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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OCHN Highlights Abilities During Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

OAKLAND COUNTY, MI (March 6, 2024) – Oakland Community Health Network (OCHN) hosted its annual Abilities Awareness Event on Tuesday, March 5, 2024. The event celebrated abilities of people living with an intellectual or developmental disability in honor of Developmental Disabilities Awareness month, which is observed in March.

President Ronald Reagan first recognized March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in 1987 to increase public awareness of the needs and the potential of Americans with developmental disabilities. During this month we celebrate the coming together of people with and without disabilities to promote strong and diverse communities. The 2024 Disability Awareness Month theme is “A World of Opportunities.”

OCHN’s Abilities Awareness event recognized Ability Champions Nichelle Marshall supported by Community Living Services (CLS), and Jonathan Bowie supported by Easterseals MORC. The keynote speaker was Paul Landy from Michigan United Cerebral Palsy (MI-UCP). The event also highlighted a special presentation from Team GUTS, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of the special needs community. Additionally, numerous microenterprise vendors were present to showcase their talents and sell their items to event attendees.

To learn more about OCHN, visit www.oaklandchn.org. Non-emergency Access services can be reached at (248) 464-6363. If you or someone you know needs immediate assistance, call or text the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988.

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Pictured (left to right): *Dana Lasenby, OCHN Executive Director & CEO; Malkia Newman, OCHN Board Member; Jonathan Bowie supported by Easterseals MORC; Nichelle Marshall supported by Community Living Services (CLS)*



Pictured (left to right): *Lindsay Calcaterra, Easterseals MORC Vice President of Growth and Communication; Jonathan Bowie supported by Easterseals MORC; Nichelle Marshall supported by Community Living Services (CLS); Lori Lidstrom, CLS Senior Director of Community Supports*

About OCHN

OCHN is contracted by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) to lead a provider service network and manage care for approximately 29,000 Oakland County residents at more than 400 service sites across the county. People who receive public behavioral health services through OCHN's provider network include those who have an intellectual or developmental disability, mental health concerns, or substance use disorder. Most of these individuals have Medicaid insurance coverage.

OCHN's goal is to ensure these individuals are aware of and have access to services and supports that will improve their health and quality of life, as well as ensure their engagement in full community participation. Its mission to "inspire hope, empower people, and strengthen communities" reflects an unyielding belief in a "Valuable System for Valued People." Programs and supports provided by OCHN's service network are available at www.oaklandchn.org.

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Inspire Hope • Empower People • Strengthen Communities

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