

## North Colorado Health Alliance Earns ACAP “Supporting the Safety Net Award” for Collaborative Approach to Preserve Access



At the 2011 CEO Summit, Association for Community Affiliated Plans (ACAP) gave their “Supporting the Safety Net” Award to the North Colorado Health Alliance, or Alliance. The Alliance is a partnership made up of local doctors, colleges and health departments. Colorado Access CEO, Dr. Marshall Thomas (right) gave the award to Dr. Mark Wallace, President of the Alliance’s Board of Directors.

The Alliance was formed eleven years ago because of the budget crisis in Colorado. They made programs that would give healthcare services to people on Medicaid and State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). The programs also help those who don’t have health insurance and go to local health centers and community mental health centers.

Wellness activities were put together and led by the local health department. The wellness activities extended into schools too. The Alliance addresses cultural competency for physicians, employees and the community. This shows what the Alliance can deliver. They will also continue to develop a regional health information exchange strategy. This will bring all the safety net agencies together to share one electronic patient record. The Alliance’s partners include, elected officials, physician practices, philanthropies and medical societies.

“We can tackle big problems when competing organizations work together - the Alliance is proof,” said Dr. Wallace. “The social safety net is under more pressure today than ever before. We will need to use all the tools we’ve made in the past ten years. The Alliance wants to make sure that Northern Colorado’s most vulnerable have continuing access to the care they need.”

The award recognizes a community-based organization or individual that has put into action new programs that meet the health needs of high-risk people and can serve as a model of best practices for other communities.