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Quad City Health Initiative and Bi-State Regional Commission Receive “Trails for Health Award” from American Trails for Development of QCTrails.org

The Quad City Health Initiative and Bi-State Regional Commission are honored to announce that they have received the “Trails for Health Award” from American Trails in recognition of the Be Healthy QC Coalition and QCTrails.org. The Trails for Health Award recognizes a community’s commitment to improving access to trails and promoting their use and importance for increasing physical activity.

The award was announced at American Trails’ 23rd International Trails Symposium held in Dayton, OH earlier this month. The National and International Trails Awards Program is one way American Trails recognizes the tremendous contributions and successes of exemplary people across the globe who are working to advance trails. American Trails is the only national nonprofit organization working on behalf of all trail types.

QCTrails.org was developed to encourage area residents to become more active by making information available about over 300 miles of land and water trails in the Quad Cities, Illinois-Iowa region. The website provides tools to help users find over 75 trails that support a wide variety of activities – from walking paths and hiking and biking trails to paddling/water and equestrian trails. “We are very excited to receive this award,” says Denise Bulat, Executive Director of Bi-State Regional Commission, “since QCTrails.org is a free, user-friendly, interactive, and mobile-responsive website that highlights the Quad Cities’ ideal position at the intersection of two national trail systems, the American Discovery Trail and the Mississippi River Trail.”

QCTrails.org was developed through a partnership between the Quad City Health Initiative and Bi-State Regional Commission as part of Be Healthy QC (BHQC). The partnership has featured contributions from many local organizations. QCTrails.org was made possible with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Be Healthy QC is a collaborative effort of organizations to increase access to environments with healthy food and beverage options and to increase access to physical activity opportunities in the Quad Cities. Be Healthy QC projects are funded in part by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) *Partnerships to Improve Community Health (PICH)* Initiative. PICH is a 3-year initiative that supports implementation of evidence based strategies to improve the health of communities and reduce the prevalence of chronic disease.

QCTrails is an initiative centered on community outreach and collaboration aimed at improving access to physical activity opportunities. The initiative is led by Bi-State Regional Commission in partnership with Quad City Health Initiative and with the support and collaboration of: the cities and counties in the Quad Cities Area who develop and maintain the trails, side-paths, parks, and greenways; bicycle and walking/hiking clubs/organizations; paddling clubs; environmental/recreation action groups; economic development and tourism organizations; and the website developer/consultant, Center for Community GIS.

The Quad City Health Initiative is a cross-sector community partnership working to create a healthy community. A 25-member community board oversees the organization, which was established in 1999. The Initiative seeks to be our community's recognized leader for creating collaborative action on health and abides by the core values of commitment, collaboration, and creativity. Major financial support of the Quad City Health Initiative is currently provided by the generous direct and in-kind investments of Genesis Health System and UnityPoint Health-Trinity. Additional financial support in calendar year 2016 was provided by: Cardiovascular Medicine, Davenport Eye Group, Deere & Company, Mississippi Valley Surgery Center, Modern Woodmen of America, Califf & Harper, P.C., Community Health Care, Inc., First Midwest Bank, Hy-Vee Inc., ILLOWA Construction & Labor Management Council, IMC Construction, LTD., Lee Enterprises, Inc., Molyneaux Insurance, Palmer College of Chiropractic, Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce, Rock Island County Health Department, Scott County Health Department, United Way of the Quad Cities Area, and WaterMark Corners.

The Bi-State Regional Commission is a local, voluntary organization established in 1966, serving local governments in five counties in eastern Iowa and western Illinois (Muscatine and Scott Counties, Iowa and Henry, Mercer, and Rock Island Counties, Illinois). The Commission serves as a forum for intergovernmental cooperation and delivery of regional programs and to assist member local governments in planning and project development.

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