



## KANAWHA-CHARLESTON HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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## The Kanawha-Charleston Board of Health Establishes the “Dr. Rahul Gupta Outstanding Public Health Leadership Award”

**CHARLESTON, WV** – At its March 2, 2022, meeting, the Kanawha-Charleston Board of Health announced the creation of the “Dr. Rahul Gupta Outstanding Public Health Leadership Award” at the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department.

The award, named in honor of the former Kanawha-Charleston Health Department Health Officer and Executive Director and current Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, Dr. Rahul Gupta, seeks to recognize outstanding commitment to public health leadership in Kanawha County.

The inaugural award will be bestowed posthumously to Mr. Paul Nusbaum, former member of the Kanawha-Charleston Board of Health and former Cabinet Secretary of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources. At his passing, Mr. Nusbaum was an active and valued member of the Kanawha-Charleston Board of Health. His knowledge and counsel were invaluable to the Board of Health and he was a champion of all of the efforts of the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department.

“Dr. Gupta was a strong and respected voice for public health in Kanawha County during his tenure as our Health Officer and Executive Director and then as State Health Officer at the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources,” said Jeremy Nelson, President of the Kanawha-Charleston Board of Health. “I find it fitting that the inaugural award be bestowed upon our late friend and fierce fighter, Paul Nusbaum,” added Nelson.

“This is a great opportunity for the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department to highlight our previous Executive Director and Health Officer, Dr. Rahul Gupta. It is only fitting to acknowledge the start of his career with our health department and ultimately his service in state and federal roles,” said Dr. Sherri Young, Health Officer and Executive Director of the Kanawha Charleston Health Department. “Dr. Gupta's work with the Office of National Drug Control Policy is exemplary and aligns with his goal for addressing the opioid crisis locally, and extending that impact nationally,” she added. “Naming this award for Dr. Gupta is an honor. We hope that it will encourage other

healthcare leaders to continue their work in public health, knowing that one day the impacts they make locally could lead them into a career making an even broader impact. I personally have looked up to Dr. Gupta and thank him for helping start my career in public health. This is a wonderful way to pay it forward,” stated Dr. Young. “Equally, I am pleased the inaugural award will be given posthumously to Mr. Paul Nusbaum. From his position on the Kanawha-Charleston Board of Health to his position as Cabinet Secretary of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Paul’s contributions to public health in our county and our state are immeasurable,” she concluded.

“Leading the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department has been the opportunity of a lifetime. I am grateful for the trust the people of Kanawha County, City of Charleston and the state have placed in me. I am humbled to have this award named for public health leadership as I continue to be truly inspired by the folks who work tirelessly to protect the public’s health in the state and across the nation every single day,” said Dr. Rahul Gupta, Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and former Health Officer and Executive Director of the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department.

The award will be presented to Mr. Nusbaum’s family at a later date. A plaque commemorating each year’s awardee will hang in perpetuity the lobby of the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department.

For more information on public health services offered by the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department, please visit [www.kchdvw.org](http://www.kchdvw.org) or call (304) 348-8080.