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VNA Health Care Holds Grand Opening for New Joliet Clinic

New 14,000 square foot facility will significantly expand VNA's services for the Joliet community, reaching 5,000 new patients over the next two years

Joliet, IL - Today, VNA Health Care, the largest Community Health Center in the Chicago suburbs, held a grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony for its new health center in Joliet. The new facility at 1501 West Jefferson Street includes 26 medical exam rooms, a wellness kitchen, waiting areas, a laboratory, nursing stations, mental/behavioral health counseling rooms, and a drive-through pharmacy. At the newly completed 14,000 square foot facility, VNA physicians and nurse practitioners offer family practice, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, and mental/behavioral health services. This extra capacity allows VNA to expand its services for Joliet and surrounding communities, and they expect to serve 5,000 patients and complete 25,000 exams over the next two years.

At a grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony today, VNA President and CEO Linnea Windel was joined by Congressman Bill Foster, Congresswoman Lauren Underwood, State Senator Rachel Ventura, State Representative Dagmara Avelar, Joliet Mayor Terry D'Arcy, and others to celebrate the new facility and recognize the impact this new health center brings to the community.

"VNA is thrilled to officially open our new health center in Joliet. At this clinic, we will expand our services to those in need as we strive to positively impact the lives of thousands of people in the area and the community as a whole," said VNA President and CEO Linnea Windel. "Providing high-quality, affordable health care for people who would otherwise experience difficulty obtaining care is central to our purpose, and we are grateful that we are able to expand the reach of our services. We appreciate Congressman Foster and Congresswoman Underwood for their support in advocating for the federal funding that made this project a reality, and we are happy that so many friends of VNA were here to celebrate this moment with us today."

In fall 2021, the Health Resources & Services Administration - Bureau of Primary Health Care (HRSA) awarded VNA \$1.3 million in federal funding to support construction of the Joliet location. The funding was authorized by the American Rescue Plan of 2021, which provided HRSA with funding to support construction, expansion, alteration, renovation, and other capital improvements to modify, enhance, and expand health care infrastructure. Earlier this year, Congressman Foster and Congresswoman Underwood helped secure an additional \$500,000 in federal funding to support the project. State Representative Avelar also helped secure \$250,000 in state funding for the clinic.

"During my time representing this area in Congress, I've witnessed first-hand VNA's commitment to providing high-quality, affordable health care for all," said Congressman Bill Foster. "That's why I was so proud to secure

\$500,000 to support their new health care facility in Joliet, which will help fill a vital gap in treatment for so many members of the community."

Joliet and the surrounding communities that are served by the new VNA clinic have a low-income population of 63,000, but only 23,000 are currently served by Community Health Centers. In Will County, approximately 8% of residents live below the poverty line. To address the 31.5% of the Hispanic/Latino population in Will County that speaks English less than "very well," the clinic offers all services in both English and Spanish with additional languages available through translation services.

"This ribbon cutting is such a proud moment for our community," said Congresswoman Lauren Underwood. "This new VNA health center is a great example of how we can use federal resources to expand local access to high-quality care. I'm so pleased that we were able to deliver this funding, and I'm going to keep working hard to expand access to affordable, high-quality health care for every family in our community."

The new health center also provides services to improve overall health outcomes for the community, including chronic disease management, access to cancer screenings like mammograms, benefits assistance, and nutrition education. VNA previously served the Joliet community at a leased space and all services have been moved to the new location.

In March of 2023, VNA launched a three-year, comprehensive "Growing for Tomorrow" campaign to support its efforts to expand services in the Chicago suburbs, which includes this new facility in Joliet. The campaign has a goal of securing \$5 million that will allow VNA to grow its reach and provide high-quality, affordable healthcare throughout the Chicago suburbs to 100,000 individuals annually. VNA currently serves 75,000 patients who reside in the Chicago suburbs, more than any other Community Health Center.

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About VNA Health Care

VNA Health Care is the largest Community Health Center (also known as a Federally Qualified Health Center) in the Chicago suburbs. VNA provides care for more than 75,000 patients annually and is committed to improving health equity and decreasing disparities. VNA has served people regardless of insurance status or ability to pay for more than 100 years and 2022 marked its 20th Anniversary as a Community Health Center. To learn more, visit www.vnahealth.com.