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Contact: Romanda Simpson, *Ketchikan Wellness Coalition*

Phone: 907-225-9355

Email: romanda@ktnkwc.org

[NOTE ATTACHED PHOTOS OF GRANT TEAM]

Ketchikan Wellness Coalition awarded \$300,000 grant from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to support Filipino health equity

The Community Solutions for Health Equity grant aims to improve health systems and health outcomes for the Ketchikan Filipino community.

[KETCHIKAN, AK, March 11, 2021) – Ketchikan Wellness Coalition (KWC), in partnership with Filipino community members and PeaceHealth Ketchikan Medical Center, was recently awarded a \$300,000 Community Solutions for Health Equity (CSHE) grant offered by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the largest health-focused philanthropic foundation in the nation. The \$300,000 grant is issued over three years and will support community engagement and changes within local health systems aimed at improving Filipino community health outcomes. The grant application process was highly competitive receiving over 1,000 nation-wide applications in the first round, of which there were 27 finalists and only ten grant recipients.

Launched in 2019, the CSHE grant program “is focused on elevating the voices of communities of color and other communities left out of discussions when local health care systems in the United States are creating policy.” Ketchikan is home to a large Filipino population—10.3% of City of Ketchikan residents compared to 3.9% in Alaska overall. Dr. Charlie Jose, a PeaceHealth medical provider, shared his excitement for the program, “I am thrilled to be part of this initiative that will help improve health equity and access for Filipinos in Ketchikan. Navigating health care for anyone can be difficult, let alone patients from marginalized communities. It will be great to help Filipinos get better connected with our health care system.”

Data from a 2019 Ketchikan Public Health Filipino Health Survey demonstrated numerous health outcomes that could be improved for the Filipino population in Ketchikan through a more culturally responsive health system. Linda Montecillo, a Filipina Nurse who was part of the grant process, highlighted how the community will benefit, “I have lived in Ketchikan for over 50 years and have seen the growth of the Filipino population. This community, most especially our elderly population, will benefit from the fruits of this grant – healthy Filipinos. It is a privilege to be part of this! Maraming Salamat (thank you very much).”

This grant aims to address issues identified in the Public Health survey through a community-driven approach. Grant activities will be led by Filipino community members in partnership with KWC and local health providers. Activities will include improving outreach and relationships, reviewing service procedures and policies, and better meeting the needs of the Filipino population in the health system.

Ketchikan Wellness Coalition will be hiring a full-time, Tagalog-speaking program coordinator for this grant who will work closely with the Filipino community and local health providers.

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Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is the largest philanthropy dedicated to health and is dedicated to “helping everyone in America have an equal opportunity to pursue a healthier life”. “

The Ketchikan Wellness Coalition (KWC) is 501c3 non-profit, structured as an umbrella organization that focuses on the eight dimensions of wellness and exploring the intersections of health and wellness between each. The KWC concentrates on prevention and aims to build health, resilience, and wellness across the Ketchikan community. KWC employs and sees value in the coalition model and currently has seven ‘Task Forces’ that address various social determinants of health and focus on enhancing protective factors.