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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***Open Door Health Center Awarded Funds Through the American Rescue Plan***

**Mankato – (October 15, 2021)** – Open Door Health Center has been awarded \$520,260 to help modernize the clinic and help continue to support underserved communities. A total of 14 health centers throughout the state of Minnesota have received funding supported by the American Rescue Plan and the Biden Administration, with awards totaling \$8,644,259. These funds will allow Open Door to complete and improve two non-clinical areas within the building. Completion of these projects will allow for expanded clinical and community space to help support patient services.

"Open Door Health Center is grateful for this funding, as it will help us improve the quality of our clinic, help support space for our staff, and help us expand our clinical areas to improve patient care. This funding will also help many other community health centers better serve their patients and overcome so many challenges within public health," said Rhonda Eastlund, Chief Executive Officer at Open Door Health Center. Open Door has a contractor in place and has begun preparing for renovations throughout the clinic.

This announcement comes as health centers, often called the backbone of "America's public health care system," are engaged on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic, completing more than 15 million vaccinations and diverting non-acute COVID cases from overwhelmed hospitals. "The last significant investment in infrastructure for health centers was over a decade ago when health centers served less than 18 million patients," said Mike Holmes, Board Chair of the National Association of Community Health Centers. "Today, we (America's Health Centers) have nearly doubled our patient base and are fighting to bring an end to the pandemic." Health center capital needs through 2025 are expected to total \$17.5 billion, including funds to repair, replace and upgrade existing infrastructure as well as build capacity to serve up to 38.5 million patients by 2025.

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**About Open Door Health Center** - Open Door Health Center is a federally qualified health center (FQHC), founded in 1994 to be a safety net clinic for the underserved populations in Southern Minnesota. Today, ODHC provides comprehensive medical, dental, and behavioral health care to ALL persons regardless of insurance coverage, or ability to pay. Our mission is to provide access to integrated, patient-centered care for our communities. Open Door serves approximately 11,000 unique patients each year. In addition, we provide free dental screening to more than 1000 school children in 16 elementary schools in South Central Minnesota each year. We also provide free insurance enrollment and legal assistance on-site, so that our patients are free to focus on their health.