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For Immediate Release

Regional Rock Stars of All Ages Continue to Inspire with Stories of Hope

The Regional Rock Stars is a collaborative effort to highlight the stories of everyday people doing extraordinary things. They're neighbors, colleagues, co-workers and friends who are making a difference with acts of kindness, hope and gratitude during the COVID-19 pandemic. Three were announced last week and we're proud to announce today the next set of Regional Rock Stars; we will share stories weekly.

"Congratulations to the Regional Rock Star Nominees! They have gone above and beyond during this difficult time and deserve recognition," noted Eva Field, President & CEO of Hinsdale Chamber of Commerce. "Hinsdale Chamber is proud to join forces with our partners and look forward to celebrating these amazing people."

Mayor Frank Trilla, Village of Willowbrook. On his own time and with his own money, Mayor Trilla delivered cases of water and face masks that were badly needed at Chateau Senior Care Facility where a severe COVID-19 outbreak occurred. He met the local manager of Whole Foods to start a program where seniors could come in early to purchase their groceries. This program has since been adopted by Costco and others. He also, at his own expense, had all Village of Willowbrook police cars sterilized for potential COVID-19 contamination. "I try to help where I can," Mayor Trilla says. "I have limited talents but they include cleaning and, in this case, sanitizing cars and facilitating water. It was my pleasure to help deliver thousands of masks, gowns and gloves. It was the least I could do."

Anna Padron Sikora, Pillars Community Health. Anna produces and posts videos in the Community Coping Clips on Pillars Community Health website and social media. They are informative, kind and straightforward. Anyone looking for tips on maintaining mental wellness in these times will benefit. "The more kindness we give, the more "riches" that are returned to us," Anna says. "We don't know people struggle with on a daily basis, especially now. All of us have additional layers of stress at this time. We need to extend more kindness to one another." She explains the videos were a new way to reach out and try to provide comfort to the wider community sheltered in place. "As mental health providers and advocates, we are always trying to reduce stigma around mental health. My wish is that we would talk about mental health as easily as we talk about physical health. We are in the same storm yet we all have different boats. The aftermath will be different for each of us. Always be kind."

Kendell Sullivan, FocusOm Yoga. Kendell organized a lunch program for the essential staff at Loyola Hospital in Maywood. There are no longer cafeteria services for the hospital staff, so she created a fundraising campaign at the yoga studio to raise money to buy lunch from local restaurants. Kendell extended her hand to help as many people as possible during this crisis. She explains that "None of it would be possible without the group effort that has emerged. What I do affects others, and if I am careless with resources or in the case of the pandemic, only considering my own health, the result may be devastating for someone else." She goes on to explain that, "When the pandemic began, I was suddenly in a position of closing a business and not working at the hospital because of the halt of elective surgeries. I could see the

stress my fellow healthcare workers who had to show up day after day were facing, and I have a connection with an entire community looking for ways to be of service, so my business partner and I began explore how to bring these two together. A very wise woman once told me, 'Give, give, give, and it will come back thousandfold.' I have taken this message to heart. If I can show up and be kind, then maybe I can inspire someone to do the same."

Olivia Wirtz and Chris Vasti, Lyons Township High School. These two seniors created an Instagram page to give classmates a place to celebrate college decisions and feel a sense of pride in their accomplishments. They are making a big difference for parents, families, students and their high school. @lthsseniors2020 now has over one-third of the senior class pictured. Chris says, "I was looking forward to May 1st, when seniors wear college shirts to school; I was devastated to find out that wouldn't be a reality for us." Olivia describes their situation as seniors, "In times like these, when no one knows what's going on, it's important that people do their part to help keep some sort of order when everything is chaos. With everyone doing their part, we can get through hard times and come out stronger." She explains that she saw a few other high schools doing similar things, so she, "Decided to take action and make an account for LT where the seniors could submit their future plans. This account makes it special for the seniors to announce their future, whether it's a university, community college or military plan. I think students really appreciate this account because it brings us together even though we can't physically do that." Both students feel that, "If you live by simple acts of kindness and try to be selfless, everything can change. It's like the snowball effect. If you do something nice for someone, they pass it on and soon enough everyone around you is better off."

The Regional Rock Stars is a collaborative effort by AMITA Health, Community Memorial Foundation, the Hinsdale Chamber of Commerce, West Central Municipal Conference and the West Suburban Chamber of Commerce & Industry. **We invite you to share more stories of the individuals who are making a difference in our community so that we can recognize them and be inspired by the ways they are bringing the entire region together. [Use this simple form to let us know who you know and who deserves to be recognized.](#)**

Individuals will be recognized at a community celebration at the end of the year.



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AMITA Health (www.AMITAhealth.org) is a joint operating company formed by AdventHealth in Altamonte Springs, Fla., and St. Louis-based Ascension. AMITA Health is the largest health system in Illinois, comprising 19 hospitals and more than 230 sites of care. The health system has 900 providers in its medical groups, more than 26,000 associates and 7,000 physician partners and serves over 6.6 million residents in the greater Chicagoland area.

Community Memorial Foundation (CMF) is a private health conversion foundation established in 1995. The Foundation's grantmaking and community work are guided by its mission - to measurably improve the health of those who live and work in the western suburbs of Chicago. Throughout 25 years of regional investment, CMF has awarded more than \$77 million dollars to nonprofit organizations in the western suburbs of Cook County and southeastern portion of DuPage County. cmfdn.org

Hinsdale Chamber of Commerce has been in operation for more than 90 years by representing the voice of businesses in Hinsdale and beyond and has created a legacy in serving the entire community by Connecting Business through Community-Leadership-Opportunity-Involvement.

The West Central Municipal Conference serves as the Council of Government representing 52 local governments in west suburban Cook and eastern DuPage Counties. Within our mission statement, we seek to serve our members by fostering municipal cooperation and communication; developing solutions on matters of mutual concern; advocating common interests at the county, state, and federal levels of government; and offering training, technical assistance and resource information that contribute to the efficient management of local government. westcook.org

The West Suburban Chamber of Commerce & Industry is the collective voice of the region's business community, advocating pro-business initiatives and public policy on a state and local level. Economic prosperity is driven by promoting the thriving business climate, geographical preference and demographic diversity of the region. We leverage the strength of our membership by encouraging innovation and the exchange of ideas, information and opportunity for the benefit of the entire community. Wsccl.org