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CONTACT: Lindy Vincent
Communities Joined in Action
360-489-0496
lvincent@cjaonline.net
www.cjaonline.net

Communities Joined in Action to Intensify Focus on Policy Change

The Communities Joined in Action 6th annual national conference, to be held October 5-7 at the Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, will showcase how communities are **Improving Health ~ Eliminating Health Disparities in an Age of Health Reform**. More than 200 community health leaders are expected to attend and share best practices and ideas for addressing health disparities in light of the new national health policy.

Five pre-conference workshops will cover topics including a Congressional advocacy and leadership training, visits to Congressional offices, and information sessions on addressing health disparities. Ascension Health will host a reception on October 6 to honor Congressional officials and staffers. Conference key-note speakers include Assistant Attorney General Thomas E. Perez, and CDC Research Director for Social Determinants of Health and Equity, Dr. Camara P. Jones.

Throughout its ten-year history, CJA has been a vehicle for organizations to collaborate and share best practices. CJA's vision includes disruptive change that broadens and strengthens the health care system by addressing head on the social determinants of health, or the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age, in addition to the healthcare delivery system.

According to CEO Dr. Christopher Holliday, "Healthy communities and reducing the cost of healthcare are beyond the reach of the traditional healthcare model." The Affordable Care Act places greater emphasis on community organizations in the fight to keep Americans healthy. The implementation of national health reform has vast implications for local delivery systems, community health improvement initiatives, and financing methods.

"We look forward to bringing together stakeholders and partners to strengthen our communities' voices and especially the voice of the underserved. This conference provides our members and others working in communities throughout the US another opportunity to collaborate in person and share experiences and best practices for reducing health disparities and bending the cost curve" says Laura Brennan, Conference Planning Chair, CJA Chair-Elect and Community Affairs and Outcomes Senior Manager for Care Oregon.

About CJA: CJA's nearly 200 member organizations work for approximately 8.5 million individuals who are underserved by the traditional health care community. Founded in 2001, CJA is a national membership organization of local and state health collaboratives committed to improving the health of individuals, families, and populations. CJA is a leader in mobilizing communities to build public/private community-based partnerships that ensure access to needed health and human services that produce positive health outcomes. CJA convenes and supports leaders from across the health community to help achieve better health for all people at less cost.