

2010 Brazos Valley Health Summit

2010 Summit brings hundreds together to identify prominent health problems and discuss potential solutions.

The 2010 Brazos Valley Health Summit took place on September 23, 2010, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Brazos Center in Bryan, Texas. The Health Summit was attended by a crowd of nearly 200 people including local residents, elected officials, regional and local organizations, health care and social services providers, health resource commission members, health resource center staff, and academicians. The primary purpose of the Health Summit was to present the key findings from the Brazos Valley Health Status Assessment, although attendees also received an overview of local efforts – both community-based and academically driven initiatives – that were already addressing some of the identified problems.

Dr. Monica Wendel, the Director of the Center for Community Health Development (CCHD), and Dr. Jim Burdine, the Co-Principal Investigator for CCHD, provided an overview of the assessment process and presented the assessment's key findings. The prominent regional issues identified through the assessment included: lack of reliable, affordable public transportation; a growing rate of obesity; a high rate of chronic disease; poor access to mental health services; alcohol and substance abuse; and a lack of resources/services for the older population.

An afternoon panel offered a glimpse into current local efforts to address the identified problems. Presenters and their presentations included Dr. Marcia Ory, "Texas Healthy Lifestyles – Evidence Based Programs in Texas"; Dr. Julie Ribardo and Ms. Eleanor Ryder, Brazos Valley Obesity Prevention Network and UP-BEAT; Dr. Joseph R. Sharkey, "Challenges to Healthy Eating in Rural Brazos Valley"; Dr. Mark Benden, "Stand-Biased Classroom Study at College Hills Elementary School"; Ms. Camilla Viator, Health Resource Center Transportation Programs; and Dr. Timothy Elliott, "Screening Counseling via Telehealth."

The summit was co-hosted by the Brazos Valley Health Partnership (BVHP) Board and the Center for Community Health Development (CCHD) at the Texas A&M Health Science Center (TAMHSC) School

of Rural Public Health. Mr. Britt Allen, the President of the BVHP Board, and Dr. Burdine, who also serves as the Assistant Dean for Public Health Practice at TAMHSC-School of Rural Public Health, kicked off the summit by welcoming the attendees.

Dr. Craig Blakely, Dean of TAMHSC-School of Rural Public Health, welcomed Dr. Eduardo Simoes, Director of the Prevention Research Centers Program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Dr. Simoes spoke about prevention research centers and the importance of community-campus partnerships.

Mr. Albert Ramirez, Secretary of the BVHP Board, and Dr. Monica Wendel, Director of CCHD, gave an overview of

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the collaboration between CCHD and BVHP beginning in 2002. The efforts of CCHD and the BVHP have resulted in the development of five rural health resource centers and the creation of county health resource commissions to oversee the centers. Today, while the BVHP, as a nonprofit organization, is focused on the ongoing development and sustainability of the county health resource centers and the

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commissions that govern each center, the BVHP also serves as CCHD's community advisory committee. As an advisory body to CCHD, BVHP represents a source of local accountability in the research process and acts as a research partner for the center.

Sponsors of the assessment also were honored at the summit with Commissioner Dean Player, Vice President of the BVHP, and Ms.

Vicky Jackson, Treasurer of the BVHP, acknowledging the contributions of sponsors through a sponsor recognition award. Sponsors included the Center for Community Health Development, Brazos Valley Council of Governments, Brazos Valley Community Action Agency, College Station Medical Center, Scott & White Hospital-Brenham, City of Bryan, St. Joseph Health System, United Way of the Brazos Valley, Workforce Solutions

Brazos Valley, Burleson St. Joseph Health Center, Madison St. Joseph Health Center, Mental Health Mental Retardation Authority of the Brazos Valley, TAMHSC-School of Rural Public Health, Texas A&M Health Science Center, City of College Station, and Brazos County Health Department.

Summit sponsors included HEB and the BVHP. HEB provided breakfast snacks and also sold HEB gift cards in

five dollar increments on site. Summit attendees could purchase a gift card that would be donated to area food pantries. More than \$400 in gift cards were donated by attendees. The BVHP provided lunch at the summit.

