

# Leon County Health Fair

## “Good Health, the Treasure of Life”

by Laura Windwehen

**The Leon County Health Resource Commission (LCHRC) partnered with Leon County and Brazos Valley Community Action Agency to put on the first annual Leon County Health Fair, themed “Good Health, the Treasure of Life”. The fair brought over 40 organizations and over 400 people to the Centerville High School gym on April 16th.**

The idea of a health fair developed when Col. James Wallace brought together concerned citizens to discuss obesity and other issues affecting their community’s health. County Extension Agents, Tommy and Wendy Neyland, suggested that they all partner and put on the first annual Leon County Health Fair. This had been a dream of Wendy’s and Tommy’s but a dream they knew they could not accomplish alone. That day the work began.

Brazos Valley Community Action Agency (BVCAA) and health care providers from Leon County were also at the table. BVCAA offered to help organize the event because they had experience doing similar events in other communities. The group agreed that the Leon Health Resource Center would be the focus of the fair, targeting their soon to be implemented telehealth services. Leon County’s Grant Project Coordinator, Jean Turner, took the lead in organizing the event. Jean is the operational manager of a \$540,000 grant the county received

to offer mental health and specialty care services to citizens of Leon County through telehealth at the LHRC.

The goal of the fair was to target Leon County students from 6th to 8th grade. School nurse, Sheri Ramby, coordinated with several Leon County schools to bus students in throughout the day to partake in the event. The students were given cards that were “punched” at each vendor booth they visited. Once the students’ card had been punched at each booth, the students entered their cards into a raffle for a bicycle donated by Wal-Mart. Over 250 students attended the fair, learning about topics such as nutrition, exercise, and stress management. BVCAA staff offered 30 minutes educational classes throughout the day targeting these topics.

Health fair staff were overwhelmed with the community support shown and have already begun to plan for the fair to be an annual event. Jean considered the day a great accomplishment, stating: “The event was a

huge success and much larger than I ever dreamed. We are already looking forward to next year’s fair and know it will be even bigger”.

### CONTENTS

Brazos Valley Health Partnership . . . . .	2
CHRISTUS Health . . . . .	2
National Model for Child Health Assessment . . . . .	3
Practicum Fair. . . . .	3



## Community Highlight

# Brazos Valley Health Partnership

by Lou Ann McKinney, Chair, Leon County Health Resource Commission

**My husband, Mike, and I spent the first part of our married life and started our family in Leon County. Mike, known to everyone as "Dr. Mike," practiced medicine in Leon County for 16 years before he moved to another level of public health. Even though we relocated, we never left Leon County behind because we always had a special place in our hearts for our dear patients and friends.**

When Mike was appointed Chancellor of the Texas A&M System, I was thrilled to know it would bring me closer to the place I had grown to love. We have always maintained a home in Centerville. Upon our return, I learned about the partnership that had been formed between Leon County and the Center for Community Health Development (CCHD). When I was given the opportunity to help provide extended health care to the citizens of Leon County, I jumped at the opportunity. I was honored when Leon County Judge, Byron Ryder, approached me to serve as chair of the Leon County Health Resource Commission. For 16 years, Mike and I provided much needed health care to the people of Leon County, but now I had the opportunity to reach many more residents and promote a healthier community.

I feel we are blessed as a county to work with such a wonderful and educated group at CCHD. Their guidance and devotion has enabled us as a community to better ourselves. They have given us the tools to put together a plan customized for our county. The technical assistance they have provided over the last three years has allowed us to develop a fully functioning health resource center and brought needed services to our residents. Their assistance has also led to the development of a 23-member commission that is motivated and determined to improve the health and well-being of our citizens. They have been our backbone and we know our community would not have been able to achieve this success without them.

