



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **MCHD recognized for Local Leadership and Volunteer of the Year awards**

*Caption MCHD awards 2014\_01: Shay Simmons accepts the Local Leadership Award from IDPH Director Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck at the sixth annual Director's Awards Ceremony at the 2014 Integrated Public Health and Medical Preparedness Summit.*

*Caption MCHD awards 2014\_02: Clara Lehan accepts the Volunteer of the Year Award from IDPH Director Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck at the sixth annual Director's Awards Ceremony at the 2014 Integrated Public Health and Medical Preparedness Summit.*

BLOOMINGTON, IL- Personnel affiliated with the McLean County Health Department (MCHD) received recognition from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) on July 9 during the sixth annual Director's Awards Ceremony at the 2014 Integrated Public Health and Medical Preparedness Summit in Schaumburg, IL. Shay Simmons, MCHD Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, received the Local Leadership Award and Clara Lehan, a MCHD Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteer, received the Volunteer of the Year Award. This is the fifth consecutive year that a McLean County MRC volunteer received this award.

### **Local Leadership Award**

Shay Simmons, Bioterrorism and Emergency Preparedness Coordinator at MCHD, was awarded the 2014 Local Leadership Award by IDPH. Since joining the health department in 2009 after a career in the United States Marine Corps, Simmons contributed to maintaining the health and safety of county residents by advocating for the most vulnerable through her coordinated efforts with the McLean County Emergency Management Agency and members of the McLean County Access and Functional Needs Advisory Panel (AFNAP) to promote the McLean County Functional Needs Registry. She strengthened and maintained valuable partnerships with local emergency response agencies and private organizations through her active role in the McLean County Disaster Council. In addition, her training, recruitment, and retention efforts have expanded McLean County's MRC unit. Simmons also serves as an American Red Cross volunteer and assisted in the Super Storm Sandy and Hurricane Katrina recovery.

### **Volunteer of the Year**

Clara Lehan was awarded the distinction of Volunteer of the Year by IDPH, a fifth consecutive win by a health department MRC volunteer. Lehan, of Towanda, has accumulated more than 200 volunteer hours since joining MRC in 2005. A retired nurse with an active nursing license, Lehan is an appreciated resource to the MRC unit. She is a certified First-Aid and CPR instructor who conducts annual training for MRC volunteers at cost, which is a significant investment of time and expertise on her part. Lehan provided augmentation to health department staff during a partnership with a local pharmacy to target under and uninsured residents in need of the seasonal flu vaccine. Lehan is part of the medication dispensing team for Point of Dispensing (POD) operations in preparation of pandemics and other medical countermeasures events, using her nursing background and interpersonal skills to assist the health department meet the need of McLean County residents. She also volunteers for outreach events at local campuses and businesses, engaging residents and promoting emergency preparedness.

The MCHD MRC unit, founded in 2005, provides a reserve of community-based volunteers with medical and non-medical backgrounds to respond to local health needs and supplement public health emergency response. To learn more about the McLean County Health Department MRC, please visit <http://health.mcleancountyil.gov/mrc>.

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