



MEDIA ADVISORY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PAUL SISKA WINS 2009 OUTSTANDING BOARD MEMBER OF THE YEAR

(Thornton – November 9, 2009) Paul Siska, Adams County Undersheriff, has been named 2009 Outstanding Board Member of the Year by Colorado Behavioral Healthcare Council (CHBC). Siska has been active on Community Reach Center's Systems Board for ten years, including a two-year term as Board President. His steadfast efforts to improve access to mental health services for criminal offenders and reduce stigma associated with mental illness are extensive. He chairs the Metro Area County Commissioners Mentally Ill Inmates Task Force, and represents law enforcement on Colorado's Legislative Oversight Committee and Advisory Task Force, to study treatment of persons with mental illness in the criminal justice system.

When asked what drew him to service at Community Reach Center, Siska replied, "Ten years ago, the national rate of suicide among law enforcement officers was higher than deaths that occurred in the line of duty. I learned that officers weren't seeking help because of a sense of shame associated with mental health issues. I thought that was unacceptable, and wanted to help change those attitudes." Siska stated that he is proud of the excellent relationship that has been forged between Adams County Sheriff's Department and Community Reach Center, noting that it opened the door to the development of the Community Engagement, Supervision, and Evaluation (CESE) and Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) programs in Adams County. "I am humbled beyond words to receive this award," said Siska.

Community Reach Center, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is a premier mental health provider, and the designated mental health provider for individuals eligible for Medicaid in Adams County. Since 1957, Community Reach Center has provided life-changing services to children, adolescents, adults and seniors. Each year the Center serves more than 10,000 unduplicated clients at outpatient offices located in Brighton, Commerce City, Northglenn, Thornton and Westminster, as well as in homes, schools and emergency rooms. Community Reach Center is the only mental health provider in the Rocky Mountain Region to acquire a pediatric primary care practice as an element of its continuum of services. The Center is committed to providing integrated care that marries mental healthcare with primary healthcare, in order to support the overall health and recovery of its clients. For more information, visit www.communityreachcenter.org.

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