



Connecting students to careers,  
professionals to communities &  
communities to better health.

# ACCESS



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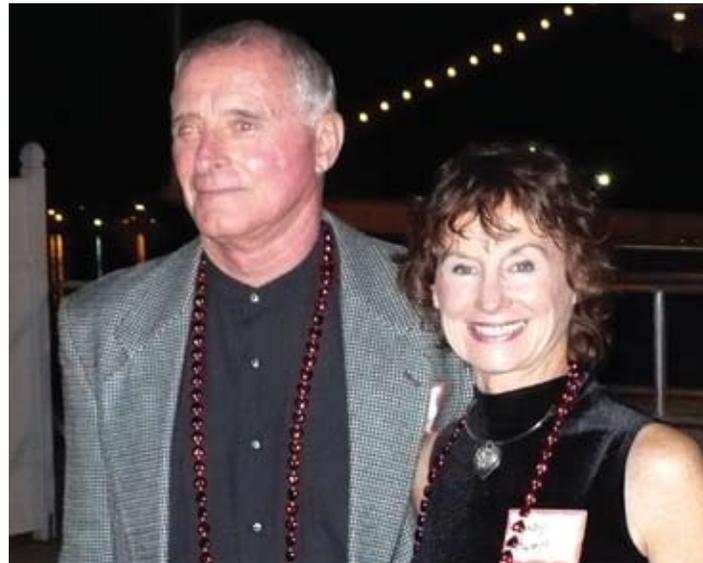


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### Access by E-Mail!

Beginning with our 2008 fall issue, the **AHEC Access Newsletter** will be transitioned to an electronic format and e-mailed to our readers. To ensure you continue to receive uninterrupted **Access**, please submit your e-mail address to [ahecnews@health.usf.edu](mailto:ahecnews@health.usf.edu) by August 29th.



Judy Powell and her husband, Jim, at the GNAHEC Preceptor Recognition Event (story page 5).

## Judy Powell Retires With Top Honors

Judy Powell, Director of the Crystal River High School (CRHS) Health Academy and long time Gulfcoast North AHEC (GNAHEC) board member, will retire at the end of this school year with much to celebrate. Not only was she chosen by her colleagues to receive the teacher of the year award for her school but she went on to win the county-wide competition. Mrs. Powell was delighted to be chosen for the award based on an interview conducted by the Citrus County School Board and other community members. Ms. Powell is known throughout the county for her enthusiasm, creativity and dedication both in and out of

the classroom. A big part of her teaching philosophy is to treat her students as emerging adults and not children; because she realizes that they are our future healthcare professionals.

Mrs. Powell's passion for education began when she attended Florida State University with aspirations of becoming a French translator for the United Nations. She was only 17 years old at the time, and recalls with a smile that she quickly discovered she was better at English than French! She decided to become an English teacher. Her personal life and

*Powell continued on page 2...*

## Selleck Named NAO President

Cynthia Selleck, DSN, ARNP, program director of the USF Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program, became president of the National AHEC Organization (NAO) Oct. 1. The NAO is a national membership organization that supports and advances 50 AHEC programs and more than 200 centers operating in almost every state. AHECs work to improve the health of individuals and communities by transforming health care through education.



Cynthia Selleck  
DSN, ARNP

Dr. Selleck served on the NAO Board for the last six years in several capacities, including member-at-large of the Program Director's Constituency Group (PDCG), secretary of the PDCG, secretary of the NAO Board and, most recently, president-elect.

"Cindy is an articulate and effective spokesperson at the board table, at USF, or on Capitol Hill on behalf of the issues that affect AHECs and the constituencies we serve," said Susan Moreland, NAO Immediate Past President and CEO of the North Louisiana AHEC. "She exemplifies

*NAO continued on page 2...*



# AHEC ACCESS

**AHEC Program Director**  
Cynthia Selleck, DSN, ARNP

**Gulfcoast North AHEC**  
Executive Director  
Jody Lazzara, MS, LMHC

**Gulfcoast South AHEC**  
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## Meet Jill O'Reilly, Fiscal & Business Specialist

Please join us in welcoming Jillian O'Reilly to the USF AHEC Program Office. In her role as Fiscal & Business Specialist, Jill is primarily responsible for reviewing the budgets of numerous accounts, preparing financial reports, statements and spreadsheets, and reconciling the books. In addition to her fiscal duties, Jill is also responsible for entering the wealth of clinical training data received each quarter from departments within the



Jill O'Reilly

USF Colleges of Medicine, Nursing and Public Health. (Since being hired October 8, 2007 Jill has entered over **72,000** hours of data for more than **750** medical residents and students from the colleges of medicine, nursing and public health.)

