



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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## **Hawaii Department of Health's Thaddeus Pham recognized nationally among top "40 Under 40 Leaders in Minority Health"**

HONOLULU – The National Minority Quality Forum this week recognized Hawai'i Department of Health's (DOH) own Thaddeus Pham as one of this year's 40 Under 40 Leaders in Minority Health. Pham received the prestigious award in Washington, DC during the 2018 Leadership Summit on Health Disparities.

The 2018 40 Under 40 Leaders in Minority Health award recognizes influential young minority leaders across the nation who are making a difference in health care. Honorees include physicians, pharmacists, dentists, anesthesiologists, nurses, policy experts, researchers and others in a variety of health-related occupations.

Pham is the viral hepatitis prevention coordinator in DOH's Harm Reduction Services Branch and is also co-founder and co-director of the Hep Free Hawai'i Coalition, a community-based coalition focused on increasing awareness about viral hepatitis and access to care in Hawai'i. He approaches public health from a social justice perspective and seeks to leverage community partnerships and policy changes to address health disparities.

"Thaddeus Pham and other emerging young leaders like him in Hawai'i and the nation are vital to reducing serious health disparities," said Health Director Dr. Virginia Pressler. "We are very proud of Thaddeus and his role in the next generation of leaders in minority health."

Pham's efforts to prevent the spread of viral hepatitis have brought him into contact with larger health and social justice issues, including opioid overdose prevention, drug policy, immigrant and migrant healthcare, correctional health, homelessness, poverty, and sexual and gender equity.

"It is an honor to receive this award on behalf of the many underserved communities that we fight for each day," Pham said. "More people are realizing how health care intersects with social issues such as racial inequality and minority status. Meaningful changes in public health care will require innovative thinking that looks beyond medical issues."

Recent accomplishments of the Hep Free Hawai'i Coalition include a collaboration with

community partners to provide in-language materials for people from Asia and the Pacific as well as increased hepatitis prevention services at correctional facilities, community health centers and pharmacies. Collaborations include involvement with syringe exchanges, law enforcement, and other non-traditional partners on community-based efforts such as the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program and implementation of the statewide Opioid Plan.

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