

NEW HAMPSHIRE UNION LEADER

Dartmouth Health doctor honored for work with children

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Charles Cappetta, M.D., Dartmouth Health Children's pediatrician and children's health advocate, center, has been selected as the recipient of the 2022 Sandi Van Scoyoc Legacy Award by the New Hampshire Children's Health Foundation. Cappetta was honored in a ceremony at Dartmouth Health's regional administrative office in Bedford in June, where Gail Garceau, president of the New Hampshire Children's Health Foundation, right, presented him with the award and a \$2,500 check, which he donated to Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children New Hampshire . CASA NH president and CEO Marty Sink, left, was on hand to accept the donation.
Provided by Dartmouth Health

A local pediatrician was recently honored for his years-long dedication to the health and well-being of children in New Hampshire.

Dr. Charles Cappetta, a Dartmouth Health Children's pediatrician, was selected as the recipient of the 2022 Sandi Van Scoyoc Legacy Award by the New Hampshire Children's Health Foundation, a leading funder for children's health in the state.

The award recognizes a New Hampshire organization or individual that "demonstrates an exemplary and aspirational commitment toward improving the health of New Hampshire children and families," according to Gail Garceau, president of the foundation.

"Dr. Cappetta is truly a champion for children's health and he has been involved in almost too many initiatives to count," Garceau said. "He has gone out into the community and directly engaged children to teach them about their health. His work both professionally and as a volunteer exemplifies the priorities of our foundation."

Cappetta was selected from nine nominees for the award, including people working directly with children in a range of occupations including pediatrics, mental and oral health professionals and those promoting healthy eating habits for children.

"I am extremely honored and humbled by this recognition and feel blessed to have spent my whole professional career working in a state that cares so much about kids and families," Cappetta said. "It's a huge thrill to be chosen by an organization whose most important mission ... holds patient-centered care at its core. It doesn't get any better than this."

Affectionately known as "Dr. Chuck," Cappetta has practiced pediatric and family medicine in Nashua for more than 30 years, and was honored with the award at a ceremony in Bedford earlier this summer. Garceau presented

him with the award and a check for \$2,500 which Cappetta donated to Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children.

“When you look at Dr. Cappetta, you see the best in humanity,” said Alisa Druzba, board chair of the foundation. “He represents everything the New Hampshire Children’s Health Foundation stands for.”

In addition to his pediatric practice, Cappetta participates in many professional and civic organizations, committees, councils and boards, and completed his pediatric residency at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon in 1993. He joined the pediatric practice at Hitchcock Clinic in Nashua, now Dartmouth Hitchcock Clinics Nashua. In June, he celebrated his 32nd anniversary with Dartmouth Health.

“He is a role model for our current residents and represents what an academic health system brings to New Hampshire,” said Dr. Keith Loud, Dartmouth Health Children’s physician-in-chief. “Dr. Cappetta has not only practiced his entire career at Dartmouth Health Children’s, he was trained in our pediatric residency at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center.”

Garceau cites the award- winning Granite State FitKids program that Cappetta founded in 1997 as just one example of his commitment to all aspects of children’s health. The program teaches children about their bodies and how individual actions and choices affect them.

“One of the programs that keeps me young at heart is my program – Granite State FitKids,” Cappetta said. “We teach fourth- grade children about their bodies and how to take care of them over seven weeks in the classroom.”

When schools were remote during the COVID-19 pandemic, Cappetta created a virtual FitKids for those schools that wanted to continue offering the program to students.

“Granite State FitKids has grown from serving three schools in the greater Nashua area to more than 25 schools in New Hampshire and northern Massachusetts,” Garceau said. “It teaches children and their families about the importance of regular physical activity and promotes lifelong respect for mind, body and spirit.”

The New Hampshire Children’s Health Foundation was incorporated in 1997, according to its website, and is a leading funder for children’s health issues in the state.

“Our focus is on children from birth to age five and their families, and our priorities are to improve children’s oral health, promote healthy eating and active living, address childhood trauma and increase access to children’s health insurance coverage,” Garcia said. “The important work that we do with our partners has profound and long-lasting benefits for the youngest and most vulnerable children in our state.”

Cappetta said the foundation is instrumental in providing health care to children in New Hampshire.

“They walk the talk each and every day. They put words into action and have an extremely dedicated group of awesome professionals who are committed to improving the lives of those they serve in any way possible,” Cappetta said. “NHCHF is the glue that holds so many families and organizations together. They define advocacy – doing what is needed each and every day for those less fortunate and they are a class act in every way imaginable.”

Cappetta said he couldn't imagine doing anything else.

"I love being with kids and families, I love spending time in the communities, working in the schools and walking side by side in the shoes of all those who come to see us," he said. "I can't imagine any other profession for me personally that brings me such joy. It is the ultimate honor to be trusted with the care of families, and I work as hard as possible to maintain this trust with everything I do. Community and families and patient centered care is all that matters to me."

Original article from the New Hampshire Union Leader:

https://www.unionleader.com/news/health/dartmouth-health-doctor-honored-for-work-with-children/article_58b2e0b5-a405-5573-8239-e48eda8f38c3.html