At the Institute for Diversity in Health Management’s (Institute) National Leadership and Education Conference in June, the Institute presented its Outstanding Member, Partner and Ambassador Awards. The Institute’s recipients demonstrate exemplary service, extraordinary leadership and enduring commitment to advance diversity and ensure equitable care for all.

Warrior Centric Health, LLC (WCH) received the Outstanding Member award. Led by Ronald Steptoe and Evelyn Lewis, M.D., WCH has been a member of the Institute since 2014. Their mission is to teach providers how to successfully understand and treat generations of America's servicemen and women, which they accomplish through certified training systems that target military and veteran demographics.

WCH was the first accredited program to address the socio-cultural determinants of health in multiple generations of service members, veterans and their families. Their work equips health care providers and supportive service professionals with the knowledge to ask the right questions to accurately assess, diagnose and treat veterans and their families.

The American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) received the Outstanding Partner Award. As one of its founding members, ACHE has been invested in the work of the Institute since its inception in 1994. A 1992 study released jointly by ACHE and the National Association of Health Services Executives, revealed minorities represented more than 20 percent of hospital employees but held less than 1 percent of top management positions. The study also showed that African-American health care executives made less money, held lower positions and had less job satisfaction than their white counterparts.

For the past 22 years, ACHE has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to the Institute, through active participation on the Institute's Board of Directors and providing guidance on the Institute's mission to expand health care leadership opportunities and support career advancement for ethnically, culturally and racially diverse individuals. ACHE offers a number of diversity-themed educational programs and resources to its members and provides leadership in this area to the health care field.

During the award ceremony Institute President and CEO Tomáš León also announced a new strategic alliance with ACHE. The goal of the alliance is grow the Summer Enrichment Program (SEP)—one of the Institute’s flagship initiatives—so that a greater number of students and health care organizations can participate annually.

New this year was the Institute’s Ambassador award, which honors one individual for leadership and efforts to promote diversity and eliminate health care barriers.
disparities. The first recipient of the honor was Juana Spears Slade, CDM, CCF, chief diversity officer and director of diversity and language services, at AnMed Health, Anderson, S.C.

Throughout her career, Slade has demonstrated a passion for increasing diversity and eradicating disparities in care. Under her leadership, AnMed Health has made noteworthy efforts to accomplish both goals. In 2015, the American Hospital Association named AnMed Health as one of the honorees for its Equity of Care Award. In addition to her full-time role, Slade also serves on the Institute board and is a founding member and current chair of the Institute’s American Leadership Council on Diversity in Healthcare (ALC). Slade consistently provides expertise, advice and counsel to Institute leadership and staff, and is always willing to assist. Her key insights and strategies have benefited the Institute and the entire health care field.

On the final day of the conference, the Institute recognized 20 health care organizations from across the country for their progress toward increasing diversity and reducing disparities in care. Recognition was based on hospitals and health systems’ responses to the Institute’s 2015 survey, “Diversity and Disparities: A Benchmark Study of U.S. Hospitals.” To learn more about those honors, please visit www.diversyconnection.org.