), formerly the Ohio Association of Free Clinics, advocates on behalf of Ohio's free clinics and the people they serve. We do not provide direct health care services on-site, but support those clinics that do. Free clinic services vary, but may include: primary care, prescription assistance, dental, vision, behavioral health and other specialties. With the recent impacts of COVID-19, the number of unemployed and uninsured/under-insured citizens is skyrocketing like never before. Using cost-effective strategies, such as in-kind services, building partnerships with other nonprofit organizations and donations of health care resources and time, we are able to support free clinics so they can provide for the health care needs of their patients. These strategies mean that every dollar invested in free clinics brings nearly \$6.45 in care for patients.

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