

## CCHD: The Next Phase

*In late March, the Center for Community Health Development (CCHD) was notified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of its selection as a Prevention Research Center for the 2009-2014 funding cycle. Thirty-three centers were selected from across the nation, including some previously funded centers and some brand new ones. This represents an exciting time for CCHD as we prepare for the next five years.*

While the Center has multiple funders, the Prevention Research Center funding supports most of our core infrastructure. Over the next five years, the CDC funds will allow us to focus in on some key areas that we feel are critical to continuing to build and strengthen infrastructure for community-based participatory research that examines health promotion and disease prevention. Here are some things you are likely to see in the next five years:

### Community Collaboration

Community collaboration will focus on building the skills and infrastructure necessary to strengthen our partnerships. CCHD will continue its work with the Brazos Valley Health Partnership (BVHP) and the county health resource commissions. In order to create a stronger partnership and better collaboration, BVHP will serve as the community committee and will participate in joint retreats and planning with CCHD. We will also continue our work in Cameron, Hidalgo, and Starr Counties in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

### Communication and Training

Communication and training are intertwined, so we have combined the functions; Mike Stephenson (TAMU; Communication) will serve as the director of this component. Our training efforts will focus on community partners through the identification of specific needs and the tailoring technical assistance and mentoring in those areas. Communication and dissemination will continue through multiple channels including our website, the bi-monthly newsletter, publications and presentations.

### Research

Since the Diabetes Prevention and Management Project was successful in building sustainability, CCHD has selected a new core project for this funding period. Dr. Joseph Sharkey will serve as the Principal investigator for the new core project entitled "Working with Rural and Underserved Communities to Promote a Healthy Food Environment: Mixed Methods Approach." The project, developed

in collaboration with community partners in the Brazos Valley and Hidalgo County, targets four rural counties in the Brazos Valley and 22 census block groups (CBGs) in two large areas of Hidalgo County, and aims to improve accessibility and availability of healthy foods.

The Center will also continue developing research in the areas of rural and minority health disparities, community-based mental health for rural populations, school-based environmental interventions for childhood obesity, promotora-based community interventions targeting various health issues for colonia residents, and participatory evaluation research with the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District.

### Evaluation

Drs. Lisako McKyer (TAMU; Health & Kinesiology) and Corliss Outley (TAMU; Recreation, Park & Tourism Sciences) will serve as the new co-directors of evaluation for CCHD. Evaluation efforts will focus on examining CCHD and BVHP's continuous

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process of capacity building through community engagement, partnership development, planning, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination. Evaluation of this process will be accomplished by continuing to utilize tools such as the Interorganizational Survey and the Key Leader Survey.

Center director, Dr. Jim Burdine, expressed his excitement about the next phase of the Center: "This funding presents us with great opportunities to continue to work with our partner communities and make measurable impacts on the health issues that concern them the most. We are collectively ready to use what we've learned in the last five years to make the next five even better."

# Fun Run Held to Promote Public Health Week

The School of Rural Public Health kicked off Public Health Week with the second annual 5K Fun Run on the morning of Saturday, April 4, 2009. This year's theme coincided with National Public Health Week's theme, "Healthy People in Healthy Communities". The purpose of this year's Fun Run was to raise money for the School of Rural Public Health's student scholarships and special projects fund as well as to provide an opportunity for the Brazos Valley to "kick start" healthy living initiatives through the run/walk. We had a great turnout with a total of 140 participants ranging in ages from 2 to 60+ years old! The entry fee was \$15.00 and each participant received a race bag that included a t-shirt with the national public health week logo, a CCHD aluminum water bottle, sunscreen, hand sanitizer, and many other coupons for local businesses. This year we added age groups to the race in order to award more participants with a medal. The age groups were as follows: 25 and under, 26-35, 36-45, and 50+ for each males and females. Awards were given to the top three finishers in each age group, along with top overall male and female finishers.



The Fun Run committee consisted of Dr. Jane Bolin, Ashley Wilson, Harlan Johnson, Chelsea Bishop, Shivani Kapoor, Wendy Moreno, and Arin Robertson. Thanks to the committee, the 40 student volunteers who signed up to help organize the event, and the many businesses in our community who donated to the cause. The SRPH 5K Fun Run was a huge success!



## 2009 Chronic Disease Academy

The Center for Community Health Development sent three of its staff to the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD) annual Chronic Disease Academy in Seattle in March. The Academy is designed to provide hands-on skill building based on the NACDD Competencies for Chronic Disease Practice. The Diabetes Prevention and Management Project manager, Ashley Wilson, and graduate research assistant, Megan Wernicke, attended the academy track for Managing Programs and Resources.

