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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Friday, March 17, 2023

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## **America's Blood Centers Recognizes National Excellence in Supporting Blood Donation and Strengthening the Blood Supply**

*Award winners were recognized in Washington, DC for their leadership in helping to save lives through blood donation*

*[\\*\\*Videos from these award winners are available here\\*\\*](#)*

**Washington, DC** – America's Blood Centers (ABC), the national organization of community-based, independent blood centers that supply 60 percent of the nation's blood supply, recognized leaders from across the country for excellence in supporting the nation's blood supply over the last year as part of its annual *Awards of Excellence*. The award recipients were honored in Washington, DC as part of ABC's Annual Meeting, which brought together blood center executives and national leaders to discuss advocacy and regulatory updates; the latest in science, medicine, and technical affairs; and key topics facing the industry.

"America's Blood Centers is proud to recognize the outstanding work of these award recipients, who have been leaders in promoting blood donation and ensured that blood products are available for patients. Their dedication has helped strengthen the blood supply at a time when the blood community continues to navigate the ongoing challenges from the COVID pandemic. Blood center staff nationwide and our community and government partners work together to encourage more individuals to selflessly give blood to help save lives," said Kate Fry, Chief Executive Officer at America's Blood Centers.

"To be recognized by ABC as National Partner of the Year is a great honor and was largely made possible by our VA employees and Veterans who donated blood across the nation," said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. "VA will always stand by our commitment to support our country's health care systems by helping meet the nation's need for blood."

"I am pleased to serve as the Assistant Secretary for Health for the impact I can make on critical public health issues such as blood donation. As a pediatrician, I have seen first-hand what blood and blood products can do for my patients. These patients, and their families, rely on you to provide these lifesaving products," said Admiral Rachel Levine, Assistant Secretary for Health at the Department of Health and Human Services. "I thank America's Blood Centers for this honor and for all their help to ensure blood is available when those in our nation need it most, despite numerous challenges including staffing shortages, a changing donor base, and the COVID-19 pandemic."

"Through several years now, our workplace blood drives have become integral to our teammates' experience of working at Glad Manufacturing. It is inspirational to see so many of our teammates come together at every workplace blood drive, because we know why they do: they genuinely care about people, and they know they are saving lives in our community when they give blood," said Brenda Smith, Human Resource Business Partner at the Clorox Company. "We are honored to be recognized by America's Blood Centers as their 2022 Corporation of the Year and we look forward to continuing this life-saving work with our partners at Community Blood Center of the Ozarks."

“Donate for Mothers blood drives are here to remind us to give back to our mothers, especially those with pregnancy complications. Our alliance of women's health advocates is here to spread awareness, to lift survivors, and to support hope and gratitude for the gift of blood donation,” said Dr. Vy Rossi, founder of Donate for Mothers. “Thank you to Vitalant and America’s Blood Centers for this national honor - Donate for Mothers could not have better partners for this labor of love.”

**National Partner of the Year: Department of Veterans Affairs.** This award recognizes an ABC partner for their commitment to saving lives, helping communities, and supporting the blood supply. Working with ABC and other blood collection agencies, the Department launched the Roll Up Your Sleeves campaign during the height of COVID-19 to address the pandemic’s resulting strain on the blood supply. The Department hosted blood drives nationwide, fulfilling their “fourth mission” to support America’s health care system in times of disaster. ABC members brought in nearly 4,000 donors, including nearly 1,000 new donors, as part of this partnership, and the Roll Up Your Sleeves Campaign has now been extended indefinitely.

**The Blood Community Advocate of the Year: The ADVANCE Study Team.** This award honors individuals who demonstrate leadership, commitment, or extraordinary service in advocating on behalf of ABC member blood centers and the blood community. This group of honorees includes stakeholders from blood centers, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and the LGBTQ+ community, who came together to collaborate on the groundbreaking Assessing Donor Variability and New Concepts in Eligibility (ADVANCE) Study. Its data contributed to the Food and Drug Administration’s recent draft guidance that would establish blood donor screening based on individual donor assessments, not sexual orientation.

**William M. Coenen President’s Award: The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).** This award was established in 2015 to honor Bill Coenen, former Chief Financial Officer of America’s Blood Centers, for his long service and commitment to ABC members. In 2022, HHS launched a national public awareness campaign to encourage more individuals to donate blood. This award was accepted by Admiral Rachel L. Levine, MD, the Assistant Secretary for Health at the Department of Health and Human Services, who has played a critical role in championing the need for blood and convened stakeholders across the federal government to promote a safe and available blood supply.