All summit presentations and full assessment reports can be found on CCHD's website, <http://cchd.us>.

Creation of the Don L. Strickland Scholarship for Community Health Development

One of the highlights of the Brazos Valley Health Summit was the special recognition of Don Strickland, who was one of the founding members of the BVHP and the first Chair of the BVHP Board. Earlier this year, Dr. Jim Burdine initiated a fundraising effort for the Don L. Strickland Scholarship for Community Health Development. Once endowed, the scholarship will be awarded to a TAMHSC-School of Rural Public Health student who is working in the arena of community health development. Dr. Burdine acknowledged Mr. Strickland's commitment to the Brazos Valley and the health partnership over the years as Dr. Craig Blakely, Dean of the TAMHSC-School of Rural Public Health, presented Mr. Strickland with a plaque commemorating the creation of the scholarship.

If you are interested in contributing to the Don L. Strickland Scholarship for

Community Health Development, you may send your contribution to Hugh T. McElroy, Jr. at the TAMHSC-School of Rural Public Health; 275 SRPH Admin Bldg; College Station, TX 77843-1266. Please make the check payable to HSC Foundation; Memo: Strickland Scholarship. If you have any questions, please contact Hugh McElroy at (979) 845-9673 or by e-mail at hmcclroy@srph.tamhsc.edu.



Making a Difference through Partnership

CDC Site Visit Team Joins CCHD for Brazos Valley Health Summit

The Prevention Research Center Program Office conducts site visits to each PRC around the country to get a first-hand look at what the centers and their community partners are doing. This on-the-ground experience helps them give helpful feedback, offer assistance, and advocate for support. On September 22, a five-member site visit team arrived in College Station consisting of our Project Officer and two members each from the Communication and Dissemination Team and the Evaluation Team.

In their three-day, meeting-packed visit, the team talked with CCHD faculty and staff about current activities and challenges, traveled to the Burleson Health Resource Center in Caldwell, and talked to commission members and partners there; they attended the Brazos

Valley Health Summit; and met with the Brazos Valley Health Partnership Board. The feedback the site visit team provided was very positive, and they encouraged us to focus on the outcomes of the capacity-building activities of the Center and Partnership. They will be sending a formal report shortly. In response to their advice, the Center's Evaluation Team is leading a revision of our evaluation plan to better document specific outcomes of our capacity-building efforts.



South Texas Promotora Association (STPA) Border Binational Health Week Events

The South Texas Promotora Association (STPA) convened a group of partners to plan the 7th Annual Binational Conference for Promotores, which occurs during Border Binational Health Week each October. This year, the STPA and the planning committee hosted three events. A kick-off event and walk was held on Sunday, October 3 at the San Juan Park behind the San Juan

Community Center. The theme of the event was breast cancer awareness, and the event honored a local promotora who is currently undergoing breast cancer treatment. The other event included a two-day conference for promotores/community health workers (CHWs) on both the U.S. and Mexican sides of the border, held at the South Texas College, Pecan Campus, Cooper Center in McAllen, Texas. The

objectives of this year's conference were: 1) to provide training on diabetes, obesity, cancer awareness, and hospice care; 2) to provide an opportunity for networking and resource/information sharing among promotores; and 3) to promote and highlight promotores' activities. The Center for Community Health Development (CCHD), in collaboration with the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, TAMHSC-School of Public Health, Brownsville Regional Campus, provided 4 DSHS-certified CEUs for 75 CHWs/promotores on Thursday, October 7, from 12:30-5:00 p.m. The training entitled, "Healthier

Choices = Healthier Communities," covered the core competency of knowledge—including topics such as obesity, nutrition, and physical activity. At the Friday conference, Fernando Martinez, Ph.D., Assistant Professor at Northwest Vista College in San Antonio, Texas, provided DSHS-certified CHW CEUs to more than 100 promotores. Event partners include Hidalgo County Health and Human Services; South Texas College; the Center for Community Health Development at the TAMHSC-School of Rural Public Health (CCHD, SRPH); San Juan Community Center (Hidalgo County, Precinct 2); Health & Human Services Commission, Office of Border Affairs; Medical Innovations; Mano a Mano; Velmark Health Services; Safeguard Universal Business Forms & Promotions; Northwest Vista College; Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Hidalgo County; and Pan American Health Organization.



