



Arizona Association of Community Health Centers

700 East Jefferson Street, Suite 100
Phoenix, Arizona 85034

Phone: (602) 253-0090
Fax: (602) 252-3620



Community Health Center Connections is Published By
Arizona Association of Community Health Centers



National Women's Health Week is May 10-16, 2009. Governor Brewer's Office for Children, Youth, and Families is leading this year's Women's Health Week effort in Arizona in partnership with the Governor's Commission on Women's and Children's

Health, the Arizona Department of Health Services, women's health website, EmpowHer.com, and community organizations across the state.

The Arizona Women's Health Week campaign fosters collaboration between healthcare providers, state, local, and tribal government, and social service organizations. As part of the national effort, the campaign raises awareness about manageable steps women can take to improve their health. The focus is on the importance of incorporating simple preventive and positive health behaviors into everyday life. When women take even the simplest steps to improve their health, the results can be significant. But women need to be able to choose the most effective steps for their individual lifestyles and circumstances. They need to be informed and take responsible actions to improve their own health.

Events are planned throughout Arizona in celebration of the theme, "It's your time." Additionally, women will be encouraged to seek preventive healthcare services on May 11, National Women's Check-up Day.

For information about Arizona events or to register your event, please visit: www.gocyf.az.gov/Children/SP_WHW.asp. You can also visit the National Women's Health Week Website for more ideas and resources (including logos, giveaways, sample newsletter scripts, brochures, or tips on media outreach) at: www.womenshealth.gov/whw/.

A NEWSLETTER PROVIDED BY:

ARIZONA ASSOCIATION OF
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS



Volume 5: Issue 1
May 2009

Association Chief Executive Officer Announces His Departure



Joseph S. Coatsworth, Chief Executive Officer of the Arizona Association of Community Health Centers since June of 2003, announced his decision to leave the Association when his current contract expires on June 30, 2009. Mr. Coatsworth made the announcement at a Board of Directors meeting on February 23, in Phoenix.

"I know the Association will continue to accomplish a great many things in the years ahead for the medically underserved populations of Arizona and the Community Health Centers we represent" he said. "My decision to leave is entirely personal and based on my belief that change is both positive and inevitable. I will certainly miss the Board members and staff of the Association, all of whom have been wonderful to work with during the past six years. The Board members and staff of this Association are truly exceptionally accomplished people."

At the Board meeting in February and in subsequent meetings with Association staff members, Coatsworth noted that he had been working "for the past 50 years, since I was 16 years old," and that now was a good time to seek new ventures, including the possibility of not working again.

Mr. Coatsworth has led healthcare associations for the past 27 years, including 21 years at the Connecticut Hospital Association. He also served ten years as a member and Deputy Speaker in the Connecticut House of Representatives, and several years as commercial lending officer with Connecticut's largest commercial bank. He is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin and earned a graduate degree in business during his tenure at the hospital association. He and his wife Karen plan to continue living in Scottsdale where they have lived for the past eight years.

The Board of Directors has begun a search process for a new Chief Executive Officer who will begin on July 1, 2009.

Annual Meeting Honors Dr. Ginger Ryan, Ed Sicurello



Jennifer "Ginger" Ryan with Joseph S. Coatsworth and Fatima McCasland

The Arizona Association of Community Health Centers held its Annual Meeting and Legislative Day on Tuesday and Wednesday February 24 and 25, 2009. The Annual Meeting included an Awards Dinner honoring key Community Health Center leaders who have made profound contributions which dramatically improved access to healthcare services.

Jennifer "Ginger" Ryan, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer of Chiricahua Community Health Center in Elfrida and Bisbee, Arizona was presented the Association's Award for Leadership, in recognition of her establishing a Federally Qualified Health Center in rural eastern Arizona more than a decade ago and fostering its growth into neighboring communities.

"Dr. Ryan has been a pioneer in creating primary healthcare services for residents in a rural area of Arizona where limited access to healthcare previously existed," said Joseph S. Coatsworth, Association Chief Executive Officer. Her achievements in creating access to these essential healthcare services serve as a model for us all."

