INDIANA UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS
School of Medicine

January 10, 2011

Dr. Charles R. Bantz, Chancellor, IUPUI
355 N. Lansing Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Dear Chancellor Bantz,

It is with the greatest pleasure that I write in support of the nomination of the Community Dental Clinic (CDC) of LaGrange County for the 2011 Chancellor's Community Award for Excellence in Civic Engagement. Although my personal involvement with the Community Dental Clinic has been relatively recent, I have been aware of their accomplishments and collaboration within IUPUI for years. The CDC is an embodiment of IUPUI's mission of collaboration and advancing Indiana citizens through research, creative activity, teaching, and civic engagement. Through their innovative collaboration with the School of Dentistry and School of Medicine at IUPUI, the CDC has promoted educational, cultural, and economic development and a better understanding of diversity.

Eleven years ago the Community Dental Clinic (CDC) was established as a partnership of faculty from IUPUI and the Amish community. The clinic was a response to this community's dire need to improve the oral health and quality of life for children in their markedly underserved community, particularly those with bleeding disorders. Bleeding disorders are particularly prevalent in the Amish community because of their patterns of inheritance. The original IUPUI faculty involved in the CDC were Drs. Brian Sanders (IU School of Dentistry) and Dr. Amy Shapiro (IU School of Medicine). The clinic has since expanded and thrives, now providing care for over 5,000 patients annually and serving as an economic and service model nationally for providing dental care within rural, underserved areas.

The CDC supports IUPUI's education mission in several ways. Each year, several Amish families participate in a teaching session about their culture and diversity. Additionally, a favorite elective of IUPUI dental students is an excellent 'service learning' project during which students provide supervised dental care at the CDC.

The CDC also contributes to the research mission of IUPUI, participating in a variety of extra- and intra- mural research projects with the IU School of Dentistry. My more recent involvement with the CDC is in planning future collaborations around service, teaching and research. Because of the huge success of the collaborative dental clinic, the CDC and the Department of Pediatrics are now exploring how to establish a medical clinic which would incorporate research and teaching. Unfortunately, many Amish children suffer from a number of genetic disorders that require a large amount of specialty and medical care. The Amish community has long

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partnered with Riley Hospital for Children for their care. Developing a medical clinic will potentially allow longitudinal follow-up of research cohorts and bio-banking (storage of biologic materials for research use). Such an effort has huge implications for improving the health of the Amish community and for the development of scientific breakthroughs to treat “orphan” (rare) diseases – an endeavor of national and international significance.

I wholeheartedly support the recognition of the Community Dental Clinic of LaGrange County for the 2011 Chancellor’s Community Award for Excellence in Civic Engagement. The spirit and accomplishments of the CDC exemplify the values of this award and the collaborations have been invaluable in improving the health of children and furthering the service, teaching and research missions of IUPUI.

Sincerely,

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