

Grimes Health Resource Center Grand Opening

Grimes County residents will once again have a place to go for health related needs and transportation assistance.

On February 11th, the Grimes County Health Resource Commission hosted a Grand Opening for the new Grimes Health Resource Center (GHRC). The event was a great success with over 70 attendees. The Grimes County Chamber of Commerce was there to do an official ribbon cutting for the center along with two local television stations, KBTX and KHRD, and the local newspaper, the *Navasota Examiner*.

Over the past few years the Commission has focused on locating additional space for the GHRC so they could expand their services. Their hard work finally paid off when Grimes St. Joseph stepped up and offered two rooms in the hospital to relocate the GHRC. The hospital saw this as a win-win opportunity. It allowed for expansion of the center and also gave hospital clients a place to go for assistance. Once given the news, the Commission immediately began working to prepare for the move. The GHRC was temporarily shut down to relocate and hire staff.

Lori Duncan, the GHRC Office Manager, was hired in mid-January. Ms. Duncan will be the sole employee of the GHRC and will do everything from answering the phones to coordinating the services at the center. The GHRC will initially be open Monday through Friday from 9 AM to 1

PM, with hope to expand to a full-time schedule in the future.

The GHRC is a place for county residents to come to access health related social services. Currently, the center's focus is providing transportation to residents in need. There are no eligibility guidelines for the service, except for a need. Transportation is provided by volunteers using a locally supported minivan. The van provides rides both within and outside of the county to places such as doctor's offices, pharmacies, grocery stores, and other social service facilities. In addition to transportation, the center will provide medication assistance and information and referral to other services. The addition of the extra office at the new location also allows for partnerships with other organizations whose staff will have access to a rent free office where they can meet with clients thus using more of the organization's resources for client services.

The ultimate goal of the GHRC is to serve as a one stop shop for residents, where they can come to one place and access a variety of organizations and services.

This not only helps the client but also serves as a resource to the partnering organizations by allowing them to collaborate with other organizations. All in all, the community stands to see great benefit from the center and many lives will be transformed. Despite all the hard work put in by the Commission members, Chair Bert Miller knows it would not be possible without local support. Hon. Miller noted, "Our ability to provide these services is due to our primary funders, Grimes County, the City of Navasota, Grimes St. Joseph and a grant from Safeco Insurance Company.

We were also fortunate to have the support of the Lena Mae Farris Foundation (LMFF) for the first

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several years. The Executive Director of LMFF, Cynthia Robertson, was the driving force behind the transportation program and helped get the center up and running."



BVHSA Surveys Released in February



Martha Tackett

Martha joined the Center for Community Health Development in January as Center Coordinator. Martha grew up in College Station, lived in East Texas for an extended period of time and returned to the Brazos Valley in 1999. Her background is in Accounting and Research Administration and she was most recently with the Texas A&M Health Science Center Marketing and Communications Department. In her spare time, Martha volunteers with the College Station Fire Department Citizens' Action Response Team and enjoys baking and cake decorating.

Beginning in mid-February and continuing through the middle of March, Brazos Valley residents will begin to receive phone calls requesting their participation in the Brazos Valley Health Status Assessment survey. ETC Institute, the survey administrator, will be asking residents of Brazos, Burleson, Grimes, Leon, Madison, Robertson, Waller, and Washington Counties to take the household survey which will be mailed directly to their homes and returned to ETC in a pre-stamped and addressed envelope

accompanying the survey.

CCHD faculty and staff are also preparing to hold community discussion groups across the eight-county region beginning the week of March 22nd and continuing through the end of May. Staff anticipates holding over 50 discussion groups with health and social services providers, key community leaders, and consumers.

Sponsors of the assessment include CCHD, Brazos Valley Council of Governments, the

School of Rural Public Health, Brazos Valley Community Action Agency, College Station Medical Center, Trinity Medical Center, St. Joseph Health System, United Way, Workforce Solutions, Burleson St. Joseph Health Center, Madison St. Joseph Health Center, Texas A&M Health Science Center, Waller County, the City of Bryan Community Development Program, and the City of College Station Community Development Program.

South Texas Community Leader Spotlight Dr. Brian Smith

Brian R. Smith, M.D., M.P.H., is the Regional Medical Director for the Texas Department of State Health Services Region 11 (an area the size and population of West Virginia). Before joining DSHS in tuberculosis control in 1992, he practiced medicine in community health centers in South Texas, and with the Cherokees and Choctaws in Oklahoma. He worked in Guatemala, Nigeria, and Cameroon after graduating from Southwestern in Dallas in 1976. He is an adjunct professor for UT and Texas A&M schools of public health and medicine in South Texas,

with publications in the fields of US-Mexico border tuberculosis, diabetes, dengue, and maternal health. He has extensive experience in collaboration with Mexico in tuberculosis, Binational Infectious Disease Surveillance, sister city projects, and the US-Mexico Border Health Association, as well as emergency preparedness experiences. Dr. Smith has collaborated with CCHD and SRPH on numerous projects including the IHOS project (2001-07), several community partnerships, and recently, the San Carlos Christmas event, through providing technical assistance, public

health and medical expertise, and resources. Dr. Smith is a great asset for promoting activities and research to improve health status and quality of life for Region 11 residents.



