



Arlington Free Clinic

For Immediate Release
January 3, 2012

For more information, contact:
Jody Steiner Kelly
Director of Clinical Administration
703-979-1425, ext. 124
jody@arlingtonfreeclinic.org

**Arlington Free Clinic Executive Director Nancy Sanger Pallesen
Named 2012 Washingtonian of the Year**

Arlington VA - Arlington Free Clinic Founder and Executive Director Nancy Sanger Pallesen was named 2012 Washingtonian of the Year by Washingtonian Magazine. The announcement appears in the January 2012 issue.

Pallesen joins a cadre of distinguished men and women the magazine has honored over the past 40 years for their work in improving the lives of local residents. She is among eight local leaders named this year. Previous honorees include First Lady Barbara Bush, U.S. Senator Barbara Mikulski, Northern Virginia Community College President Robert Templin, and WTOP Vice President of News and Programming Jim Farley.

Pallesen was recognized for her commitment to public health and steadfast efforts to create and sustain the only clinic providing free health care to low-income uninsured adults in Arlington. Pallesen opened the Arlington Free Clinic in 1993 on a shoestring budget after discussions with the Arlington County Medical Society and Arlington Hospital. "We had no money in the bank and the office was in my house," she says. In the Clinic's early years, patients were seen in the nurse's office of a local middle school.

"For the first year, we had amazing good will from the community to provide support for our fledgling operation, plus two financial angels (one of whom remained anonymous) who made it possible for us to survive. We also had a wonderful group of volunteers, some of whom are still here," says Pallesen.

That good will has continued for the past 17 years. The Clinic today provides over 11,000 free medical visits a year to approximately 1700 of Arlington's underserved, uninsured residents. The clinic has a team of more than 550 volunteers, including 170 doctors, who help fill the gap in access to medical care in Arlington, keeping patients out of expensive emergency rooms and minimizing health care costs.

Pallesen is the granddaughter of Margaret Sanger, a health advocate and nurse who opened the first birth control clinic in the United States. "My grandmother often said 'we all have to take responsibility as we live our lives to help make the world a better place.' Margaret Sanger has had an enormous impact on the world. We have done a small part to make a difference in the lives of more than 11,000 people in Arlington who carry the double burden of poverty and poor health. I think she would be pleased to see the results of our efforts."

To learn more about Arlington Free Clinic visit our website at www.arlingtonfreeclinic.org