## Setting a Community Research Agenda

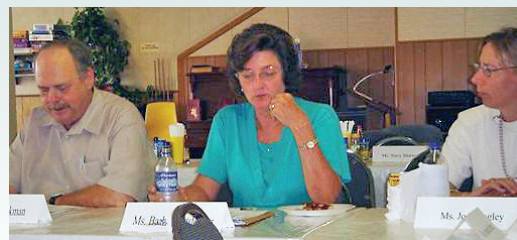
**Since its inception in 2002, the Brazos Valley Health Partnership (BVHP) board has worked in partnership with the Center for Community Health Development (CCHD) to improve health status of residents of the seven-county region.**

When CCHD was designated as a Prevention Research Center by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the BVHP board readily fulfilled the role of Community Committee, assisting in development, implementation, and monitoring of the Center's research and training agendas. Over the past six years, the BVHP has been actively engaged in activities ranging from assessment to organizing community discussion groups to the implementation of community interventions to improve health status.

With the selection of a core research project for the CCHD's upcoming re-application to the CDC underway, the BVHP Board will play an integral role in the selection of the core research project. In their May meeting, the BVHP Board will receive an overview of the proposed projects that were submitted through concept

papers by CCHD affiliated faculty last month. Following the overview, CCHD staff will provide board members with project summaries that will be reviewed and commented on by the executive committee of each board member's county health resource commission.

Given the Center's focus on community-based participatory research, this process underscores the value of community engagement and guidance as we plan for the next five-year research and training agendas. Our commitment to improving the health of the Brazos Valley community remains strong, and we are convinced that partnering to conduct prevention research will advance that mission.



## CHRISTUS Health

**The mission of CHRISTUS Health Community Benefits Program is to improve access and quality of health in the communities served by CHRISTUS.**

This includes community health programs, such as CarePartners that positively influence the overall health and well-being of the communities served by CHRISTUS. PRC Faculty (Health Policy and Management; Social and Behavioral Health ) have been working with CHRISTUS Health on an evaluation of their CarePartners program (TPHA Journal, May, Camp & Gamm, 2007).

Currently we are exploring ways of collaborating with CHRISTUS Health on the implementation and evaluation of chronic disease self-management management programs, based on

current activities being undertaken by the PRC Diabetes Prevention and Management Program.

Toward this end, SRPH faculty were invited to serve as keynote speakers and expert panelists at the annual CHRISTUS Health Community Health Council Conference in Houston (February 20-21, 2007). Dr. Ciro Sumaya reviewed common themes in SRPH, Dr. Marcia Ory presented the keynote address on developing evidence-based community health programs through translational research. There was also a panel on Evidence-Based Community Health Programs with Dr. Bolin speaking

on Community & Clinical Partnering: Chronic Disease Prevention & Management, Dr. Gamm on the strengths of community-clinical and academic partnering, and Dr. May on the Care Partners evaluation to date. Key issues brought up were the importance of implementing evidence-based programs for making the best case for health promotion, the

value in working across clinical and community sectors, and the importance of understanding process measures and outcome measures related to Chronic Disease Prevention and Management.





## New Graduate Assistant



Cary Haynes is a School of Rural Public Health graduate student working toward a Masters in Public Health with a concentration in Social & Behavioral Health at the Texas A&M Health Science Center School of Rural Public Health. Cary has recently been hired as a Graduate Research Assistant for the Center for Community Health Development. She will be working with county health resource commissions in Burleson, Grimes, Leon and Madison Counties at the direction of Laura Windwehen, our Community Partnership Manager. Cary is a 2006 graduate of Texas A&M University where she majored in Community Health and minored in Dance. Prior to being hired at the Center, Cary worked for the Brazos County Health Department as a health educator.

## A National Model for Child Health Assessment

***As part of its approach to practicing community health development, Center faculty and staff have extensive experience in conducting community health status assessments. In fact, Center Director, Dr. Jim Burdine has been involved in conducting assessments in nearly 200 communities throughout the U.S. over the past 20 years.***



Typically, the assessment process is designed to engage community stakeholders such that when the results of the assessment are released, a partnership of those stakeholders can be mobilized to plan, implement, and evaluate activities to address the priorities identified.

