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## **City recognized by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**

**Rocky Mount, N.C.** -- Rocky Mount is one of 10 winners of the 2020-2021 RWJF Culture of Health Prize awarded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The Prize honors and elevates communities for working at the forefront of advancing health, opportunity, and equity.

Rocky Mount is being nationally recognized for pursuing innovative ideas and bringing partners together to rally around a shared vision of health. Rocky Mount's award-winning efforts include, addressing generations of disinvestment through an array of community wealth building approaches, changing the longstanding power dynamics that impede progress, and partnering to create a vibrant downtown corridor with a renewed sense of possibilities for area residents.

“Winning the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Prize is not only a humbling honor, but also a symbol of reassurance that our community is on the right path to making the city of Rocky Mount a place of health, opportunity and equity,” City Manager Rochelle Small-Toney said. “We are thankful for our community partners who work tirelessly to make the city of Rocky Mount an exciting place to work, play and live.”

Rocky Mount will receive a \$25,000 prize, join a network of Prize-winning communities, and have its inspiring accomplishments shared throughout the nation. The other nine winning communities are: Addison, Ill.; Alamosa County, Colo.; Chickaloon Native Village; Drew, Miss.; Howard County, Md.; National City, Calif.; Palm Beach County, Fla.; Thunder Valley Community—Oglala Lakota Nation (Oceti Sakowin Territory), and Worcester, Mass. Rocky Mount now joins Buncombe County and Durham County as the third North Carolina community to win the distinguished Prize.

To become an RWJF Culture of Health Prize winner, Rocky Mount had to demonstrate how it excelled in the following six criteria:

- Defining health in the broadest possible terms.
- Committing to sustainable systems changes and policy-oriented long-term solutions.
- Creating conditions that give everyone a fair and just opportunity to reach their best possible health.

- Maximizing the collective power of leaders, partners, and community members.
- Securing and making the most of available resources.
- Measuring and sharing progress and results.

“Our community recognizes that we have accomplished so much through dedication and commitment,” Rocky Mount Mayor Pro Tem Richard Joyner said. “My expectation is that the Culture of Health Prize will be something that inspires our citizens and partners to continue working on improving our community block by block and citizen by citizen.”

The Foundation will honor this year’s winners, November 9-10, during a virtual RWJF Culture of Health Prize Celebration and Learning Event. During the event, representatives from the Prize communities will talk through the different ways they are leveraging their strengths and bringing partners together to expand opportunity. The 10 new winners will also connect with their 44 fellow Prize Alumni communities.

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