



February 28, 2006

Dear Friends:

Last week, I had an opportunity to honor the ground-breaking work of the Open Cities Health Center in St. Paul. In a fitting celebration of African American History Month, Ms. Mary Stokes and Mrs. Timothy O. Vann, the two pioneering African American women who founded the center, were honored at an award ceremony last week. Their vision to provide culturally competent health care – a vision that has grown into a vital resource in the Twin Cities community for nearly four decades.

The center has become one of the largest nonprofit community health centers in the Twin Cities. It was also one of the first in the state of Minnesota to focus on providing health care to low-income residents, predominantly people of color.

[Click here](#) to read my Congressional statement honoring the work of the Open Cities Health Center. Read the [Pioneer Press article](#) on their work.



Rep. McCollum joins Gwen Ellis, holding Nia Tolefree, Roxanne Bellamy, and Roxie Smith at the Open Cities Health Center awards ceremony.

Sincerely,

Congresswoman Betty McCollum
Serving Minnesota's Fourth Congressional District

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