In fall 2007, the Cook Children's Health System, based in Fort Worth, Texas, initiated an effort to conduct a comprehensive, regional child health assessment, the first of its kind in the nation; the six counties included are Tarrant, Johnson, Hood, Parker,

Wise, and Denton. Specifically invited by Cook Children's to collaborate in this endeavor, Center faculty, staff, and students are now beginning the compilation and analysis of secondary data from a variety of local, state, and national sources to provide context for the future phases of the assessment, including a population health survey, key informant interviews, and analysis of Cook Children's inpatient and outpatient data. In line with the community health development approach, representatives from Cook Children's have articulated their objectives as evaluating children's health needs,

identifying child health priorities, engaging and informing community task forces to plan and implement solutions, and creating benchmarks to monitor future progress.

We see this as an exciting opportunity to lend our experience to this new assessment focus and to build new relationships, extending the Center's reach in disseminating state of the art methods in public health research and practice.

## Preparing the Public Health Worker



The Center for Community Health Development partnered with the School of Rural Public Health Office of Student Affairs to co-sponsor the Spring Practicum Fair and Professional Development Day on March 28, 2008.

SRPH students are required to complete a practicum experience prior to graduation and are encouraged to work in a variety of settings. The students come from diverse backgrounds including social and behavioral health, health policy and management, biostatistics, epidemiology, and environmental and occupational health.

There were more than 30 practicum opportunities offered through 11 different organizations, including three from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, GA. We also coordinated with Ruth Schemmer from Graduate Student Services at the Texas A&M Career Center to offer professional development workshops in resume writing and interviewing skills. She was also available at different times throughout the day to personally meet with students on an individual basis as needed. This semi-annual event is part of the Center's mission to provide training opportunities related to prevention research.

1266 TAMU  
College Station, TX 77843-1266

Phone: (979) 458-0937 \* Fax: (979) 862-8371

E-mail: [cchd@srph.tamhsc.edu](mailto:cchd@srph.tamhsc.edu)

Website: <http://srph.tamhsc.edu/centers/cchd>

Editor: Kenzie McPherson

## CCHD Executive Committee

*Principal Investigator*  
**Kenneth R. McLeroy, Ph.D.**

*Center Director and  
Co-Principal Investigator*  
**James N. Burdine, Dr.P.H.**

*Associate Director*  
**Monica L. Wendel, M.A.,  
M.P.H.**

*Center Coordinator*  
**Heather R. Clark, M.S.P.H.**

*Principal Investigator,  
Diabetes Prevention and  
Management Project*  
**Marcia G. Ory, Ph.D., M.P.H.**

*Co-Principal Investigator and  
Director, Diabetes Prevention  
and Management Project*  
**Jane Bolin, Ph.D., J.D., R.N.**

