

HEALTHCARE CONNECT CELEBRATES

HealthCare Connect, the medical network for low income uninsured individuals and families, celebrated last Thursday, May 27, 2004 at Bank One Ballpark with a host of network partners, public officials, well-wishers, members of the public and health care providers.

The celebration brought together members of the public as well as those who have designed and will implement this program in Maricopa County. Speakers at the event praised the creation of this network and included Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon, AHCCCS Director Tony Rodgers, Arizona Association of Community Health Centers Chief Executive Officer and HealthCare Connect Chairman of the Board Joseph S. Coatsworth, Mountain Park Community Health Center President/Chief Executive Officer Sylvia Echave Stock, State Representative Debbie McCune Davis, Abrazo Healthcare Executive Director for Managed Care Penny Garrity, as well as a representative of Governor Janet Napolitano Anna Maria Chavez, a representative of U.S. Senator John Kyl, Jane Grace, Gay Ann Williams, VP State and Government Affairs Health Net of Arizona and Tammy Stoltz who is both Executive Director of HealthCare Connect in Phoenix and PCAP in Tucson.

Special appearances and testimonials were given by Norm Botsford, Pima Community Access Program (PCAP)

Board Member and Charlene Rogers, a PCAP member. Pima Community Access Program is the model that helped form HealthCare Connect.

The event had a long list of sponsors including Sonora Quest Laboratories and Fry's Food Stores. Abrazo Health Care presented a signed contract to HealthCare Connect confirming that all 6 of their hospitals, formerly known as the Vanguard Group, will participate in this new system of discounted health care services for the uninsured.

In addition, Health Net of Arizona, represented by Gay Ann Williams presented a check for \$100,000 to pay for the enrollment fees of 2,000 HealthCare Connect subscribers.

HealthCare Connect is the entity created by the Arizona Association of Community Health Centers and financed by a federal grant secured by the Association last November. Its mission is to create a medical network for uninsured people who can enroll for \$50.00 per year for an individual and \$100.00 per year for a family of 2 or more. The program is scheduled to "go live" July 1, 2004. Health care providers will include primary care and specialty care physicians, Community Health Centers, hospitals, and other health care providers. All providers will accept heavily discounted fees as payment in full when treating the uninsured and therefore assure health care for thousands of individuals and families who currently lack health care coverage.

For further information please contact HealthCare Connect at 602-288-7564 or visit our website:

www.healthcareconnect.org

ARIZONA LEGISLATORS

ADJOURN: PRIMARY CARE

FUNDS ASSURED

The Arizona Legislature adjourned on May 26th, bringing a grueling 136 day session to a surprising conclusion. The Legislature's final order of business was the passage of the budget bills and the moderate House Republicans managed to push through a \$7.4 billion budget, which included favorable allocations for Community Health Centers and other healthcare interests. Allocations include:

- ◆ \$10.4 million for Community Health Centers
- ◆ \$250,000 for Physician Loan Repayment
- ◆ \$226,000 for Health Start

In January, when the Legislature convened, the economic outlook was dubious and the Community Health Centers (CHC) were not assured continued funding. CHC funding was included in the Governor's and the Legislature's initial budget proposals, but the CHC line item was a target for possible budget cuts throughout the session. The CHC primary care program funds are used to provide primary healthcare for uninsured clients between 100 and 200% FPL who do not qualify for Medicaid.

Another last minute victory was the repeal of the 6 month re-determination requirement for AHCCCS (Medicaid) patients. Last session, Legislators shortened the period in which Medicaid patients must re-enroll for health benefits from 12 months to 6 months. The rationale was that a shortened period would weed out people who make too much money and would discourage people from enrolling in AHCCCS. The restored 12 month redetermination period will help ensure continuity of health care for many Community Health Center patients.

Community Health Centers throughout Arizona are encouraged to contact their legislators and thank them for continuing this essential funding and repealing the 6 month re-determination requirement for AHCCCS services.

TWO GIANTS IN THE

COMMUNITY HEALTH

CENTER MOVEMENT LEAVING

Robert Gomez, Executive Director of El Rio Community Health Center in Tucson and Sr. Barbara Stowasser, Executive Director of St. Elizabeth's Community Health Center in Tucson have both announced that they will be leaving their posts after 20 years. Both Mr. Gomez and Sr. Barbara led their respective institutions to greater heights and had a profound effect on the ability of the indigent to find health care services, not only in Tucson but throughout Arizona. Mr. Gomez departure from El Rio is scheduled for September 1, 2004.

A farewell party for Sr. Barbara is scheduled for Saturday, June 19, 2004 at St. Elizabeth's

of Hungary Clinic in Tucson from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. with the Program scheduled for 2:00 p.m.

Nancy Metzger has been named to replace Sr. Barbara as Executive Director of the St. Elizabeth's of Hungary Clinic.

