

News Release



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Southcentral Foundation recognized by top U.S. officials with 2011 Baldrige National Quality Award

***Alaska Native-owned health care earns highest presidential honor for
performance excellence***

(ANCHORAGE, ALASKA) – Southcentral Foundation is Alaska’s first health care organization to receive the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, announced today by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce.

The U.S. Congress created the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program and the award in 1987 to identify and recognize the country’s most innovative organizations, and then disseminate and share best-practice performance strategies. The goal is nationwide advancements in innovation and quality. Southcentral Foundation was one of the four organizations able to meet the nation’s highest standards and receive the 2011 award.

This year, the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program received 69 applications (two manufacturers, three service companies, two small businesses, eight educational organizations, 40 health care organizations and 14 nonprofits/governmental organizations). The applicants were evaluated rigorously by an independent board of 553 examiners in seven areas: leadership; strategic planning; customer focus; measurement, analysis and knowledge management; workforce focus; operations focus; and results.

Southcentral Foundation and ten others were selected for a site visit in October. The examiners spent between 300 and 1,000 hours assessing each of the 11 finalists’ strengths and opportunities for improvement before reaching their decision of the four organizations selected.

“This award honors the collective effort of our tribal leadership, customer-owners, and employees who have pursued excellence, systematically, in all aspects of Southcentral Foundation’s Nuka System of Care,” said James Segura, chair of the Southcentral Foundation Board of Directors. “Our ‘commitment to quality’ is a corporate goal and we work tirelessly to continuously improve.”

“It is a remarkable recognition that affirms all we do in our health care system,” said Katherine Gottlieb, president and CEO of Southcentral Foundation. “We care what happens in a hundred years, it is about our children’s children.”

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The award will be presented by President Barack Obama in April.

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About Southcentral Foundation

Established in 1982, Southcentral Foundation's (SCF) mission is to work together with the Native Community to achieve wellness through health and related services. The nonprofit health care affiliate of Cook Inlet Region Inc. (CIRI), SCF has grown in its 27 years, from a single dental clinic to an internationally recognized, award-winning health care organization that employs more than 1,400 people and manages more than 60 health care programs and services.