Graduate Student Spotlight



Manual Diaz

scholar, born and raised in Los Angeles, CA where he received a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Cal Poly Pomona University. He earned his Master's degree in Clinical Psychology from Teachers

Manny Diaz is a Ph.D. student in the Counseling Psychology doctoral program at Texas A&M University. He is a first generation

College, Columbia University in New York. As a graduate student, he has become more aware of his theoretical inclinations and how they affect his approaches to research and counseling methods. He is interested in learning new techniques to provide mental health and intends to apply what he learns at the Community Center for Health Development to underserved communities. Post doc, he plans to become a faculty member and perform counseling practices related to his research.



Katrina Serrano

University of Illinois at Chicago. After working for a couple of years in the health care field, she decided it was time for a change. Fate intervened and she met her husband, who got accepted

Katrina Serrano is a native of Chicago, IL, where she received her Bachelor's degree in Biological Sciences from the

into a Ph.D. program at Texas A&M University. Upon moving to College Station, she decided to pursue additional education, and recently received her Master's degree in Health Education at the Department of Health and Kinesiology at Texas A&M. She is continuing on and is currently a Ph.D. student in Health Education. Her advisor and her research interests have led her to the Center for Community Health Development, which is a wonderful and exciting opportunity for her!

1266 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-1266

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

E-mail: cchd@srph.tamhsc.edu

Website: <http://cchd.us>

Editor: Kelly N. Morris

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

CCHD Executive Committee

Principal Investigator
Kenneth R. McLeroy, Ph.D.

Co-Principal Investigator
James N. Burdine, Dr.P.H.

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

*Program Development
Specialist*
Kelly Morris, M.P.H.

*Brazos Valley Regional
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Julie St. John, M.P.H., M.A.

*Director of Communication
& Training*
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Co-Directors of Evaluation
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Lisako McKyer, Ph.D., M.P.H.**

Evaluation Manager
Heather R. Clark, M.S.P.H.

*Director, TxHAN, TxNOPRN
and Principal Investigator,
Core Project-Rural Food
Environment*
**Joseph R. Sharkey, Ph.D.,
M.P.H., R.D.**

*Senior Research Associate,
Rural Food Choice Program*
Wesley Dean, Ph.D., M.A.

Director, CTxCARES
Marcia G. Ory, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Program Manager, CTxCARES
Meghan Wernicke, M.P.H.

*Director, Southwest Rural
Health Research Center*
Jane Bolin, Ph.D., J.D., RN



Save the Date for the 2nd Annual Christmas in the *Colonias* Gift Drive

Last year, faculty, staff, students and their families came together to generously provide gifts and mothers' baskets for more than 40 families living in San Carlos-area colonias. Several parents shared that they would not have had Christmas without these gifts, and they were touched that sponsors bought gifts like they would have done for their own families. In addition, the mothers loved their gift baskets that were filled with lotions, make-up, and other items! Overall, Christmas in the *Colonias* was tremendously successful, and we are returning to host our second annual gift drive for families living in Progreso. Our *promotoras* are identifying 75



children for this year's activity. We are collecting beauty and hygiene items for the mothers now, and we will be looking to sponsor all the families/children very soon. Dr. Brian Smith, Regional Director for Health Service Region 11, again will serve as Santa Claus; Mrs. Smith is Mrs. Claus. If you would like to become a sponsor, please contact either Raquel Flores (raflores@srph.tamhsc.edu) or Gabriela Arandia (Arandia@srph.tamhsc.edu). The deadline for gifts to be dropped off is Wednesday, December 1.

Have you Moved? We are continuously making efforts to keep our distribution list up to date. If you have a new email address or mailing address, please send it to Kelly Morris at kamorris@srph.tamhsc.edu so that we may update your contact information in our mail out list.