



**PRESS RELEASE
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2024 Award for Excellence in Health Service Winners Announced

Hot Sulphur Springs, Colo. (July 5, 2024) — Each year, the Grand County Rural Health Network honors modern-day health pioneers who truly impact the health and lives of individuals and our community. These are individuals or organizations who have had a positive impact, either professionally or as a volunteer, on our community's health and wellbeing.

This year, the Network's Board of Directors chose to award multiple individuals that are dedicated to putting the health of the community first in many unique ways. **The Network is pleased to announce the 2024 recipients of the Award for Excellence in Health Service: Jessica Jimenez, medical assistant at Middle Park Health; and Kim Long, driver at Grand Seniors.** These deserving award recipients will be recognized on September 12th during the kickoff event for our fundraiser "Gratitude for Grand – Give a High Five for Health". This annual fundraiser provides an opportunity for people to share their gratitude and give a 'High Five' to individuals, organizations, or groups that make a difference in their health or the health of our community. For more information or to give a High Five during the week of September 13-27, please visit www.gcruralhealth.org/highfive/.

Jessica was born and raised in Grand County and has been working with Middle Park Health since March 2013. She loves working in healthcare and learning new things every day. Jessica graduated from San Joaquin Valley College and became a certified medical assistant. She is fluent in Spanish and found this to be extremely helpful in her career. Receiving this award means a great deal to Jessica and she is so appreciative that her hard work and dedication to her job does not go unnoticed. In her free time, Jessica enjoys being with her family. She and her husband have been together for 15 years. She has 3 amazing children and her entire immediate family lives in Granby, so they see each other quite often. Jessica does plan to eventually further her education in the medical field but for now is extremely happy doing what she is doing and raising her children in the community where she grew up.

Kim is also a Grand County native with the distinction of being a "Dr Ceriani baby" born at the Kremmling hospital in 1954. He spent his wonder years in Granby, followed by decades of years he wonders about in the Fraser Valley. He now resides in Granby with his wife, Mary, and Rocky the Cat. Some educational and business opportunities led him away from home on a variety of adventures, always returning to Grand County for employment and a place to live. Like most locals, two or three jobs were always necessary, only to be interrupted by partying, fishing and team sports.

Attempts at careers came and went, and the last 15 years were consumed by engagements with Middle Park Health, Grand County Public Health, Grand County Council on Aging, Grand County Rural Health Network, and now

Mountain Family Center as a driver for Grand Seniors Transportation Program. Kim also has a long history volunteering at 9Health Fairs and the Red Cross, to name a few. These most recent endeavors have allowed Kim unique opportunities to help many residents get health care services and assistance. He says he has experienced more fulfillment from these encounters than all previous occupations combined.

The Rural Health Network's Board of Directors believes these recipients' leadership, compassion, and commitment to health best practices illustrates the innovation and community impact this award was designated to celebrate. Their efforts truly showcase that "health is more than healthcare." This is also the first time ever we have both award recipients who were born, raised and continue to live in Grand County. Congratulations to Jessica and Kim!

Past award recipients include: Leigha Klein, owner - Thin Air Fitness, and Ann Baer and Tracey Vasquez, Grand County Public Health and Home Care Services in 2023; Tess Riley, Grand County Library District in 2022; Brene Belew-LaDue, BSN, RN, and Outbreak of Kindness in 2021; Grand County COVID-19 Incident Management Team Command Staff in 2020; Sue Johnson, LCSW and Katie Hornbaker, CRNA in 2019; Heather Bentler, RN and John Nichols, MD in 2018; Wade Walker, RPh in 2017; Val Lind, RN in 2016; Hannah Foley, NP and Ray Jennings in 2015; Mary Jo Hargadine, RN in 2014; and Therese McElroy, RN in 2013.

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About Grand County Rural Health Network: Grand County Rural Health Network offers access, resources, and support for all of our neighbors to lead their healthiest lives. We believe everyone has the right to health care and to understand how to access that care. We are a nonprofit serving Grand and Jackson counties in Colorado. Our office phone number is (970) 725-3477 and website is <https://www.gcruralhealth.org>. Our local health resource guide can be found at <https://www.healthygrandcounty.org>