



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 12, 2015

Contact: Risha Stebbins

Phone: 804-732-8900

**Petersburg community collaboration awarded coaching,
funding resources with *Roadmaps to Health* Action Award**

PETERSBURG, VA—A strategy to engage Petersburg residents and city leaders in building a culture of health has yielded new, nationally recognized resources for the community. By working in partnership through the Petersburg Wellness Consortium and The Cameron Foundation, the City of Petersburg is one of 20 communities nationwide to receive a *Roadmaps to Health* Action Award. The Action Awards are designed to strengthen the capacity of communities to make effective and lasting change. This award will be used to build on Petersburg's existing efforts to improve its health outcomes.

The Action Awards are part of the *County Health Rankings & Roadmaps* program, a collaboration between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. As a *Roadmaps to Health* Action Award community, the Petersburg Wellness Consortium and the City of Petersburg will receive a year of direct, customized support from a *Roadmaps to Health* community coach and be able to participate in learning network activities. The grant also provides \$10,000 to accelerate the community's work in building a culture of health. As a best practice model, the program includes community engagement and policy planning as core components.

In the *County Health Rankings & Roadmaps* program, the *Rankings* show communities where they can improve, and the *Roadmaps* show communities how to take action to expand opportunities for healthier choices. The *Roadmaps* program was introduced in a presentation during The Cameron Foundation's Healthy Communities Regional Summit in 2014, and the Foundation has facilitated the formation of a collaboration between the current partners.

"This is quite an accolade for the City of Petersburg and the Petersburg Wellness Consortium," noted J. Todd Graham, president of The Cameron Foundation. "The Foundation's 2013 Health Needs Assessment identified the need for greater collaboration as key to improving health outcomes in the region. By having the Healthy Communities Summit last fall, we were able to help with bringing some national best practice ideas and examples to this community for greater use locally. This Action Award for the City of Petersburg is a reflection of that work, and we're very enthusiastic about what can result from such an effort."

Petersburg Mayor W. Howard Myers noted, "On behalf of Petersburg City Council, we are pleased to participate in this award because it is a resource to encourage healthy and active lifestyles in our community. Our community grapples with a number of poor health indicators; however, through the efforts of the city and our community partners, we are actively working to improve the quality of life for our residents. The resources afforded to us through this award will help to improve our progress as well."

Petersburg City Manager William E. Johnson, III emphasized that this is one important step forward in a long-term commitment that the City is making to improve health indicators and outcomes for our residents. "This coaching program aligns well with the City's own priorities, which include improving citizen health. In order to be successful, the *Roadmaps to Health* Action Award stresses public and private partnerships as a best practice approach to impacting community health. Utilizing the coaching expertise that comes with this award, the City of Petersburg, partner organizations and residents will strive to build a culture of health together," he added.

The goal of the Petersburg Wellness Consortium is to leverage existing partnerships and resources to improve health outcomes. Dr. Maghboeba Mosavel, team lead for the Petersburg Wellness Consortium, discussed the critical role that Petersburg citizens are playing in promoting a healthier community, saying, “The Petersburg Wellness Consortium has worked for the past three years to engage residents in conversation and education to address health and wellness. This coaching opportunity with the *Roadmaps to Health* project is a natural fit with the efforts that we already have begun. We anticipate the experience will aid our team in identifying the best ways for policy and grassroots community efforts to better address the Petersburg community’s health challenges.”

For the *Roadmaps to Health* Action Award, the collaborative partners on the team include: Dr. Maghboeba Mosavel, Team Lead—Petersburg Wellness Consortium; William E. Johnson, III, City Manager—City of Petersburg; Valerie L. Liggins, Program Officer—The Cameron Foundation; Tiffany A. Cox, Community Health and Prevention Supervisor—Crater Health District; Debra S. Jones, Virginia Cooperative Extension Health Specialist—Virginia State University; Natan D. Mackenzie, Community Resident—City of Petersburg; Mike J. Roberts, Executive Director—Petersburg YMCA.

ABOUT THE CAMERON FOUNDATION

The Cameron Foundation is a private foundation that supports the work of nonprofits and partner agencies to improve the quality of life of residents in its service area. Founded in 2003, The Cameron Foundation was formed from the proceeds of the sale of Southside Regional Medical Center by the Hospital Authority of the City of Petersburg. Its service area encompasses the region historically served by the hospital and includes the cities of Petersburg, Colonial Heights and Hopewell; the counties of Dinwiddie, Prince George, and Sussex; and the portion of Chesterfield County lying south of Route 10. Since it began grantmaking in 2004, the Foundation has awarded over \$69 million to organizations serving the residents of the Tri-Cities and surrounding counties.

More information about the Foundation, its grant opportunities, and its grant recipients is available on its website, www.camfound.org, or by telephone at 804 732 8900.

#