*Director of Evaluation*  
**Craig Blakely, Ph.D., M.P.H.**

*Director of Communication*  
**Michael T. Stephenson, Ph.D.**

*Director of Training*  
**Carrie Sorrells**

*Director, TxHAN*  
**Joseph Sharkey, Ph.D.,  
M.P.H., R.D.**

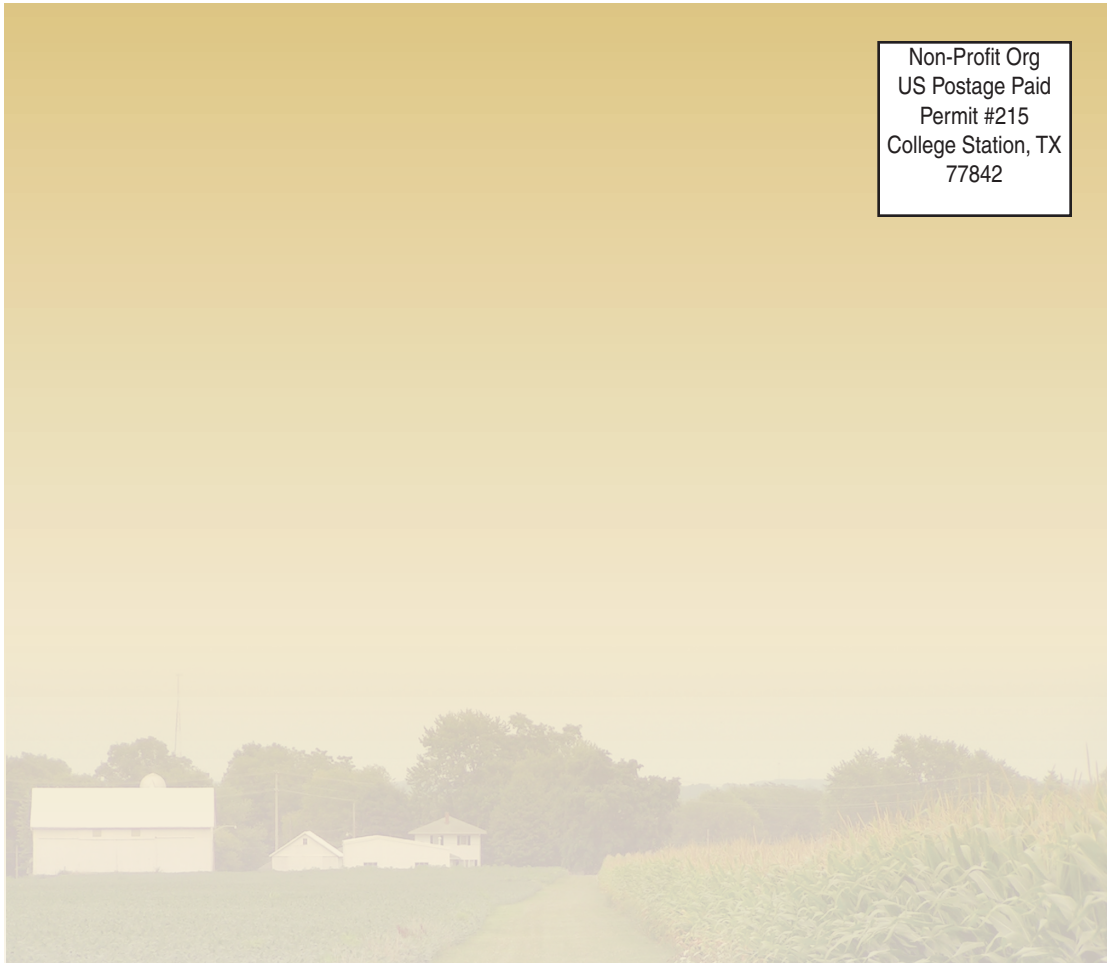
*Brazos Valley Regional  
Director*  
**Angela Alaniz, B.A.**

*South Texas Regional Director*  
**Julie St. John, M.A., M.P.H.**

*Project Manager,  
Diabetes Prevention and  
Management Project*  
**Kerrie Hora, M.S.**

*Project Manager, Steps to a  
Healthier San Antonio;  
Communications Specialist*  
**Kelly Morris, M.P.H.**

Non-Profit Org  
US Postage Paid  
Permit #215  
College Station, TX  
77842



## Resources

The following resources are available for more information on the articles in this edition of *Communitas*:

**Brazos Valley Health Partnership**  
<http://bvhp.org/>

**CHRISTUS Health**  
<http://www.christushealth.org/>

**Cook Children's Health System**  
<http://www.cookchildrens.org>

**School of Rural Public Health-Practicum Fair &  
Professional Development Day**  
<http://cchd.us/training>

## Services

***The Center for Community Health Development can be contracted to provide services, training, or technical assistance in the following areas:***

- Strategic Planning
- Operational Planning
- Leadership Development
- Research Design
- Survey Construction
- Coalition Development
- Assessment
- Evaluation