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## LONG BEACH DEPT. OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES HONORED FOR ITS EXCELLENCE BY CALIFORNIA'S LARGEST HEALTH FOUNDATION

LOS ANGELES (December 5, 2019) – The California Endowment announced at a December 3<sup>rd</sup> ceremony in Oakland that the Long Beach Department of Health & Human Services was the recipient of the [2019 Advancing Health Equity Awards Exemplary Health Equity Practice Award](#) for its [partnership effort](#) to provide legal representation to immigrants facing deportation, as well as working to improve language access services to Long Beach residents. Eight public health departments and health human service agencies from across California were honored by The Endowment at the December 3<sup>rd</sup> ceremony for their work that goes beyond the traditional scope of public health to positively impact the health of poor and marginalized communities.

“Bringing health equity to all Californians requires public health departments to think outside of traditional medical interventions and practices to reduce and eradicate health disparities experienced by California’s poor and marginalized communities,” said Anthony Iton, MD, JD, MPH, senior vice president, The California Endowment. “Long Beach Department of Health & Human Services work to advance health equity provides vital support to the county’s hard working immigrants.”

Launched in 2014 by The Endowment, the *Advancing Health Equity Awards* are meant to bring attention to and reward public health department practices that can inform and inspire the future work of others committed to improving health equity. This year’s awards ceremony at The California Endowment’s Oakland conference center featured a fireside chat with California’s Surgeon General Nadine Burke Harris.

“Understanding the science of toxic stress is an important addition to all the work we are doing on health equity,” said California Surgeon General Nadine Burke Harris. “Because when we deploy all the science and resources that we have, including all of the resources of health care to be part of the solution, that gets us to achieving a health equity agenda faster and more effectively.”

A complete description of the award is below:

- **Exemplary Health Equity Practice Award** was given to the City of [Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services](#) which established the first municipal [Office of Equity](#) in Southern California. In collaboration with the [Vera Institute of Justice](#) and [Sanctuary Long Beach](#) the Office of Equity established the [Long Beach Justice Fund](#) (LBJF) to provide legal counsel for immigrants facing deportation to help families stay together. Immigrants with legal representation are eleven times more likely to establish the right to remain in the United States. In addition, the Office of Equity has worked to improve language access services for health, human and city services through a partnership with an alliance of community-based organizations known as the [Language Access Coalition](#). Nearly half of Long Beach residents speak a language other than English. By improving access to these translation services, ALL Long Beach residents will have better access to health, human and city services.

“In advancing health equity, we really had to broaden our lens of what public health looks like,” said Kelly Colopy, Director, Department of Health & Human Services City of Long Beach. “The Long Beach Justice Fund was really intended to help support immigrants facing deportation because we know the stress and trauma that comes from deportation can really impact the health of the family and the community.”

Click [here](#) to view and download a photo of insert Kelly Colopy accepting the award.

**Photo caption: Kelly Colopy, director, City of Long Beach Department of Health & Human Services, accepts the Advancing Health Equity Award at the Dec. 3 ceremony in Oakland, CA.**

### **About The California Endowment**

The California Endowment, a private, statewide health foundation, was established in 1996 to expand access to affordable, quality health care for underserved individuals and communities, and to promote fundamental improvements in the health status of all Californians. Headquartered in downtown Los Angeles, The Endowment has regional offices in Sacramento, Oakland, Fresno and San Diego, with program staff working throughout the state. The Endowment challenges the conventional wisdom that medical settings and individual choices are solely responsible for people's health. The Endowment believes that health happens in neighborhoods, schools, and with prevention. For more information, visit The Endowment's Web site at [www.calendow.org](http://www.calendow.org).

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