FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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White House Highlights Public Health and Climate “Champions of Change”

WASHINGTON, DC – On Tuesday, July 9th, the White House will honor eleven people as “Champions of Change” who are working on the front lines to protect public health in a changing climate. The President’s Climate Action Plan recognizes the need for responsible steps to cut carbon pollution, so we can protect our kids’ health and begin to slow the effects of climate change. These Champions are raising awareness about these health consequences and helping their communities prepare for climate-related health impacts. From doctors and educators helping communities cope with poor air quality worsened by carbon pollution, to a patient who has suffered from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease advocating for clean air protections, each of these Champions are leading the way on climate and health.

The Champions of Change program was created as an opportunity for the White house to feature groups of Americans – individuals, businesses and organizations – who are doing extraordinary things to empower and inspire members of their communities.

To watch this event live, visit www.whitehouse.gov/live at 10:45 am ET on July 9th. To learn more about the White House Champions of Change program and nominate a Champion, visit www.whitehouse.gov/champions.

Dr. Laura Anderko
Annandale, VA

Dr. Laura Anderko is the Robert and Kathleen Scanlon Endowed Chair in Values Based Health Care at Georgetown University School of Nursing & Health Studies. As a nurse, scholar, and educator she has worked to raise awareness of students, nurses, and the general public about the impact of climate change on our health, especially on those most vulnerable such as children. Focusing on prevention, she has advocated in partnership with organizations such as the American Lung Association to promote an understanding of “health in all policy,” including how the Clean Air Act impacts climate change and health.

Dr. Yadira Caraveo
Thornton, CO

Dr. Yadira Caraveo has been an advocate since medical school. During residency, she was an active member of her resident union and advocated for improved working
conditions for her colleagues, healthcare access for her patients, and supported environmentally friendly candidates for public office. While receiving her training in pediatrics in New Mexico, she saw firsthand the health effects of air pollution on her patients, particularly those with asthma and chronic lung diseases. Through a leadership program with the National Hispanic Medical Association she became involved with the work of the Union of Concerned Scientists and Voces Verdes, providing insight into the medical perspective on climate change’s public health impacts. Dr. Caraveo currently works as a general pediatrician in the Denver, Colorado metro area, where she was born and raised.

Kizzy Charles-Guzman
Brooklyn, NY

Kizzy Charles-Guzman is the Director of the Climate and Health Program at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), where she advances efforts to develop and implement effective strategies to prepare for and respond to the anticipated adverse health impacts associated with a changing climate. Charles-Guzman engages in citywide sustainability and climate resilience planning efforts to ensure that public health concerns and vulnerability information is integrated into preparedness plans. Prior to joining the DOHMH she was the Policy Advisor on air quality at the New York City Mayor's Office of Long Term Planning and Sustainability where she implemented and coordinated environmental initiatives outlined in the city’s comprehensive sustainability plan, PlaNYC 2030. There, she worked with environment and health leaders and policymakers to spearhead the passage of city and state legislation. Charles-Guzman has also worked in the non-profit sector, collaborating with multiple advocacy organizations on environmental justice and public health issues. In 2013, she was awarded the EPA’s Region 2 Environmental Quality Award in recognition of her outstanding commitment to protecting and enhancing environmental quality and public health in New York City.

Gary Cohen
Jamaica Plain, MA

Gary Cohen is Co-Founder and President of Health Care Without Harm, a global non-profit organization working to transform the healthcare sector to become more sustainable and focused on individual health and the health of communities and the planet. He also founded Practice Greenhealth, a membership organization with 1,300 hospitals and 85 businesses to green the healthcare sector. With the Healthier Hospitals Initiative, he worked to bring together 13 major hospital systems to sponsor a three-year campaign to embed sustainability into the core business strategy of healthcare in the United States, including linking climate change mitigation with implementation of the Affordable Care Act.
Dan Dolan-Laughlin  
Wheaton, IL

