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Michigan Association of Health Plans Recognizes Health Care Leaders at Annual Conference

LANSING, Mich. — Sen. Curtis Hertel (D-Lansing), Rep. Al Pscholka (R-Stevensville), Mickey Knight, Dr. Jim Forshee and Crain's Detroit Business were recognized today for their contributions to addressing important state health care issues during the Michigan Association of Health Plans' Annual Conference at the Grand Traverse Resort.

Sen. Curtis Hertel and Rep. Al Pscholka were named MAHP Legislators of the Year. Hertel has demonstrated his outstanding leadership through his participation on key subcommittees and his work with Michigan citizens with receiving health care services such as Medicaid and the Healthy Michigan Plan.

As a current Appropriations Committee chairman, Rep. Al Pscholka has strongly supported programs affecting Michigan residents' health care services, including the expansion of Medicaid through the Healthy Michigan Act.

"Sen. Hertel and Rep. Pscholka have been leaders on important and difficult issues, demonstrating the possibilities of public services," said MAHP Executive Director Rick Murdock. "We need more lawmakers like these two who work hard to improve the health of Michigan residents."

Mickey Knight, former state representative from West Michigan and founder of Knight Consulting Group, was awarded the Gene Farnum Award for being a champion for health policy and program initiatives that protect Michigan's most vulnerable citizens. A longtime lobbyist working to help explain health care and health insurance issues to lawmakers, Knight's public service to the citizens of Michigan has been an illustration of fairness and balance.

"This award conveys our deep appreciation and long-deserved recognition for Mickey Knight's service not just to MAHP but to Michigan citizens who benefited from his work." Murdock said. "Without his values, integrity and commitment many of the policy advances for Michigan and for the managed care industry would not have taken place."

MAHP presented the President's Recognition Award to Crain's Detroit Business for its reporting on critical, often complex issues involving affordable and accessible health care services for state residents. Crain's has provided readers, including many in the health care, insurance and public policy arenas, information about health care issues in a timely matter.

“MAHP members have found Crain’s Detroit Business to be an insightful and timely source of information on key health care issues affecting our industry,” said Murdock. “The reporting of Crain’s is objective and fair – even when offering criticism of our industry.”

MAHP’s most prestigious award, the Ellis J. Bonner Outstanding Achievement Award, has been granted to Dr. Jim Forshee, chief medical officer of Molina.

“Jim has been a positive force in our association, helping make it better and more closely aligned to Ellis Bonner’s principles,” said Murdock. “He has been a leader in constantly rethinking health care to determine the best possible care for Molina’s members.”

The Bonner Award recognizes a MAHP member who has been nominated by colleagues based upon exemplary service, leadership and contributions to the managed care industry and community. The late Ellis Bonner was a father of the health maintenance organization movement in Michigan, a mentor to many people and a tireless promoter of creation of a just and accessible health care system for Michigan citizens.

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The Michigan Association of Health Plans (MAHP) is an industry voice for 14 health care plans, covering over 2.5 million Michigan residents, and 50 businesses affiliated with the health care industry. MAHP facilitates communication among members, government, and the industry regarding health care issues of common concern. The mission of the Michigan Association of Health Plans is to provide leadership for the promotion and advocacy of high quality, affordable, accessible health care for the citizens of Michigan.