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Photo: Robert Shaw, Patricia Polanco, Sandra Guice, Sheli Sheppard, Towanda Webber, Sheila McWhorter at the Open House

Madison Health Resource Center Activities

The Madison Health Resource Center (MHRC) has completed another successful year. The MHRC is located in Madisonville and was the first Health Resource Center established in the Brazos Valley. The MHRC is continually evolving to better meet the needs of Madison County community members to improve both access to health care and the health status of Madison County residents through collaboration and coordination of services.

The MHRC currently offers approximately 20 different services, including audiology, education classes, transportation, and senior meals. From October 2011 to September 2012, the Center saw 786 new clients and provided 3,467 total units of service. In addition, the MHRC increased its information and referral services by 77% over the previous year. The MHRC recently hosted an open house on April 18 to show case three new services, including telehealth counseling for mental health,

substance abuse and community outreach, using local community health workers (CHWs). In the 2010 Brazos Valley Health Status Assessment, more than a quarter of Madison County residents surveyed experienced at least one poor mental health day in the past month, and one in five had been diagnosed with either depression or anxiety. Thirty-five percent of residents surveyed who needed mental health services reported that they could not get them. Substance abuse was also reported as a top community issue, second only to transportation. The new telehealth counseling services will improve access to mental health and substance abuse services. The MHRC is collaborating with the Brazos Valley Council on Alcohol and Substance Abuse (BVCASA) and the Texas A&M University Telehealth Counseling and Assessment Clinic (TCAC) to provide counseling services. All services will be free to Madison County residents and will be offered at the MHRC.

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In addition, the MHRC has identified two community members who are participating in a six-month CHW Certification Program, taught by Ms. Julie St. John at the Center for Community Health Development CHW Training Center. The CHWs are expected to be certified in July 2013 and will assist the Center in providing outreach to the local Hispanic Community.

Funding for the Telehealth Counseling Services and the CHW outreach is provided by a three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration. The grant proposal was submitted by Madison County Government on behalf of the Madison Outreach and Service through Telehealth (MOST) Network. The MOST Network is a group of community organizations and service providers committed to improving access to mental health and substance abuse services in Madison County. The network partners include BVCASA, Center for Community Health Development at Texas A&M Health Science Center, Madison County, Madison St. Joseph Health Center, Madison County Health Resource Commission, MHRC, and Texas A&M's TCAC.

Thanks to the generosity of local donors and service providers, MHRC will celebrate its 10-year anniversary this year. The MHRC has come a long way and is looking forward to more successes in the future.

Ribbon cutting ceremony at the MOST Network Open House

CCHD Welcomes New Graduate Assistant



The Center is excited to welcome a new graduate assistant, Yuliana Alcaraz, who will be assisting with the ÉPICO (Education to Promote Improved Cancer Outcomes) project and the Community Health Worker Training Center.

Yuliana is originally from Laredo, Texas, where she received a Bachelors of Science in biology from Texas A&M International University. Yuliana's experience volunteering at the local health department ignited her interest in infectious diseases. She is currently a first-year graduate student pursuing a Masters in Public Health in Epidemiology. Yuliana is also interested in border health issues and most specifically health disparities. Yuliana is excited to work for the Center for Community Health Development to gain knowledge and experience in community health assessments and community interventions.



Congratulations CCHD Graduates!

The Center is proud to announce the graduation of five graduate research assistants next month. Although sad to see these team members leave, we are excited for what is in store for them. Please join us in congratulating these graduates!



Denise Adame will be graduating with her Master of Public Health through the Department of Health Promotion and Community Health Sciences. Denise has been with CCHD for almost two years, working on the ÉPICO project (Education to Promote Improved Cancer Outcomes). In the Fall, Denise will begin a doctoral program at the University of North Texas.



Fatimata Ba will be graduating with her Master of Public Health through the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics. Fatimata has received an internship with The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center over the summer and will begin looking for a job in the Fall.



Jai Girard is graduating with her Masters in Youth Development through the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences. Jai has been with CCHD for one year and will continue working on the Evaluation of a Medication and Treatment Adherence Curriculum project throughout the summer. In the Fall, she will begin pursuing her Ph.D. in Tourism.



Monique Ingram is graduating with her Master of Public Health through the Department of Health Promotion and Community Health Sciences. Monique has worked with CCHD on Community Collaboration, most specifically with the Brazos Valley Health Partnership. Throughout the summer, she will continue working with CCHD on the Regional Health Assessment and will begin looking for a full time job.



Funtó Olusanya is graduating with her Master of Public Health through the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics. Funtó has worked with CCHD for one year on the Evaluation of a Medication and Treatment Adherence Curriculum project and will begin the Ph.D. program in the Texas A&M Department of Health and Kinesiology.

Geocaching for Exercise and Activity Research Webinar

On March 20, Dr. Monica Wendel, Ms. Whitney Garney, Dr. George Cunningham, and Ms. Angie Alaniz hosted a webinar about the Geocaching for Exercise and Activity Research (GEAR) Study.

The webinar was available to interested employees at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The Webinar highlighted GEAR, which is a 12-month research study examining physical activity while geocaching. Geocaching is a growing sport participated in by millions of people across the world. The sport is considered a high-tech treasure hunt through the use of a GPS-enabled device to find hidden “caches” or treasure. The GEAR study is a time series design, which uses monthly surveys to measure current geocachers’ physical activity. The study has enrolled 1,000 participants across the United States. It began in January 2013 and is expected to conclude in March 2014.



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Dancing for the Health of It!

According to the Texas Medical Association, Texas has the highest rate of uninsured individuals in the country. Addressing such problematic rates is the Health For All clinic, which is a non-profit, free clinic serving the medically indigent in the Brazos Valley, providing primary care to those who have no means to pay. The clinic, which was established in 1987, receives almost all of its funding from local donors who live or do business in the Brazos Valley. By treating more than 3,000 uninsured patients each year as an alternative to expensive emergency room visits, Health For All saves Brazos Valley hospitals and taxpayers millions of dollars each year.

Each year, Health For All hosts its spring fundraiser, Dancing for the Health of It! Last month, Dancing for the Health of It! featured local "celebrities" from across the community, with all proceeds going to Health For All for patient care. This year, Dr. Monica Wendel, currently the president of the Health For All board of directors, and her husband Shane participated in the dance competition, performing the merengue. CCHD staff attended to show their support for her and this great cause (and they did some line dancing too). The event was fun for everyone and succeeded in raising more than \$20,000.