

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | Contact: |
| July XX, 2013 | XXXXXXXXXX, OAAHC(XXX) XXX-XXXXXXXXX@XXXXXStacy LavillaDirector of Communications, AAPCHO(510) 272-9536 x110slavilla@aapcho.org |

**Karen Jiobu of the Ohio Asian American Health Coalition Receives National Hepatitis B Champion Award**

**Washington, D.C., July XX, 2013 –** Karen Jiobu of the Ohio Asian American Health Coalition was among a select group of recipients presented with inaugural Hep B United Champion awards, which recognizes extraordinary leadership and commitment in addressing hepatitis B in high-risk Asian American populations.

Hep B United issued the first-ever national Hepatitis B Champion awards during an [event](http://e2.ma/click/x5due/5jqzgb/dm91vb) in Washington, DC last month at which a multilingual hepatitis B testing campaign for Asian Americans was announced. Ms. Jiobu was recognized for her long professional commitment to addressing the serious public health threat of hepatitis B, which disproportionately impacts Asian American communities. Serving as a Laboratory Director at a large multi-hospital system for 30 years provided her with the knowledge and experience to make a significant impact in improving testing and vaccination rates in Central Ohio. As the coordinator of a four-year joint grant from the Asian Pacific Islander American Health Forum and the Kellogg Foundation, Ms. Jiobu’s program screened 1,300 high-risk individuals for hepatitis B. In addition, she persuaded the Ohio Department of Health and the Columbus Public Health Department to provide free vaccination for those who tested negative, and facilitated the creation of a Hepatitis B Free Clinic at Ohio State University to provide treatment for those who tested positive and were uninsured.

“I am honored to receive this Hep B United Champion award in recognition of Ohio Asian American Health Coalition’s ongoing efforts to reduce the impact of hepatitis B and liver cancer in our communities,” said Karen Jiobu. “Our dedicated Ohio coalition and partnerships with organizations like Hep B United, allow us to continue to work towards improving the health of our Asian American communities.”

Jeff Caballero, executive director of AAPCHO and co-chair of Hep B United, said the Champion awards highlight not only the national efforts and successes of Hep B United, but also helps to feature the dedication of local partners who on a day-to-day basis increase hepatitis B awareness, screening, vaccination and linkage to care for all communities impacted by this disease. “In recognizing coalition partners like Karen Jiobu’s leadership with Ohio Asian American Health Coalition, we celebrate organizations and individuals in the community who through their dedicated efforts have sought to truly alter the impact hepatitis B has had on Asian Americans,” said Caballero, adding, “We commend Ms. Jiobu and Ohio Asian American Health Coalition for its leadership and unwavering commitment to this work.”

Asian Americans account for more than half of the 1.2 million Americans estimated to be living with chronic hepatitis B and, consequently, have the highest rate of liver cancer among all racial and ethnic groups. Although hepatitis B is preventable with a safe and effective vaccine, and treatable with approved medications, most individuals with hepatitis B have never been screened for the disease and are unaware of their infection.

For more information about the Ohio Asian American Health Coalition and the Hep B United Champion awards, visit Hep B United’s website at [http://hepbunited.org/news#HBUChampions](http://e2.ma/click/x5due/5jqzgb/tea2vb).

#MORE#

**About Hep B United**

Hep B United is a national coalition to address the public health challenge of hepatitis B. The goal of Hep B United is to support local community coalition efforts across the U.S. to increase hepatitis B awareness, screening, vaccination and linkage to care for all Americans, but in particular, for high-risk Asian American and Pacific Islander populations who are disproportionately impacted. For more information on Hep B United, please visit [http://hepbunited.org](http://e2.ma/click/x5due/5jqzgb/96a2vb). To learn more about their regional coalitions, please visit [http://hepbunited.org/local-campaigns](http://e2.ma/click/x5due/5jqzgb/pzb2vb).

**About Ohio Asian American Health Coalition**

The Ohio Asian American Health Coalition is an alliance of communities and individuals focused on the health and well-being of Ohio’s Asian American population. Its mission is to eliminate social inequities that contribute to disparities in the quality of life of Ohio’s Asian American and Pacific Islanders through community research, education and advocacy. For more information, please visit [www.oahcoalition.org](http://www.oahcoalition.org).

###