



## **Rural Health Champion Award Nominee 2016**

### **Steve Russ - Board Chair, Nevada Regional Medical Center, Vernon County, MO**

Mr. Russ is truly worthy of being tagged a Rural Health Champion. Steve has been a Board Member of Nevada Regional Medical Center since 2009 and Board Chair since 2015. He also served as Vice Chairman of the Board for four years prior to 2015. His character and insights have guided NRMC through some trying times and have led a dramatic turnaround, both operationally and financially. An EHR conversion gone wrong, substantial administrative team and staff turnover, considerable physician unrest adding to financial strife, a hospital being out of bond compliance, a bond rating downgrade, and a facility being on the verge of bankruptcy all dramatically affected the operations of NRMC in fiscal years 2013-14. Through Mr. Russ's steady hand in promoting tough Board decisions, the organization turned an \$8,000,000 loss in fiscal year 2014 into an \$800,000 loss in fiscal year 2015 – and is closing in on a profitable fiscal year 2016. Not only does Mr. Russ understand the proper amount of Board involvement in hospital management but he has been tireless in having a presence at hospital and Board functions. He is quite involved in other community service as well, including the hospital's Foundation and Celebrate Recovery, a Christ-centered recovery program.

Steve has a true commitment to improving healthcare in his hometown of Nevada. As a Pharmacist, he has always fostered an interest in his community's health and welfare. And since a period in his earlier life when he lost his Pharmacy license due to a period of narcotic addiction, he has returned fully recovered, with a give back spirit infused with an inspired passion to assist the industry he feels he temporarily violated. His top interest in Board involvement relates to Board education. He leads discussion on several topics each month as to how they impact our hospital, our market, our industry, and our patients. Mr. Russ has attended various seminars and conferences in Missouri and nationally with in-depth training on hospital issues including Population Health and other hot topics. He has led strategic planning sessions that looked towards the future of the hospital and our relationships with others in the industry. We believe that the leadership of Steve Russ is the gold standard for Hospital Trustees and that he deserves to be chosen as the Rural Health Champion for 2016.

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