Wilson found the Academy sessions very helpful: "Meeting other public health professionals from across the country and sharing ideas and experiences was a great way to expand my skill set and learn new ways to enhance our efforts in chronic disease prevention." The Center's Associate Director, Monica Wendel, served as one of the instructors for the Academy, leading a session on strategies for resource development and diversifying funding and a session on using logic models for program and evaluation

planning. According to Wendel, "We spend a lot of time struggling with how to plan—particularly related to evaluation—and don't have a solid framework for how programs and evaluations are tied together. Using program logic models provides a streamlined way of making those connections." Next year's Chronic Disease Academy is scheduled for February and will be held in Orlando, Florida.

## Research Core Partnership

In the fall of 2008, the PRC Research Core teamed up with the Texas A&M University College of Engineering in order to create a kiosk case for the Diabetes Education Kiosks that are located in local community clinics. The feedback the Research Core has received from the sites where the kiosks are currently placed, is that a more professional case would increase usage and better protect the kiosk in the clinic waiting rooms.

Dr. Bolin asked Dr. Julie Linsey of TAMU Engineering Department for advice on what type of case would be practical for the kiosks in their settings. Along with some retail examples, she suggested that the students in her Advance Product Design course work on designing and creating a kiosk case model as part of their semester project. Two teams of four engineering students met with the Core research team to gather details about the project and then set out to create models of kiosk cases that would protect the computer equipment, but still be easily accessible to diabetic patients. Each team created four computer models and presented them to the kiosk team. After receiving feedback on the computer models, the students built the actual models of the kiosk cases and created a report for their end of semester project. Working with the group of students was a pleasure. The Research Core would be happy to partner with the Texas A&M College of Engineering on future projects.



## Graduate Student Spotlight



Sayali Tarlekar was selected as the Associate Editor-in-Chief for Context – The Journal of Health Students Taking Action Together. Context is the nation's first student-run, online, peer-reviewed journal that highlights the exceptional work of health students in the community and recognizes well-designed evaluations of student-initiated programs. Context is published semi-annually and connects students across the United States and Canada who are working to improve the health of our communities from a variety of perspectives including: policy research, program evaluation, community partnership, and patient empowerment. Sayali will serve as The Associate Editor for one year before she becomes the next Editor-in-Chief of Context. She will assist the Editor-in-Chief in guaranteeing the quality of content and communicating the vision for the journal, and make every effort to ensure that the journal is a well-cultivated resource.

Sayali was also selected as the National Focal Point (NFP) for United States for the Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS (GYCA). GYCA is a youth-led, UNAIDS and UNFPA supported network of young leaders and adult allies working on youth and HIV/AIDS in 150 countries. The principal function of the NFP is to engage GYCA members within their country, organize local meetings, events, and campaigns, and assist in mapping and networking. This is a one year voluntary position.

## Student Disparities Research Symposium

The Program for Rural and Minority Health Disparities Research, a research collaborative between the Center for the Study of Health Disparities at Texas A&M University and the Center for Community Health Development at the Texas A&M Health Science Center School of Rural Public Health, hosted a Student Disparities Research Symposium on Monday, April 6, 2009. The symposium was scheduled to coincide with National Public Health Week and featured presentations by student mini-grant awardees.

Student mini-grants of up to \$5,000 were awarded to students with exceptional proposals for pilot research focused on nutritional health, obesity, diabetes, or other health disparities among rural or minority populations. The funding

for the mini-grants was provided by CCHD through the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Prevention Research Centers Program. Funded pilot projects were submitted by Cheree Sisk, Department of Nutrition and Food Science (TAMU); Sasha Fleary, Department of Psychology (TAMU); Vanessa Byrd and Matthew Smith, Department of Health and Kinesiology (TAMU); and Laura Pruitt-Stephens and Helene Cook, Department of Educational Psychology (TAMU).

The Student Disparities Research Symposium took place in the classroom building at SRPH and was attended by approximately 50 faculty and students from SRPH and TAMU. Dr. Jeffrey Guidry, Associate Professor in the Department of Health and Kinesiology (TAMU), served as the moderator for the symposium. The symposium began with a presentation

by Matthew Smith who presented the preliminary findings of his pilot research with Vanessa Byrd on the factors contributing to fathers' perceptions of their role in preventing childhood obesity. Next, Dr. Joseph Sharkey presented the work of his advisee, Cheree Sisk, who is currently completing an internship outside of College Station. The presentation provided attendees with a report on Cheree's feasibility study on conducting weekly in-home measures of household food availability. Finally, Sasha Fleary presented her mixed-methods research on mother-identified influences on physical activity of children during the summer months. The symposium concluded with a question and answer session in which attendees were able to ask questions about the presentations.

## Affiliated Faculty



Daniel F. Brossart, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Psychology

in the Texas A&M University College of Education and Human Development. His primary emphasis area is counseling psychology, and his research interests include psychological intervention research, psychological treatment processes and outcomes, and statistical methods for studying change.

Over the past year, Dr. Brossart has worked collaboratively with several faculty and staff of the Center to develop community-based participatory research programs focusing on extending mental health services to

rural populations through telehealth technology. Most recently, Dr. Brossart and the Center's Associate Director, Monica Wendel, submitted a Challenge Grant to examine the comparative effectiveness of telephone- and televideo-based counseling for rural residents.



