

Rita Osborn

Executive Director of Utah Center for Rural Health at Southern Utah University

Cedar City, UT, US

Specializing in rural Utah healthcare, community building, and project management.

Biography

Rita Osborn is the executive director of the Utah Center for Rural Health. Osborn founded the highly successful Rural Health Scholars program at Southern Utah University, significantly broadening learning opportunities for undergraduate students and raising acceptance rates to graduate health professional programs. The program has since expanded to Dixie State University and Snow College. She has written and overseen successful grants and contracts to support many programs, including two recent \$1 million federal grants to address the opioid crisis in several rural counties in Utah. Osborn founded the Free Clinic that operated in Cedar City until 2013 when it became a Federally Qualified Health Center. She continued to chair or serve on the board for the Family Health Center that operates five clinics in the region. Osborn is most passionate about assisting and advising students who aspire for health career careers, particularly for first-generation students who hail from rural or disadvantaged backgrounds. She is always enthused when such students matriculate to graduate programs, believing that we are helping to change our health care system in some small way. She also serves on statewide entities that include the Workforce Task Force with the Utah Hospital Association, the Utah Telemedicine Advisory Council, the Rural Health Association of Utah, along with others. Osborn's thesis addressed health care shortages and challenges in southern Utah. She volunteers as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) and works with foster children, leading to recent recognition as Iron County's CASA Advocate of the Year. In partnership with a local faith-based organization and drawing upon USDA federal grants, Osborn created and oversees summer lunch and after-school food programs in Iron County that for over a decade have fed hundreds of children daily.

Industry Expertise

Education/Learning, Health Care - Providers

Areas of Expertise

Community Health Programs, Rural Health Care Access & Delivery, Property Management, Healthcare, Grants, Community Building, Utah's Opioid Crisis

Affiliations

Primary Care Statutory Committee , Utah TeleHealth Network Committee, Solid Rock, International, Governing Board , With Love, From Strangers, Governing Board , CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) Volunteer , Family Healthcare ? Community Health Centers ? Board Chair , Southwest Utah CHC ? Board of Directors, Finance Committee, Public Relations Committee , Rocky Vista College of Osteopathic Medicine Start up Task Force and Admissions Selection Committee

Education

Southern Utah University
M.A. Business Administration

California State University at San Bernardino
B.A. Public Administration

Accomplishments

Achievement in Experiential Learning Award
Southern Utah university, 2014

Utah Campus Compact Engaged Scholar
Southern Utah University, 2007

Thunderbird Advisor of the Year
Southern Utah University, 2007, 2009, 2012

CASA Advocate of the Year
Iron County

Hero in Healthcare Award
Family Healthcare, 2018

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