



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **GOVERNORS ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER (CA) AND M. JODI RELL (CT) DECLARE SEPTEMBER 8 RECESS ROCKS DAY Proclamations are part of Community Health Center, Inc.'s coast-to-coast childhood obesity prevention campaign; Campaign includes video contest and creative movement program in schools**

**MIDDLETOWN, Conn. (September 8, 2010)** – With one-third of American children overweight or obese, Community Health Center, Inc. (CHC) today launched a new national childhood obesity prevention campaign. Called *Recess Rocks*, the campaign has two components: a nationwide video contest that seeks solutions directly from children and adolescents and a program that reinvents recess by pairing dance instructors with schools to increase students' activity through creative movement. To support the coast-to-coast campaign, California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Connecticut Governor M. Jodi Rell each issued a proclamation declaring September 8 to be Recess Rocks Day in their respective states.

“The childhood obesity epidemic is spreading at an alarming rate,” said Dr. J. Nwando Olayiwola, CHC’s chief medical officer and a family practice physician. “As a result, September has been declared National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month. The *Recess Rocks* campaign supports this national effort. Through the Recess Rocks program – part of CHC’s innovative bundle of clinical and community-based interventions – and the national video contest, the campaign targets healthcare providers, schools, community organizations and, most importantly, children and adolescents as they try to address this epidemic and seek new solutions.”

The campaign’s video contest engages children and young teens in grades 2 through 8 across the United States in addressing childhood obesity. Children are asked to submit videos featuring a speech, song, dance or commercial that answers two questions – “How do you feel about the childhood obesity problem?” and “What can you do about it?” – and shows how they and their family and friends stay healthy. Children may enter individually or as part of a group from a public or private school or youth-focused community organization or club (e.g. Boy and Girl Scout troops and 4-H clubs).

“For 38 years, Community Health Center has been providing care to families across Connecticut. Today, we care for more than 100,000 patients, many of whom are children,” said Dr. Robert Dudley, a CHC pediatrician nationally recognized in the field of obesity. “Our studies show that programs that empower people, as well as provide a forum for children, teens and families to discuss their needs and define action strategies to address childhood obesity, are highly effective. The Recess Rocks contest creates such a forum, encouraging children and teens to begin a national conversation.”

Entries will be judged on overall impact, creativity, memorable content and delivery and a clear message on how the problem can be solved. The first 300 kids to enter will receive a free *Recess Rocks* tee shirt.

Three grand prize winners will win an Apple iPad. Three second place winners will receive a Nintendo Wii and Wii Fit Plus; three third place winners receive a Flip Ultra Camcorder; and 10 fourth place winners win Apple iPod 2 GB Shuffles. The winning group will receive \$2,500 for their school, organization or club; the second place group will win \$1,000; and the group that places third will win \$500. The contest ends on November 30, 2010.

The *Recess Rocks* campaign is the flagship of CHC's group of programs to prevent and reverse obesity. One of these programs is Recess Rocks, in which dance instructors are paired with schools. The dance artists transform sedentary recesses, engaging kids in fun, creative movement activities. Until today, the program, which began in 2007, was only implemented in Connecticut schools. With the launch of the Recess Rocks campaign, the program is now available to schools across the country.

"Recess Rocks is a promising solution to the childhood obesity problem. It is a creative, alternative strategy for engaging youth in exciting, fun ways while increasing awareness of the need for physical activity," said Mildred Thompson, deputy director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center to Prevent Childhood Obesity.

Visit [RecessRocks.com](http://RecessRocks.com) to enter the Recess Rocks video contest, to learn more about bringing the Recess Rocks program to your local school, or to get details on CHC's many programs and interventions to prevent and reverse obesity.

**About Community Health Center, Inc.**

Since 1972, Community Health Center, Inc. has been one of the leading healthcare providers in the state of Connecticut, building a world-class primary health care system committed to caring for underserved and uninsured populations. CHC is focused on improving health outcomes for its more than 100,000 patients as well as building healthy communities. Currently, CHC delivers service in 173 locations statewide, offering primary care in medical, dental and behavioral health services.

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