**ABC Corporation of the Year Award: Glad Manufacturing in Rogers, Arkansas.** This award is given to a corporation that demonstrates an exceptional commitment to the volunteer blood community. Glad Manufacturing, which hosted their first corporate blood drive in 2007, has been a long-time advocate for local blood donation, consistently increasing the number of new donors and blood donations each year. In 2022, Glad hosted a two-day, multi-shift blood drive on five occasions, resulting in 614 blood donations collected - a 43 percent increase from blood donations collected in 2021.

**William M. Coenen President’s Award: Simone Glynn, MD, MPH.** Dr. Glynn most recently served as Branch Chief at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute at the National Institutes of Health where her nationally recognized blood research programs and initiatives made dramatic enhancements to the safety of the nation’s blood supply. She also served as Project Officer for the Recipient Epidemiology and Donor Evaluation Study and was instrumental in providing the proof, through four studies, that the blood donor deferral policy for gay and bisexual could be changed and still ensure the safety of the blood supply, among many other notable accomplishments.

**William M. Coenen President’s Award: Theresa Pina, Vice President of Operations at Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center.** Ms. Pina has served as a volunteer expert with ABC’s marketing, communication, and advocacy work and has served as president of ADRP, the international division of ABC, for two years. Under her leadership, ADRP has continued to grow in the U.S. and internationally, while helping the blood community navigate the challenges of the COVID pandemic.

**ITxM Award for Excellence in Technical Operations: Nancy Benitez, MHS, (ASCP) SBB, Lab Director, OneBlood.** This award is presented to an individual who demonstrates exceptional commitment to the field of technical and laboratory operations in the blood banking field. For more than 25 years, Ms. Benitez has dedicated her time, talent and expertise to the blood banking community in ensuring rare blood is available. In 2001, she launched one of the first Blood Bank Technology schools as part of the reference lab at Community Blood Centers of South Florida, now OneBlood. The school continues more than 20 years later.

**ABC Outstanding Blood Drive of the Year Award: “Donate for Mothers,” nominated by Vitalant.** This award is given to one blood drive that has demonstrated excellence in promoting blood donation through recruitment and collection efforts and establishing blood donation as a priority within an organization. Co-founded three years ago by Dr. Vy Rossi, the Amniotic Fluid Embolism Foundation, Colorado Accreta Survivors, and National Accreta Foundation, Donate for Mothers is a month-long special awareness campaign and blood drive program hosted annually that honors and supports women who have experienced pregnancy-related complications.

**ABC Outstanding Public Relations Campaign: ImpactLife’s “Blood is Medicine” Campaign.** This award is presented to a member blood center for an outstanding public relations campaign that used print, radio, television media, and/or social media to promote blood donation awareness through original content and creativity. The Blood is Medicine campaign reached close to 4.5 million people and generated more than 5,300 units of lifesaving blood, resulting in 324 earned media placements.

**Larry Frederick Award: Harriet Huggins, AVID District Director, Clovis West High School.** This award is named after former Oakland police officer Larry Frederick, who was struck in a hit and run accident in 1982 while performing a routine traffic stop and received over 110 units of blood. It recognizes individuals for community leadership in raising awareness about blood donation. Ms. Huggins is a longtime advocate of blood donation, promoting school-based drives that bring together students, teachers, staff, community members. and more.

**Thomas F. Zuck Lifetime Achievement Award: Susan Rossmann, MD, PhD.** This award honors an individual for career achievement in the application of clinical, medical, and scientific research to improve methods of blood collection and safety and efficacy of blood products provided to patients. Dr. Rossmann has held senior leadership positions in organizations that have influenced every aspect of transfusion medicine, including the National Advisory Council of the National Institute of General Medical Sciences; America’s Blood Centers, where she served as president from 2015-2017; the Association for the Advancement of Blood & Biotherapies; the Texas Medical Association; and the Center for International Blood and Marrow Transplant Research.

Founded in 1962, America’s Blood Centers is the national organization bringing together community-based, independent blood centers. Its member organizations operate more than 600 blood collection sites providing close to 60 percent of the U.S., and a quarter of the Canadian, blood supply. These blood centers serve more than 150 million people and provide blood products and services to more than 3,500 hospitals and healthcare facilities across North America. All ABC U.S. members are licensed and regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. For more information, visit [www.AmericasBlood.org](http://www.AmericasBlood.org).

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