Dignity Health and UniHealth Foundation Address Cultural Trauma as a Health Issue with $4 Million Investment in Mental Health Trainings to Improve Outcomes for SoCal Youth

Los Angeles, Calif. – Los Angeles, Calif. – November 18, 2019 – Dignity Health is partnering with UniHealth Foundation and Southern California school districts to bring much-needed mental health awareness training to school staff and parents for the benefit of at-risk youth. The Cultural Trauma and Mental Health Resiliency Project is designed to support adults who regularly interact with young people, particularly youth of color, to identify mental distress, address the impacts of trauma, reduce stigma, and increase resiliency. Together, Dignity Health and UniHealth are providing $4 million in community grants and mental health trainings over the course of three years to implement the Cultural Trauma and Mental Health Resiliency Project.

Year one community grant funding of $759,000 has been awarded to nine organizations that will train 80 staff, who will then train 7,200 individuals who regularly interact with youth throughout Los Angeles and San Bernardino counties. Grantees were selected in part because of their longstanding partnerships with schools and students. Year one community grant recipients of the Cultural Trauma and Mental Health Resiliency Project are:

- Amanecer Community Counseling Service, Los Angeles
- National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI) Los Angeles County
- San Fernando Valley Community Mental Health Center, Inc.
- Tarzana Treatment Centers, Inc.
- NAMI San Fernando Valley
- NAMI Long Beach Area
- NAMI Glendale
- Glendale Youth Alliance
- Making Hope Happen Foundation, San Bernardino

In addition to the community grants, Dignity Health staff from each of its six Southern California hospitals will be taught how to deliver mental health awareness trainings as well as coached on how to use these skills in patient care settings and in communities served by the hospitals.

"In order to address the impact of trauma on children, communities must join forces and develop a coherent and collaborative solution," said Joel Cisneros, Director of School Mental Health, Los

Angeles Unified School District. "Led by Dignity Health, the Cultural Trauma and Mental Health Resiliency Project will sponsor projects that build capacity by empowering youth and adults in becoming mental health advocates. In addition to the funding, an expert advisory committee has been formed to guide the work across the county."

"We know mental health challenges hinder success for our students, and we are grateful for partners like Dignity Health who invest in solutions to these challenges. The Cultural Trauma and Mental Health Resiliency Project is providing important resources to ensure the kids in our community will get the help they need to thrive," said Dr. Dale Marsden, Superintendent, San Bernardino City Unified School District. "It squarely aligns with Uplift San Bernardino – our community's effort to ensure the youth of our city will be successful here."

"Our health is affected by poverty, racism, adverse childhood experiences, and violence," said Lynn Yonekura, MD, Director of Community Health at Dignity Health - California Hospital Medical Center. "We know that trauma and mental health issues can contribute to stress-related illnesses, such as mood and anxiety disorders, substance use disorders, and suicide. Linking youth to the mental health resources they need is one way we are helping schools to decrease disciplinary referrals, decrease the suicide rate, decrease absenteeism, and increase on-time graduation."

The project participants will use Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) curricula and Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) curricula, which are skills-based training courses that teach participants about mental health, substance use, and suicide prevention that have been proven to be effective. Participants of MHFA are able to identify the signs and symptoms of mental illness, offer help and resources to people in distress, and reduce the stigma associated with mental illness. The program will also use Youth Mental Health First Aid curricula created specifically for individuals who directly interact with youth. Participants of QPR learn to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help.

According to UniHealth Foundation President Jennifer Vanore, "UniHealth is proud to partner with Dignity Health on the Cultural Trauma and Mental Health Resiliency Project by providing $1.9 million of the total project cost – which will support grants, training and evaluation – with Dignity Health contributing the remainder of the $4 million total." UniHealth Foundation is a non-profit philanthropic organization whose mission it is to support and facilitate activities that significantly improve the health and well-being of individuals and communities within its service area.

About Dignity Health
Dignity Health is a multi-state nonprofit network of 10,000 physicians, more than 60,000 employees, 41 acute care hospitals, and 400-plus care-centers, including community hospitals, urgent care, surgery and imaging centers, home health, and primary care clinics in Arizona, California, and Nevada. Dignity Health is dedicated to providing compassionate, high-quality, and affordable patient-centered care with special attention to the poor and underserved. Dignity Health is a part of CommonSpirit Health, a nonprofit health system committed to

advancing health for all people and dedicated to serving the common good. For more information, please visit our website at www.DignityHealth.org.

About Dignity Health Southern California
Dignity Health Southern California's six hospitals have one common goal: to provide compassionate, high-quality health care in a safe and healing environment. Our acute care, nonprofit hospitals provide services in Los Angeles, Glendale, Northridge, Long Beach, and San Bernardino and share a legacy of *humankindness* with Dignity Health. All of the Dignity Health Southern California facilities have been recognized for quality care, safety, premier surgical services, technologically-advanced imaging centers, outpatient services, comprehensive home health services, and a wide variety of community benefit programs. Visit dignityhealth.org/SoCal for more information.