



2026 Arizona Rural Health Conference

# Arizona Rural Health Association

## Awards Presentation

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**Lupe Campos, Board President | Carrie Foote, President-Elect**

June 2026

# Today's Purpose

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## Recognize Rural Leadership

Celebrate leaders and programs whose work has measurably strengthened health access and outcomes in rural Arizona.

## Share Who AzRHA Is

Introduce AzRHA's mission as a statewide leader in partnerships, education, and policy for rural health.

## Invite Partnership

Encourage continued connection, membership, and participation in work that supports rural communities.

# Who AzRHA Is

A statewide voice focused on rural health in Arizona

The mission of the Arizona Rural Health Association is to be a leader in partnerships, education, and policy for improving the health status of rural communities in Arizona.

## Partnerships

Convenes stakeholders and strengthens connections across healthcare, public health, academic, policy, and community partners.

## Education

Elevates practical information and learning opportunities that support rural providers and communities.

## Policy

Helps rural voices stay informed, connected, and represented in policy conversations that affect access and sustainability.

# The Network Behind the Work

AzRHA brings together people and organizations committed to rural health

**AzRHA is a not-for-profit corporation and statewide leader in partnerships, education, and policy focused on rural health.**

- ✓ Passionate about promoting public health in rural Arizona
- ✓ Open to anyone whose work or interests touch rural communities
- ✓ Board expertise spans rural healthcare delivery, public health, policy, and community leadership

## Statewide

leader in rural health partnerships,  
education, and policy

## Open

membership for rural health  
advocates and partners

## Cross-sector

board and membership expertise



**Rural health is strengthened when  
clinical, public health, policy,  
academic, and community partners  
are connected.**

# 2026 AzRHA Awards

Recognizing leadership and programs that advance rural health in Arizona

## Outstanding Federal Legislator of the Year

Honors federal leadership that measurably advances the health and well-being of rural and frontier communities in Arizona.

## Outstanding AZ Legislator of the Year

Honors state legislative leadership that advances rural and frontier health through policy, budget action, oversight, and partnership.

## Distinguished Martha Ortiz Rural Health Leadership Award

Honors an individual whose dedication has improved healthcare for rural and medically underserved communities.

## Inspiring Rural Health Program Award

Recognizes a program that promotes or facilitates rural health delivery systems at the community, local, or state level.

**These awards highlight practical leadership, measurable impact, and authentic partnership with rural communities.**

# Outstanding Federal Legislator of the Year



**Senator Mark Kelly**

United States Senator for Arizona

Federal leadership

## Accomplishments

- ❖ Expanding broadband access to support telehealth and rural connectivity
- ❖ Aided in securing nearly \$10 million for the Copper Queen Community Hospital expansion in Bisbee
- ❖ Advancing bipartisan legislation to improve rural primary care access for Medicaid recipients
- ❖ Supporting funding for Arizona community health centers
- ❖ Advocating to protect Medicaid and affordable health coverage
- ❖ Working to lower prescription drug costs for older Arizonans



# Outstanding AZ Legislator of the Year



**Representative Julie Willoughby**

Majority Whip · Legislative District 13

**State leadership**

## Accomplishments

- ❖ Expanded access to critical care through AZ REACH and AZ STEP
- ❖ Strengthened transfer coordination for rural hospitals, CAHs, Tribal facilities, and IHS facilities
- ❖ Sponsored maternal mental health legislation supporting rural access to OB-GYN and behavioral health services
- ❖ Created a rural maternal health advisory process focused on low-volume, high-risk communities
- ❖ Advanced protections for AHCCCS reimbursement supporting Tribal and IHS health care delivery
- ❖ Sponsored legislation addressing AHCCCS reimbursement rates for rural hospitals

# Distinguished Martha Ortiz Rural Health Leadership Award



**Erin McMahon, CNM**

Director, Nurse Midwife Program · Associate Clinical Professor, University of Arizona College of Nursing

Rural maternal health

## Accomplishments

- ❖ Strengthened emergency obstetric readiness in rural Arizona communities without local OB services
- ❖ Delivered obstetrics simulation training for rural providers, CAHs, and first responders
- ❖ Helped more than 230 healthcare professionals build critical skills and confidence in managing precipitous births
- ❖ Volunteered her time to support rural emergency professionals caring for expectant mothers in urgent situations
- ❖ Brings 24 years of experience as a certified nurse-midwife and more than 20 years precepting students and resident physicians
- ❖ National leader in midwifery education, simulation, and clinical standards

# Inspiring Rural Health Program Award



**Benjamin Williams, DO**

Chief Medical Officer · Creek Valley Health Clinic,  
Colorado City, AZ

**Integrated rural care**

## Accomplishments

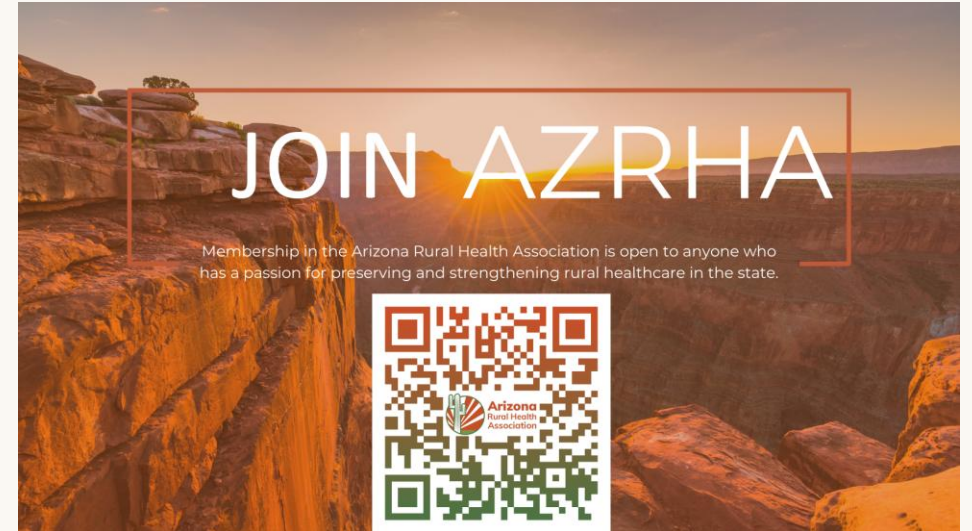
- ❖ Expanded access to primary care in the remote Arizona Strip
- ❖ Helped grow Creek Valley Health Clinic from a basic primary care site into an integrated medical home
- ❖ Strengthened access by integrating medical, behavioral health, dental, physical therapy, chiropractic, and pharmacy support
- ❖ Built partnerships to connect rural patients with advanced diagnostics, transportation support, social services, and pharmacy access
- ❖ Helped grow the clinic from 16 to 57 employees, supporting both healthcare access and local workforce development
- ❖ Advanced measurable improvements in diabetes control, hypertension management, and depression screening with follow-up care

# Join the AzRHA Network

Membership strengthens rural representation and supports the work ahead

## Membership supports:

- Education and timely information for rural health partners
- Policy engagement and rural representation in decisions shaping practice, funding, and access
- Program development, collaboration, networking, and leadership opportunities



## AzRHA members include:

Healthcare providers

Hospitals

Public health professionals

Community organizations

Academic partners

Rural health advocates

### Open and accessible

Membership is open to anyone passionate about preserving and strengthening rural healthcare.

# Thank You

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For recognizing rural leadership and strengthening the partnerships that support healthier rural communities across Arizona.

**Connect. Partner. Strengthen rural health.**

[Join AzRHA](#)