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## **Announcing the annual \$10,000 Mignon Waterman Award for excellence in behavioral health**

*Bozeman, Mont.* – The Montana Healthcare Foundation (MHCF) today announced the Mignon Waterman Award, a new annual \$10,000 award that will recognize outstanding contributions to innovation, progress, and leadership in behavioral health in Montana. MHCF created this award in honor of the late Mignon Waterman’s contributions to strengthening the system of care for people struggling with mental illness and substance abuse in Montana.

Mignon Waterman served as a founding trustee and secretary of MHCF from 2013 to 2017. Her vision, insight, and commitment played a key role in shaping the Foundation’s focus and strategy on the prevention and treatment of behavioral health illnesses (mental illness and substance use disorders). Mignon’s bio can be found [here](#).

“Mignon was a passionate and tireless advocate for behavioral health,” said Dr. Aaron Wernham, MHCF CEO. “This award is a perfect way to honor and build on her legacy of working for better care for Montanan’s struggling with mental illness and substance abuse.”

Each year MHCF will award \$10,000 to a Montana-based non-profit organization, university, state or local agency, or tribal government that demonstrates exceptional leadership, innovation, and progress in improving behavioral health and health care in Montana. Individuals may be nominated, but the nominee’s organization must accept the award on his or her behalf.

“Throughout her long public service career, Mignon worked diligently to address the needs of those experiencing behavioral health challenges, to assure this segment of our community received adequate services,” said Ron Waterman, Mignon’s husband. “She also worked tirelessly to help erase the stigma these members of our state confront on a regular basis. This award both honors Mignon and awards those with innovative ideas on how to respond to the major health issues that many Montana citizens face.”

“Our beloved colleague and friend has left us far too soon,” said Joanne Pieper, MHCF Board Chair. “This award honors her dedication to the Montana Healthcare Foundation and to the citizens of the State of Montana whose lives she touched and cared so deeply for.”

### **Nomination Details**

Nominations will be accepted beginning on August 1 of each year, and the awardee will be announced by December 1. [Additional award criteria details and link to the nomination form can be found on MHCF’s website.](#)

### **About the Montana Healthcare Foundation**

The Montana Healthcare Foundation (MHCF) makes strategic investments to improve the health and wellbeing of all Montanans. MHCF focuses on behavioral health (including mental illness and substance use disorders), American Indian health, public health and strengthening the rural health system through



focusing on new partnerships and value-based care. The foundation supports improving access to quality and affordable health services, evidence-based health education, research and analysis, improving the upstream influences on health and illnesses and informed public policy. Created in 2013, MHCF has approximately \$145 million in assets, making it Montana's largest nonprofit health foundation, and is designed to be permanent resource for the state. To learn more about MHCF, please visit [www.mthcf.org](http://www.mthcf.org).

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