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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ORANGE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT WINS PRESTIGIOUS GLAXOSMITHKLINE CHILD HEALTH AWARD FOR HEALTHY HOMES PROGRAM

Orange County, NC (October 3, 2016) – The Orange County Health Department was recently honored by the GlaxoSmithKline Foundation with their [Child Health Recognition Award](#). The health department received the prestigious award for their [Healthy Homes Program](#), a new asthma intervention initiative in the county. The 2016 awards were presented on September 14, 2016 at the NC Public Health Association (NCPHA) annual meeting. The recognition comes with a \$5,000 award, which the health department will use to support the ongoing work of the Healthy Homes Program.

The Orange County Health Department launched the Healthy Homes program in 2015 to improve the health of children with asthma by assessing the indoor air quality and safety of their home environments. During a Healthy Homes visit, the team identifies potential asthma triggers and health hazards, and assesses a broad array of housing-related health hazards such as lead, pests, allergens and other asthma triggers, carbon monoxide, mold, and radon. Staff also provides resources to help parents implement low-cost, reliable, and practical methods to reduce health and safety hazards. Using a grant, the health department provides resources to help with remediation and demonstrates how to use resources that include green cleaning kits, pest management plans, mattress and pillow covers, educational materials, and smoking cessation materials. Referrals also are made to other agencies as needed.

“Through the Healthy Homes program we are helping families take control of their children’s asthma and ultimately reducing emergency room visits and improving asthma symptoms. This is a reward in itself so it is extremely meaningful to be recognized by the GlaxoSmithKline Foundation for the impact our work is having for children across Orange County,” stated Dr. Colleen Bridger, Health Director.

Asthma is a significant health concern in Orange County. 11.6 percent of citizens reported having asthma in 2011, but among those who earn \$50,000 or more per year the prevalence was only 6 percent, while those who earn less than \$50,000 a year showed a 22-percent rate. These rates become even more alarming when reflecting on the significant health disparities that exist in the county, where the average life expectancy for African Americans is 5 percent lower than their white counterparts.

About the Award:

The North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation Child Health Recognition Awards program honors local health departments, public health staff, and individuals for innovative, collaborative programs that improve the lives of North Carolina’s children. The Foundation works with [the NCPHA](#) to coordinate the program, and all nominees and award recipients are recognized at a luncheon at NCPHA’s annual meeting. Recognition awards are presented in four categories: Lifetime Achievement, Individual, Local Health Departments, and Public Health Staff. The awards include grants and scholarships that promote public health study and programs that benefit children.



Photo: Orange County Healthy Homes Program team with award.

Pictured:

Seated from left to right: Coby Jansen Austin (Tobacco Prevention and Control), Alan Clapp (Environmental Health), Shelley Hoekstra (Family Home Visiting)

Standing from left to right: Donna King (Health Promotion and Education), Kiana Redd (Healthy Homes)

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