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CONTACT

Governor's Foundation:

John Chobanian
(615) 610-1881

Nashville Health Care Council:

Katie Schlacter
(615) 743-3147

Governor's Foundation for Health and Wellness and Nashville Health Care Council Announce February Gubernatorial Candidate Forum

Event will explore opportunities to address health and wellness issues facing Tennessee

NASHVILLE – The Governor's Foundation for Health and Wellness and the Nashville Health Care Council today announced they will jointly host a gubernatorial candidate forum on February 27, 2018 at 10:00 am CST at Trevecca Nazarene University. Seating for the event will be limited, with advance registration required.

The two organizations are natural partners to host the forum, given their shared interest in Tennessee health issues. The Foundation and Council anticipate a robust discussion that incorporates the provider, community, and employer perspectives.

Hallerin Hilton Hill, respected radio host and acclaimed speaker, will moderate the discussion, which will feature questions from a panel of health leaders and community stakeholders from across the state. The USA TODAY NETWORK – Tennessee is the media partner and will provide additional coverage. A livestream of the event will be available on all USA TODAY NETWORK – Tennessee affiliate sites.

“We’re excited to bring together gubernatorial candidates for a critical conversation about the future of health and wellness in Tennessee,” said Richard Johnson, CEO of the Governor's Foundation. “While the state is making progress in improving key health measures, we still are faced with some of America’s highest rates of preventable chronic diseases, including Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease.”

A recent study conducted by the Sycamore Institute shows that these three health conditions alone cost Tennesseans more than \$5 billion because of direct health care expenses and the impact of employee absenteeism and lower productivity.

“These are critical issues that must be addressed,” Johnson said. “We look forward to hearing the candidates’ thoughts on what the state can do to help more Tennesseans get on the path to better health.”

“Nashville is the epicenter of the health industry, and home to an unparalleled concentration of health care expertise,” said Hayley Hovious, president of the Nashville Health Care Council. “We are thrilled that Tennessee has the potential to lead the world in creating solutions to improve health care for all, and are pleased to hear from each of these esteemed candidates on how we can move health care forward.”

Nashville’s health care industry generates more than \$84 billion in annual revenues and 500,000 jobs globally. It is Middle Tennessee’s largest and fastest-growing employer, with a local economic impact of \$38 billion and 250,000 jobs.

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The ***Governor’s Foundation for Health and Wellness*** is a non-profit corporation dedicated to enabling and encouraging Tennesseans to lead healthier lives. Based in Nashville, the Foundation brings together a statewide coalition of employers, health insurers, hospital systems, local governments, school systems and health care-focused foundations and community organizations to effect positive, measurable change. The Foundation’s Healthier Tennessee initiative strives to increase the number of Tennesseans who are physically active for at least 30 minutes five times a week, promote a healthy diet, and reduce the number of people who use tobacco. For more information, visit <https://healthierTN.com>.

The ***Nashville Health Care Council*** is a premier association of health care industry leaders working together to inspire global collaboration to improve health care by serving as a catalyst for leadership and innovation. The Council serves as a trusted source for information on trends and innovations influencing the nation’s health care industry. Through regular programs, the Council provides members with unparalleled access to national and international policymakers, industry pioneers and thought leaders. For more information, visit <https://healthcarecouncil.com>.

The ***USA TODAY NETWORK – Tennessee*** is the state’s largest-reaching, multi-channel digital marketing and news network, serving six primary marketplaces and the state through many print and digital platforms with powerful, deep and relevant local reporting. In each of our markets, we are The Tennessean, the Knoxville News Sentinel, The Commercial Appeal, the Daily News Journal, the Leaf Chronicle, and The Jackson Sun. Collectively, we are the USA TODAY NETWORK - Tennessee, the state’s news leader.

Trevecca Nazarene University is a Christian university in the heart of Nashville focused on preparing students for lives of leadership and service. Founded in 1901, Trevecca is committed to holistic education, encouraging students to grow intellectually, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually. Located approximately one mile from thriving downtown Nashville, Trevecca provides a liberal arts education while guiding students to find God’s calling on their lives through traditional undergraduate programs, continuing and graduate studies and online offerings. With students from 44 states and 22 countries, Trevecca offers 15 associate degrees, 83 undergraduate majors, 20 master’s programs, and two doctoral programs, as well as specialist and certificate programs.