FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mid-Iowa Health Foundation Announces Inaugural Cohort for HealthConnect Fellowship
Foundation Welcomes Andrea Dencklau as Fellow

GREATER DES MOINES, IA — Mid-Iowa Health Foundation is pleased to welcome Andrea Dencklau, senior policy associate for the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa, into the inaugural cohort of the Mid-Iowa Health Foundation’s HealthConnect Fellowship. She is one of seven fellows selected to participate in this unique initiative, which brings together leaders in the community to advance the upstream system level changes necessary to more adequately address social determinants of children’s health.

“These seven fellows were chosen because of their demonstrated expertise and dedication to the advancement of policies and practices that address children’s health barriers,” said Teree Caldwell-Johnson, Mid-Iowa Health Foundation Board Chair.

As a fellow, Andrea will leverage her connections through the HealthConnect Fellowship and support from the Youth Policy Institute of Iowa to promote policy and practice changes focused on improving family interventions and supports. This includes increasing family-like placements and improving transition supports for youth to increase permanency and housing stability and reduce homelessness among youth who age out of foster care.

The Fellowship is designed for experienced children’s health advocates to rethink how to address challenging barriers to and disparities among children’s health. Each fellow will have the opportunity to leverage their current body of policy work on an identified children’s health issue with additional support, guidance and resources from the HealthConnect Fellowship.

“We envision this initiative will bring a new level of conversation and action around essential system changes necessary for the health and well-being of our children. We are honored to support, learn with and elevate the important work of our community and these esteemed HealthConnect fellows,” commented Suzanne Mineck, Mid-Iowa Health Foundation president and CEO.

In addition to Andrea, Becky Miles-Polka (Campaign for Grade-Level Reading), Mary Nelle Trefz (Child and Family Policy Center), Lisa Cushatt (Central Iowa ACEs 360), Josh Hellyer (Polk County Housing Trust Fund), Dawn Martinez Oropeza (Al Éxito) and Chaney Yeast (Blank Children’s Hospital) round out the group of fellows for HealthConnect Fellowship.

To learn more about the Mid-Iowa Health Foundation’s HealthConnect Fellowship, visit www.midiowahealth.org.

About Mid-Iowa Health Foundation
Since 1984, Mid-Iowa Health Foundation has pursued its mission to serve as a catalyst and partner for improving the health of vulnerable people in greater Des Moines. Mid-Iowa Health Foundation invites Des Moines-area
communities to join together to ensure children and youth are surrounded by a safe and supportive community, have access to quality health and education services, and are protected from toxic forms of adversity. To learn more about Mid-Iowa Health Foundation, visit midiowahealth.org. 

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