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Chronicles

"Healthcare the Way it Should Be"

Daniel Creitz receives Geiger Gibson Emerging Leaders Award

Twelve years ago, a young university student waiting on his girlfriend – a registration clerk at CHC/SEK – always used his wait time to clean the clinic lobby (organizing the magazines in alphabetical order), visit with patients and get to know the front-line staff.

In 2017 – four years after graduating from Washburn University School of Law and marrying the young woman – Daniel Creitz returned to CHC/SEK to apply for a new position becoming the first attorney employed by a health center in Kansas. Now he's the Senior Vice President and Chief Compliance Officer at the organization and was recently selected to receive the Geiger Gibson Emerging Leaders Award for 2023. The award celebrates young leaders whose work has helped improve the health of medically underserved patients, communities and special populations.

In collaboration with the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC), the Geiger Gibson awards are presented during NACHC's annual Policy and Issues Forum, in Washington, D.C.

"I am incredibly humbled and honored to receive this award and be a part of CHC/SEK," Daniel said. "Dr. Geiger and Dr. Gibson laid the foundation for the health center movement, a movement that CHC/SEK helps further every day in communities across Kansas and Oklahoma. It is an incredible mission and purpose, and I am very lucky to be a part of it."

Daniel has reorganized more than 1,000 contracts, navigated a 300-plus page application for a USDA loan for clinic construction and singlehandedly managed the legal transition of six Mercy clinics to CHC/SEK in less than 90 days.

Daniel now oversees CHC/SEK's risk management program, population health program, health information program, credentialing and contracting program, and pharmacy program, which includes six in-house pharmacies, plus 49 contract pharmacies. He has partnered with Washburn School of Law to create a first-of-its-kind medical/legal training experience that has benefited 12 students and hundreds of patients thus far. Building on this program's success, he is now working with other Kansas health centers to provide FQHC-knowledgeable legal resources they can afford.

At the same time, he has laid the groundwork with local judges for a Drug Court as an alternative to imprisonment for non-violent drug-related crimes.

Daniel helped create two CHC/SEK subsidiaries, including Building Health, Inc., devoted to the social determinants of health and serves as its president. CHC/SEK's newly-incorporated foundation, Inspire Health, Inc., is devoted to encouraging low-income students to consider professional careers in healthcare and law – both of which there is a shortage.

As CHC/SEK ventured into more advanced diagnostics (mammography and CT scanning), he was instrumental in completing the accreditation process, which required creating multiple policies and protocols.

He is beloved by staff and is the chief cook (burgers and dogs) at CHC/SEK events, legendary for his lunchtime bingo games and drops in regularly on weekends to bring snacks to staff in CHC/SEK's Walk-In clinics.

"I am so appreciative of what our leadership team and staff do every day for our patients and communities," Daniel said. "While I am receiving this award, it is an award for all of us and a recognition of CHC/SEK's mission to do all the good we can. Thank you to my family, friends, staff, and leadership team for their love and support. I am extremely blessed."



Daniel Creitz

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