2010 Academic Convocation

On January 20th, the Texas A&M Health Science Center (HSC) held their 2010 academic convocation entitled "Leading a Community of Excellence". Every two years, the faculty, staff, students, and administration from across the

HSC gather to participate in a formal, ceremonial assembly highlighting accomplishments of the previous years. This year's ceremony was unique in that it connected the HSC campuses (Bryan-College Station, Dallas, McAllen, Round Rock,

Corpus Christi, Temple, Houston, Kingsville, and Waco) throughout the state for the first time and celebrated the tenth anniversary of the HSC. It highlighted the diversity of partnerships; underscored the unity of purpose; celebrated discoveries,

success, and milestones; and demonstrated how our community of excellence changes people's lives across our state, around the nation, and throughout the world.

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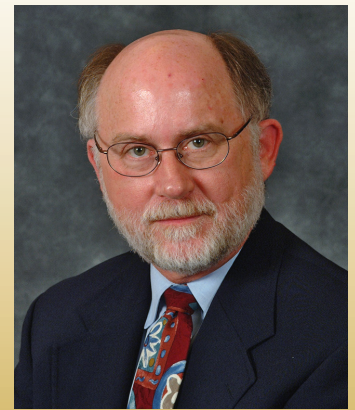
Dr. Ken McLeroy Receives Research Laureate Award

On February 8th, Dr. Ken McLeroy was presented with the 2010 Research Laureate by The American Academy of Health Behavior. The mission of The Academy of Health Behavior is to promote excellence in research and in the application of research to improve public health. In accordance with their mission, the Academy awards the Research Laureate honor to an individual who has made a significant and

enduring contribution to health behavior research. The process for identifying the Research Laureate is highly competitive and is based on a comparative review of finalists' lifetime records of research productivity and national and international impacts on the field.

While accepting this award, Dr. McLeroy took a moment to reflect upon and discuss a few key ideas that have affected his career and which he

feels are important to the public health profession. These ideas include building capacity, social ecology, systems thinking, and the role of theory. Each of these concepts has helped to shape the Center for Community Health Development and are key components in our research. Congratulations Dr. McLeroy!



Madison County Residents Giving Year Round

The holidays are a time for giving and caring, but a handful of Madison County residents do this year round. On December 8th, the Madison County Health Resource Commission held an appreciation reception for the MHRC's volunteer drivers. Over forty people, including van riders,

attended the gathering to recognize the hard work of the volunteer drivers. All year, these individuals give their time to residents in need of transportation. During the last year, the drivers volunteered over 820 hours to deliver 858 rides and drove 13,970 miles.

James Weinert was recognized with the "volunteer of the year" award. Mr. Weinert began the year as a dedicated volunteer driver and when the opportunity came up for a paid driver for the Senior Meal Program, he was the first to come to mind. In October, he began delivering meals to residents and was so dedicated he insisted on delivering during the holidays even though it was not required. These selfless individuals are the driving force behind the work that is done at the MHRC.



DSHS Regional Director Meets with BVHP and CCHD



transporting local residents to health related destinations. Prior to meeting with the BVHP Board, Dr. Monica Wendel, Dr. Ken McLeroy, and Dr. Jim Burdine presented an

Dr. Tom Betz, Medical Director for the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Region 7, traveled to College Station to meet with the Brazos Valley Health Partnership (BVHP) Board of Directors at their January 28th board meeting. Board members had the opportunity to present their regional health related priorities to Dr. Betz and discuss potential opportunities to partner with the DSHS on issues such as

overview of current CCHD projects to Dr. Betz and expressed their appreciation for the long standing collaborative relationship between Region 7 and CCHD. Dr. Betz commended both BVHP and CCHD for their efforts to develop partnerships focused on community health and for especially recognizing the contributions of local public health nurses.

Program for Rural and Minority Health Disparities Research Holds Planning Retreat

Faculty and staff from various departments and institutions within the Texas A&M System met on Friday, January 29th to evaluate progress on their current P-20 funding and to lay out plans

for future collaboration. Dr. Rick Kreider, head of the Department of Health and Kinesiology at Texas A&M, challenged the group to think about the big picture and to remember why we do what we do.

The group discussed past challenges and successes, as well as interests for future funding opportunities. An external facilitator guided an activity that characterized a competitive proposal and a fundable

principal investigator. Most of those in attendance committed to participate in developing a new proposal, for which the planning meetings will begin in May 2010.

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CCHD Staff Run Aramco Houston Half-Marathon

CCHD's co-director, Dr. Monica Wendel, and Brazos Valley Regional Director, Mrs. Angie Alaniz, along with Shannon Overby, director of the Bryan-College Station Convention and Visitors' Bureau, and Julie Nugent, ICU nurse at St. Joseph Regional Health Center in Bryan, participated in the Aramco Houston Half-Marathon on Sunday, January 17th. Congratulations to each of them for finishing the race!