Ed Sicurello, CFO/COO of Mariposa Community Health Center in Nogales, Arizona was presented with the Association's Award for Distinguished



Joseph S. Coatsworth presents Ed Sicurello the Distinguished Service Award

Service. "Ed Sicurello has worked for decades, first at the Tucson Medical Center, then as Chief Executive Officer of Desert Senita CHC in Ajo, to further the expansion of access to healthcare for all," said Joseph S. Coatsworth in presenting the award. Ed's continuing work today as CFO/COO of Mariposa Community Health Center benefits thousands of patients and contributes to improving the health status of many who were previously medically underserved. "

Also honored was Cee Cee Hofberger of Mountain Park Community Health Center in Phoenix, who was presented the Association's Award of Appreciation for her long service in health center risk management and quality improvement. "Cee Cee Hofberger has worked for years to improve the quality of patient care in Arizona, and her efforts to promote innovation and share methods of improving patient care and reducing risk factors are demonstrated by her leadership of the Association's Continuous Operational Performance Group (COPS) that focuses on these issues," Coatsworth noted.

Continued on Page Three

Continued from Page Four



2009 Legislator of The Year, Representative Rick Murphy

Representative Murphy has served on the House Health Committee for seven years and was the vice chair of the committee for four years. He is particularly interested in the self management of chronic diseases and is very impressed with the CHC collaboratives. He is a hemophilia services coordinator for Apria Healthcare and a founding member of the local Hemophilia Association's Camp Committee, which organizes a summer camp for Arizona children with bleeding disorders. He also serves as a volunteer camp counselor each summer and is a past board member. Representative Murphy is currently Chairman of the House Ways and Means committee and serves as a member of the Appropriations and the Health and Human Services committees.

New Federally Qualified Health Center Grantees

The announcement on March 2, from President Obama announcing grants worth \$155 million to establish 126 new Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC), was a huge achievement for community health centers nationwide. The grants, provided under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, will provide access to health center care for 750,000 people in 39 states and two territories.

In Arizona, three organizations were granted federal stimulus funds; Wesley Community Center, Native Health in Phoenix and North Country HealthCare. Wesley Community Center and Native Health are newly designated FQHCs. North Country HealthCare an existing Federally Qualified Health Center, with its main location in Flagstaff also received funds to create a new satellite clinic in Show Low.

The funding will create 95 new jobs for the state. As an FQHC, these organizations are charged to provide comprehensive, culturally competent, quality primary healthcare services to medically underserved communities and vulnerable populations. New FQHCs are on a short timeline to become open its doors and become an operable health center. Native Health and Wesley Community Center have vigorously begun to prepare and implement changes needed to become operable as an FQHC. North Country is underway to open their new satellite in Show Low.

The funding came at an opportune time. As the economy plummeted, Community Health Centers began to see an increase in patient services. A recent query by the Association, forecasted that within the last six months, Community Health Centers have seen up to a 30% increase in patient demand for primary care services. The funding provided by the Reinvestment Act will provide an opportunity for health centers to continue to serve their patients, stimulate new jobs, and provide primary care services in communities where access to health care is limited. Congress' support for Community Health Centers is essential for the continued growth of health centers.

For more information regarding Federally Qualified Health Centers, please log on to our website: www.aachc.org.

Community Health Centers Recognize Their Champions

Community Health Center Day at the Capitol is the culmination of the Association's Annual Meeting, as health center representatives meet with state lawmakers to advocate for continued support. On February 25th new Legislators had breakfast with Community Health Center staff and board members from every corner of the state. House Assistant Minority Leader, Kyrsten Sinema, spoke about the large budget deficits and the difficult road ahead for the state's health and human services providers. She gave the group a rousing pep talk and encouraged them to keep an open dialogue with their Legislators. Representative Eric Meyer also addressed the group. This is his first term in the State Legislature, but his credentials make him a natural advocate for Community Health Centers. He was an emergency room physician and is very interested in ensuring that people have access primary care so they can avoid unnecessary emergency room visits.