We will provide additional information on the future plans of both of these leaders in future editions of the Newsletter.

The Arizona Association of Community Health Centers has been helped immensely by the contributions these two giants in this field provided during the past twenty years, said Joseph Coatsworth, CEO of the Association. "Both of them have worked tirelessly over many years to insure that health-care services were available to the indigent and uninsured."

ASSOCIATION PARTNERSHIP **ANNOUNCED WITH AHCCCS** **AND ARIZONA STATE** **UNIVERSITY**

AHCCCS, Arizona State University, The Arizona Association of Community Health Centers, CHC Collaborative Ventures, and member Community Health Centers are beginning to form a new partnership to examine methods of improving "supply chain" processes for Community Health Centers in Arizona. The plan currently being devised, will incorporate the teaching and research expertise of ASU's Carey Graduate School of Business, the practical business experience of Community Health Centers Chief Executive

and Chief Financial Officers, the reimbursement policies of AHCCCS and health plans together with the skills of the Association of Community health Centers.

The goal? How to more effectively and efficiently supply Community Health Centers with staffing, medical supplies, information management systems and capital.

The four partners in this exciting new venture are now working to create a Memorandum of Understanding that will, as a first step, deploy ASU MBA students to several Community Health Center sites in Arizona. The long term goal is to create more health care sites for community health centers throughout Arizona and in particular in rural regions of the state.

The effort is being led by Jeffrey Wilson, Professor at Arizona State University in Tempe, Tony Rodgers, State Director of AHCCCS, Joseph S. Coatsworth, Chief Executive Officer of the Arizona Association of Community Health Centers, Glend Randolph, Chief Executive Officer of CHC Collaborative Ventures and several Community Health Center CEO's.

The Federally Qualified Health Centers who have volunteered to participate in this venture include Sun Life Family Health Center in Casa Grande and their CEO Al Gugenberger, Sylvia Echave Stock, President/CEO of Mountain Park Community Health Center in Phoenix, Ann Roggenbuck, CEO of North Country Community Health Center in Flagstaff, John Roach, CEO of Morenci Community Health Center, Clarence Vatne, CEO of Marana Health Center, Laurie Jurs, Executive Director of United Community Health Center in Green Valley, Sarah Allen, Executive Director of Canyonlands Community Health Center in Page, and Nancy Metzger, Executive Director of St. Elizabeth's of Hungary Clinic in Tucson.

AWARD TO

DR. ADELE O'SULLIVAN

Dr. Adele O'Sullivan, the Medical Director of Healthcare for the Homeless (HCH) will be honored with the HCH Clinician's Network 2004 Outstanding Service Award. She will be recognized for her outstanding service and dedication to providing healthcare to the most indigent population in Maricopa County, at the National HCH Annual Conference. Her contributions at the local and the national level are numerous.

NOTES AND FAST FACTS

Welcome to the AACHC Newsletter for June 3, 2004. We have changed the frequency of this newsletter from quarterly to bi-weekly and hope you enjoy our commitment to providing more current information with increasing frequency.

AACHC Newsletter is emailed to five hundred contacts within Arizona who have an interest in community health centers and the issues that affect them. This circulation list is expected to grow substantially during the course of the first year.

AACHC Newsletter is edited by Joseph S. Coatsworth, Chief Executive Officer and produced by Myrna Ramirez, Coordinator of Conferences and Publications. Several Association staff contributes to the writing and editing of the newsletter and will be identified periodically.

We invite you to submit news and events about your Community Health Center to Myrna Ramirez by email at: myrnar@aachc.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u> <u>LOCATION/TIME</u>
June 17, 2004	AACHC Finance Committee Meeting AACHC Conference Room Phoenix, AZ 2:00 pm
June 17, 2004	CHC CV Board of Directors Meeting AACHC Conference Room Phoenix, AZ 3:00 pm
June 18, 2004	AACHC Board of Directors Meeting Phoenix Inn Suites Phoenix, AZ 9:00 am
June 18, 2004	COPS meeting Canyonlands Page, AZ 10:00 am
July 12, 2004	TAPI Steering Committee Phoenix Country Club Phoenix, AZ 12:00 pm
July 16, 2004	COPS meeting Mariposa Nogales, AZ 10:00 am
July 20, 2004	MCAP Board of Directors Meeting AHHHA Phoenix, AZ 8:30 am
August 6, 2004	CHC CV/APA TBD 10:00 am
August 12, 2004	AACHC Finance Committee Meeting TBD Northern AZ 2:00 pm
August 12, 2004	CHC CV Board of Directors Meeting TBD Northern AZ 3:00 pm
August 13, 2004	AACHC Board of Directors Meeting TBD Northern AZ 9:00 am
August 20, 2004	COPS meeting North Country Flagstaff, AZ 10:00 am
September 13, 2004	TAPI Steering Committee Phoenix Country Club Phoenix, AZ 12:00 pm