

OCHIP CELEBRATION



Recognizing the First Year of Accomplishments

On Thursday evening, partners gathered to celebrate the contributions of the four Okaloosa County Health Improvement Partnership (OCHIP) groups. OCHIP is a group of agencies, businesses, and community members who want to improve the health of Okaloosa County residents. Members work to address the root causes of issues like workforce housing, maternal and infant mortality, substance use, and drug endangered children. Each group has their own goals, objectives, and action plans that guide their work and track progress throughout each calendar year.

During the Celebration, OCHIP Champions recognized key group members who were identified for recognition based on their outstanding contributions and dedication. This included a surprise category of awards in recognition of the Public Information Officers! Keep reading to learn more about the award recipients and check out photos from the night.

To get involved, email HealthyOkaloosa@flhealth.gov.



We'd like to extend a very special thank you to United Way of the Emerald Coast for their photo booth, and to IShot Creations for capturing the fun!



Pictured left to right: Mikiko Tucker, Devon Ravine, Nick Tomecek, Catherine Card, Tamara Young, Ed Vinson, and Chance Leavins.

PIO Spotlight

The Healthy Communities OCHIP group recognized Public Information Officers from the Okaloosa County School District, Okaloosa County, and the Cities of Crestview, Destin, and Fort Walton Beach for their valuable contributions to the Pedestrian Safety Month campaign. The PIOs developed the Protecting Pedestrians educational video series and assisted in the coordination of the Pedestrian Safety Month Poster Contest for local students.

2023 OCHIP Champion of the Year

Chief Robert Bage, Fort Walton Beach Police Department

The final award of the night was the 2023 OCHIP Champion of the Year. Chief Bage was recognized for his contributions to not only the Healthy Communities group that he co-leads, but also among the other three groups.

He is the first Chief of Police to onboard a local department to participate in Handle with Care, which is an initiative of Healthy Children. He also attended a Healthy Moms & Babies meeting where he was able to provide clarity on a statute, despite members' initial shock at having a newcomer... He has been instrumental in developing an opioid linkage to care initiative in Healthy Behaviors.

He received a championship belt after advocating for *unique* awards. We certainly hope he loves it!



A MESSAGE FROM DOH-OKALOOSA

Thank you all for the incredible efforts you have put forth to make Okaloosa County a healthier place to live. Your initiatives and efforts have made a significant impact of the lives of countless individuals, creating positive change for families, neighbors, and friends. And this is only the beginning...

We are certain your collective efforts over the next few years will bring remarkable improvements to the health of our county. Your strong commitment to collaboration and partnership has been instrumental in driving change within our community. It is a pleasure to serve this community alongside you.