**2009 Legislator of The Year,
Senator Linda Lopez**

After a morning of appointments with their Legislators, the members of AACHC met in the Executive Tower for a luncheon to honor the AACHC Legislators of the Year. Legislators of the year for 2009 have years of healthcare policy experience. Their backgrounds and personal experiences have shaped their desire to promote meaningful healthcare reforms and to retain the best practices of CHC's.

Senator Linda Lopez has been a consistent champion of Community Health Centers. Throughout the years she has demonstrated her commitment of access to quality healthcare in southern Arizona. Senator Lopez has represented Southern Arizona in the State Legislature for nine years. After eight years in the House she was elected to the State senate. She served on the House Healthcare Committee for eight years and was appointed to the Senate Healthcare and Medical Liability Reform committee when she moved to the Senate.

Senator Lopez is the founder and co-chair of the Statewide Taskforce to Prevent Prenatal Exposure to Alcohol. She continues to be an advocate for children's and women's healthcare including behavioral health services. As the Community Relations Coordinator for La Frontera Center in Tucson, she is responsible for collaborating with other agencies and providers to ensure optimum services for children and adults. Senator Lopez also served as a clinical supervisor for the Child/Family Center. Her job experience coupled with her role as a healthcare policy maker has given her a keen insight into the value of the quality services that Community Health Centers provide.

The Arizona Association of Community Health Centers also recognized Representative Rick Murphy's commitment to Community Health Centers. He is committed to finding better ways to address the delivery of healthcare. This passion for building a better healthcare system makes him a perfect champion for Community Health Centers! He has consistently promoted and protected the state health center funding that enables them to serve uninsured people on a sliding fee scale.

Continued on Page Five

Continued from Page Two

All three award recipients thanked the Association and their colleagues for this recognition.

The Annual Meeting events continued on Wednesday with the CHC membership visiting lawmakers at the State Capitol to discuss key policy and reimbursement issues affecting their health centers.

Earlier on Tuesday, the Association brought several speakers to the forefront to discuss issues affecting the state such as the current state fiscal crisis and possible solutions.

Will Humble, MPH, Interim Director of the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) provided details on the current activities and budgetary impact to ADHS programs and the Community Health Centers.

Former Senate President Tim Bee, now the Director of the Southern Arizona Office of Governor Jan Brewer, provided an in-depth Arizona state budget briefing with the spotlight on the challenges being faced by Arizona's new Governor and the strategies she is establishing to meet those challenges. Senator Thayer Verschoor, President Pro Tempore, provided a dramatic overview of the budget deficits within the state of Arizona and the current climate and movement taking place within the legislative session.

Other key presentations by AACHC members focused on the need to instruct and prepare health center professionals on various methods instrumental in dealing with state and federal lawmakers.

Effective grassroots methods were highlighted and discussed, which were deemed critical for health center success in communicating with state and federal legislators. The panel was composed of health center CEOs, including Avein Saaty-Tafoya of Clinica Adelante in Surprise, Clarence Vatne of Marana Health Center in Marana and Ginger Ryan, of Chiricahua Community Health Center in Bisbee. The panel moderator was former state lawmaker Pete Hershberger, a longtime advocate of health center funding at the Capitol.

Representatives from the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) also spoke at the Annual Meeting and included Amy Simmons, Director of Communications at NACHC, together with Jody Kent, Marketing and Public Relations Consultant of Jody Kent Consulting. They recommended and discussed a number of fresh new methods to effectively utilize the media to positively impact state and federal policy and budget issues.

Joseph Gallegos, MBA, NACHC Senior Vice President for Western Operations and former President of the Board of NACHC presented an update and review of current activities and areas of focus throughout the NACHC operations.

Tuesday's presentations concluded with Joseph S. Coatsworth, Tara McCollum Plese, Director of Government and Media Relations, Kristen Boilini and Nick Simonetta, both of KRB Consultants, providing insight and preparations for Wednesday's Day at the Capitol.

The Annual Meeting also provided the opportunity to distribute new AACHC publications to its membership. These new publications include the Association's Annual Report, Membership Directory, and the Access for All Arizonans Report for 2009.



**Cee Cee Hofberger with Fatima McCasland
and Joseph S. Coatsworth**