



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Media Contact:

Stacey Durden – Communications Manager  
Stacey.Durden@vim-cascades.org  
541-585-9007

## VIM VOLUNTEER RECEIVES OREGON DIABETES EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

**Bend, Ore. – March 21, 2016** Volunteers in Medicine Clinic of the Cascades (VIM) is pleased to announce that Joan Goodwin BA, RN, CDE has received the Oregon Diabetes Educator of the Year Award.

This award is sponsored by the Oregon chapter of the American Association of Diabetes Educators to recognize an individual who has made a special contribution to diabetes education through dedication and innovation in the daily practice of patient care.

Joan's nomination was a result of her 2,768 hours of volunteer work as a Certified Diabetes Educator at VIM, teaching patients with diabetes how to manage their disease and live well.

"Talk about a total surprise," Joan said. "I had no idea that I was even nominated! To receive this award from my peers in diabetes education is a deep honor because they truly know that self-management education is imperative with a disease this complex."

Over the years, Joan has worked with many patients through VIM. Currently, approximately 25% of the VIM patient population has a diagnosis of diabetes. Most of these are Latinos, some of whom have very elevated blood glucose levels.

Realizing that VIM's patients had a wide variety of needs, Joan developed a series of three diabetes education programs.

First is an intensive program to meet with the most critical patients four times a month for diabetes self-management education in a small group setting. During this program, patients receive instruction on a variety of basic topics, from glucose self-monitoring to healthy meal planning, exercise, and medication. But most important is the time Joan and her team spend listening to understand the unique barriers patients face as they work to get their diabetes under control. With this information, the team is able to help patients create their own diabetes self-management plan. Regular follow-up care is also scheduled with a volunteer doctor dedicated to the needs of high-risk patients with diabetes.

"These intensive classes are critically important," Joan said. "Diabetes self-management education is a tool that gives patients the ability to successfully self-manage their diabetes. But, we must also understand the disease and barriers to care from the patient's perspective. That's really the key element when helping them create a plan that they can continue to follow. And that's when significant change may occur."

Joan also facilitates bilingual group classes at the clinic. Each six-week Diabetes Wellness Program covers a multitude of subjects, including healthy meal planning, exercise, the necessity for controlling blood glucose levels, and the overall health impact of diabetes – long term and short term. Each patient receives a free glucose monitor, a depression screening, eye exam, comprehensive foot exam, and an A1C blood glucose test before and



six weeks after their last wellness class. Patients are monitored throughout the sessions to make sure they are receiving or have received expected labs, immunizations and exams, as dictated by the American Diabetes Association (ADA) standards of medical care in diabetes.

“There is a lot of hands-on learning in our wellness class,” Joan shared. “We bring in culturally relevant foods and have them portion and put together a plate of food to help guide appropriate food choices. Patients participate in a variety of physical activities and problem solving approaches are shared with the class. Because heart disease is often one of the results of not properly managing diabetes, we focus on problem solving skills to instill the confidence that yes, they can manage this.”

The third program is for patients who have been diagnosed with pre-diabetes. The goal is simple – to teach them how to get their high blood glucose levels under control before they move into Type 2 diabetes.

Diabetes is an urgent health problem in the Latino community. The rate of diabetes is almost double that of non-Latinos. The need for preventative education, accurate diagnostics, disease management education, and ongoing support is immense.

“Through Joan’s leadership, VIM patients are gaining valuable knowledge, stabilizing their health and taking what they learn home to share with their families and friends,” said Kat Mastrangelo, Executive Director of VIM. “This is grass-roots prevention at its best, reaching the broader community in a way that doctors can’t. And it’s all because of one extremely dedicated and talented volunteer who has made it her mission to tackle this difficult disease with creativity and compassion. Joan’s work inspires all of us. We are so happy that her leadership has been honored with this award.”

### **About VIM**

Volunteers in Medicine (VIM) was established in 2001 and provides free medical, mental health, vision and prescription drug care for adults over 18 who live or work in Deschutes, Crook or Jefferson County, earn less than 250% of federal poverty levels and are underinsured or uninsured. Last year, VIM provided care across more than 4,573 patient visits. Funding is through individual and corporate donations, grants, and patient donations. To learn more visit [www.vim-cascades.org](http://www.vim-cascades.org).

###