

The Pueblo Chieftain

NEWS

'A wealth of community knowledge': Health department honors Puebloan as Public Health Champion

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An advocate for local kids and a community “role model” who spent years working in substance use prevention was recently recognized by the Pueblo Department of Public Health and Environment as its 2020 Public Health Champion.

Cheryl Reid, who worked for Crossroads' Turning Points for more than 15 years, most recently as its director of prevention, died in January 2020 but was posthumously recognized March 17 by PDPHE for her many contributions to public health.

“If you ever had a question about Pueblo or who does what, you asked Cheryl Reid,” said Sarah Martinez, a PDPHE health promotions specialist who worked with Reid in the Communities that Care program.

“She was a wealth of community knowledge and always made sure to connect the dots between agencies to prevent duplication and maximize Pueblo's resources. She was always warm and welcoming to those around her and had a keen ability to make you feel special.”

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At Crossroads', Reid worked various jobs from direct patient care to director of prevention. She wrote several state and federal grants that helped bring millions of dollars to Pueblo to serve youth and families.

Reid also spent years working with local organizations like the Pueblo Coalition to Prevent Underage Drinking and Drugs, the Pueblo Alliance for Healthy Teens, which she cofounded, and the One Community coalition.

She raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for prevention-focused work in Pueblo, to include the Strategic Prevention Framework grant through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) which provided funding for One Community, curriculums in schools, and other special projects.

For several years, Reid also coordinated the administration of Healthy Kids Colorado Surveys in both Pueblo school districts to gather vital data about risk and protective factors of Pueblo's youth. The survey data informs numerous youth health initiatives in Pueblo, including many at PDPHE.

"Congratulations on a well-deserved award to the late Cheryl Reid," said Randy Evetts, PDPHE public health director.

"Pueblo's public health community acknowledges Mrs. Reid as a role model in the Pueblo community,"

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The award was presented by the Pueblo County Board of Health, with a community selection committee choosing Reid over 10 other nominees for her "promotion of health and protecting the environment."

The award has been given annually since 2012 and recent recipients include Dr. Shaun Gogarty, the Southern Colorado Health Network, Kim Arline and Pueblo Community College.

PDPHE is now accepting nominations for its 2021 Public Health Champion. To nominate a leader in the community, visit surveymonkey.com/r/BNFTB9G to complete a short electronic survey. The submission period ends March 31.

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