Mark E. Benden, CPE, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Environmental and

Occupational Health at the School of Rural Public Health. His teaching focuses on human factors, safety engineering, and ergonomics. Dr. Benden's research interests include classroom ergonomics and childhood

obesity, office worker obesity, medical device development and testing, and rehabilitation engineering.

In January, Dr. Benden received a mini-grant award from the Center to develop an innovative idea for rural emergency medical transportation, a project that has potential in multiple settings. Most recently, a research team focusing on dynamic classroom environments to reduce childhood obesity led by Dr. Benden, submitted a Challenge Grant to study the impact of changing classrooms on diverse children. This team includes the Center's Associate director, Monica Wendel, and South Texas Regional Director, Julie St. John, as well as Dr. Genny Carrillo-Zuniga, an assistant professor in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health housed in the South Texas Center in McAllen.

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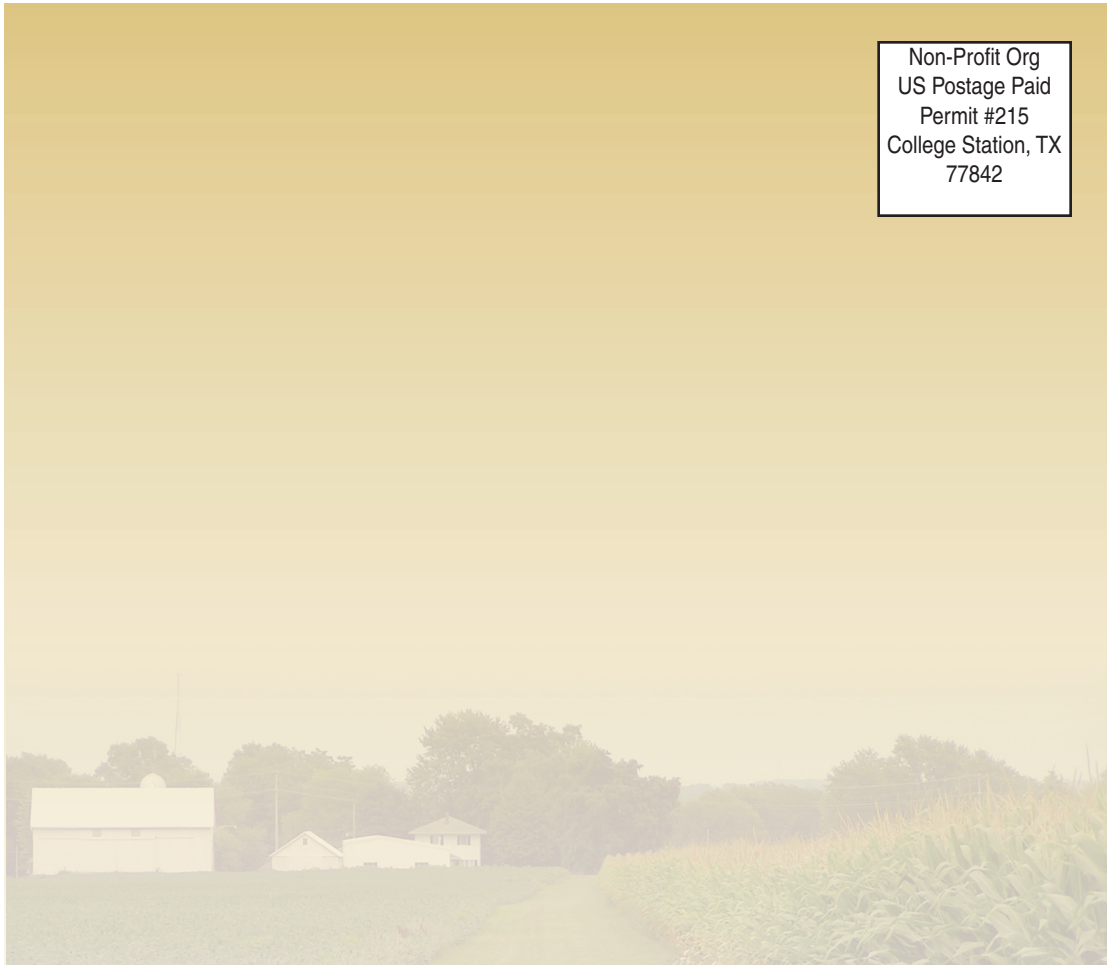
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## Resources

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

### Prevention Research Centers:

<http://www.cdc.gov/prc/>

### Public Health Week:

<http://www.nphw.org/nphw09/default.htm>

### Chronic Disease Academy:

<http://www.chronicdisease.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3581>

### Graduate Student Spotlight: Context Journal & Global youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS (GYCA)

<http://www.contextjournal.org/index.php>

<http://youthaidscoalition.org/>

## 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