



## **HCAN's Denise Harris recognized with Cradle Cincinnati Champion for Change Award**

Denise Harris, Maternal and Child Health Care Coordination Supervisor for Health Care Access Now (HCAN), received the Cradle Cincinnati Champions for Change Award at a virtual ceremony on Sept. 24, 2020.

- Harris was recognized in the "Redesigning Outreach to Pregnant Women" category, meant to highlight excellence in providing relief and assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Harris leads a team of five Community Health Workers, who help remove impediments for pregnant mothers in order to reduce infant mortality and low birth rates, issues that disproportionately affect women of color.

### **9/24/2020, Cincinnati, OH**

Cradle Cincinnati adjusted its Champions for Change Award this year, giving special emphasis to those who have made creative and effective shifts in order to continue providing excellent outreach to mothers and babies during the COVID-19 pandemic. HCAN's Denise Harris stepped up to do just that, leading her team of five Community Health Workers (CHWs) to adopt flexible practices in order to keep mothers healthy and connected with important resources during a time of uncertainty.

Julie Roemke is the Program Manager for CHW and Home Visitor Partnerships at Cradle Cincinnati. She says, "This award is meant to recognize and celebrate individuals who have creatively stepped up to support moms and babies during the pandemic."

One of Harris' overarching goals for her team is to alleviate mothers' stress by identifying and assessing obstacles and needs. The pandemic has complicated that process and, in some cases, put up additional barriers for clients. She and



her team create an environment of trust by building rapport with clients, which gives them a trusted source for education, as well as resources.

Harris' dedication to continuous improvement has served her well during the pandemic. Because her team was already accustomed to training and making adjustments, she was able to bolster them as they continued to get to the root of challenges faced by the mothers HCAN serves. Harris believes her CHWs can be a voice for their clients, and that healthy clients lead to a healthier community overall.

Roemke says, "Denise has steadfastly built her team and supported them and their clients throughout the pandemic. She has developed many relationships with partners in the community in order to provide resources and support for the moms we serve. We appreciate her kindness, leadership and dedication to our community."

Cradle Cincinnati has been recognizing individuals who do outstanding work in the community with the Champions for Change Award since 2014. Previous years' award categories differ from this year's: "Transforming medicine," "Redesigning outreach to pregnant women," and "Building community during a crisis." Harris has been acknowledged for reconfiguring her team's outreach to continue providing stellar service during the pandemic.

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