Daniel Dolan-Laughlin is a retired railroad executive who resides in Wheaton, Illinois. He is also the recent recipient of a life-saving double lung transplant. Suffering for many years with debilitating chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), Dolan-Laughlin has first-hand experience with today's air pollution-related health risks. As an active advocate for a healthier breathing environment, Daniel has given testimony in EPA hearings regarding power plant pollution and automobile tailpipe emissions. He also volunteers his time to meet with government officials in association with the American Lung Association in support of stronger clean air regulations. He regularly leads Lung Association “Better Breathers Club” meetings to help others cope with COPD.

Dr. Georgia Milan  
Missoula, MT

Leaving her clinical practice to devote more time to environmental issues, Dr. Georgia Milan helps educate health care professionals and communities about the human health impacts of climate change. She received an International Diploma in Humanitarian Aid to better serve populations most vulnerable to climate change. She is a member of Physicians for Social Responsibility and a graduate of Mayo Medical School. She lives in Missoula, Montana.

Dr. Susan Pacheco  
Houston, TX

Dr. Susan E. Pacheco is an Associate Professor at the University of Texas Health Science Center specializing in pediatric asthma, allergy, and immunology. Dr. Pacheco is the founder of The Alliance of Health Professionals Against Climate Change – a group of medical and health-related professional organizations in Texas that educate their patient populations on the adverse effects of climate change to human health. She also founded the Texas Coalition for Climate Change Awareness - an organization formed by diverse community groups and individuals willing to take a public stance and call attention to the adverse effects of climate change in Texas. She is also a health representative for the Climate Science Rapid Response Team, a group of climate change experts who provide accurate scientific information about the climate to the media and government.

Dr. William Rom  
New York, NY
An expert in the field of air pollution and public health, Dr. Rom has authored several recent papers regarding the public health impacts of climate change, including "The Sentinel Event of Climate Change: Hurricane Sandy and Its Consequences for Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine" (American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, 2013). Dr. Rom also chairs the American Thoracic Society's Environmental Health Policy Committee that advocates for science-based air pollution standards. Earlier in his career, Dr. Rom was a Legislative Fellow for then-Senator Hillary Clinton, where he played a major role in crafting the Family Asthma Bill, the Caribbean Wilderness Act, and the National Environmental Public Health Tracking Bill. Dr. Rom was also the Founder of the Rocky Mountain Center for Occupational and Environmental Health at the University of Utah.

Dr. Linda Rudolph
Oakland, CA

Linda Rudolph, MD, MPH, leads the Center for Climate Change and Health at the Public Health Institute. She works with people across a broad spectrum of public health activities to incorporate health considerations into climate change action, and climate change considerations into work to promote healthy communities and health equity. In her former role as Deputy Director for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion at the California Department of Public Health, Dr. Rudolph was the first chair of the Health in All Policies Task Force, a multi-agency cross-sector collaboration to find win-win solutions that simultaneously address health, equity, and sustainability. She also chaired the California Climate Action Team Public Health Work Group.

Therese Smith
Westland, MI

Therese Smith, RN BSN MPA CCM, is a registered nurse with more than thirty years of experience serving a multitude of populations from newborns to the elderly. As a certified case manager Smith educates her patients, both young and old, about lung disease and the effects of poor air quality – and understands the connection between climate change and air pollution. Smith has been an active volunteer of the American Lung Association of the Midland States and is a member of the Regional Leadership Council of Region B.

Dr. Jeff Thompson
La Crosse, WI

Jeff Thompson, MD, is chief executive officer of Gundersen Health System, headquartered in La Crosse, Wisconsin, which serves 19 counties in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa. Dr. Thompson’s team has helped Gundersen become an integrated health system known for its high-quality, coordinated care, community
engagement and collaborative partnerships. He is a visionary leader in the area of environmental stewardship for healthcare organizations, setting a goal for Gundersen to be energy independent in 2014.