Jill moved to Florida from New Jersey, where for eleven years she was an administrative analyst for the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMD-

NJ). Her background in academic administration and love of numbers gives her an appreciation for the complex and often challenging fiscal and data management systems she has to navigate. What others might find daunting, Jill tackles with the spirit of a puzzle master. "I look at it as a riddle and love it when I find the answer!" She is definitely in her element!

Jill is looking forward to working with the university departments and community partners. "I'm really happy to be working with AHEC. For the first time since moving to Florida, I finally feel at home."

### *Selleck from page 1...*

exactly the characteristics of leadership that the National AHEC Organization and the national AHEC network need at this time."

Dr. Selleck will serve a one-year term as NAO president. She will be a political advocate for the organization at the national level — working to restore Title VII funding for health professions programs to previous funding levels, to ensure that an AHEC Program exists in every state, and that recruitment, retention and training of health professionals for the medically underserved is a priority. Dr. Selleck will lead the NAO to identify and secure alternative funding sources through foundations as well as membership dues and affiliate membership options. In addition, she will work to collaborate more closely with partnering organizations — including the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC), the National Rural Health Association (NRHA) and the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM) — to leverage resources and to expand programming and advocacy efforts.

"I am excited about the opportunity to work with AHEC

Program and Center staff from around the country as well as with other organizations with similar missions," Dr. Selleck said. "I've always been impressed with the dedication and talent of NAO members who volunteer their time on behalf of this organization. It's all because we believe that inequities in health care access and quality are unacceptable."

Dr. Selleck, an associate professor in the Department of Family Medicine, has been AHEC Program Director at the USF College of Medicine since 1994. She oversees the nine-county service area and two AHEC centers that connect students to careers, professionals to communities and communities to better health.

Dr. Selleck also serves as the USF College of Medicine Ambassador to the National Health Service Corps (NHSC), assisting students and clinicians interested in NHSC's scholarship and loan repayment programs.

### *Powell from page 1...*

love for teaching took her as far as Hawaii then brought her back to Florida in 1983. Since then, Mrs. Powell has taught English at CRHS where in the early 90's she assumed a leadership role in Citrus County's first Health Academy. Today, she is in charge of the academy with over 170 students enrolled in various health classes that prepare them for careers upon graduation. Students can complete internships that train them to become Certified Nursing Assistants, Dental Aides or First Responders.

Mrs. Powell's collaboration with GNAHEC began in 1998 with the creation of our Health Career Expeditions to recruit and expose students to health career opportunities. Since then, she has successfully partnered with GNAHEC to start a health fair at CRHS, teach students to provide EKG screenings, offer dental aide classes and present information on osteoporosis and nutrition to schools. In 2005, Mrs. Powell became an active GNAHEC board member and continues to be a strong advocate of AHEC. Judy Powell will certainly be missed when she retires this year not only by AHEC but by the many students she has influenced throughout her career. Congratulations, Judy, and thank you for all that you've given!

# Mark Your Calendars: Upcoming AHEC Events for Students

## Spring 2008 USF AHEC Sophomore/Junior Access Day

Sophomore/Junior Access Day is designed to inform high school students of career opportunities in health professions such as medicine, nursing, public health, physical therapy and pharmacy. Access Day has been very successful in educating disadvantaged and underrepresented students who have no prior exposure to higher education. It provides a forum for them to discover the possibilities available in various health professions. Approximately 200 students residing in Charlotte, Citrus, DeSoto, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, and Sarasota counties will participate in Access Day activities.

For more information on USF AHEC Sophomore/Junior Access Day please contact LaToya S. Clark, MPH at 813-974-5973 or [lclark2@health.usf.edu](mailto:lclark2@health.usf.edu).

**Spring 2008 Access Day**  
**Friday, April 25, 2008**  
**USF Health Auditorium**  
**7:30 am – 1:00 pm**

## 2008 USF AHEC Health Professions Summer Academy

The USF AHEC Health Professions Summer Academy is a two-week residential academic program intended to increase the college preparation skills of high school students interested in health careers. Twenty-six high school juniors were accepted into the 2008 Academy class. Those students will attend SAT preparation courses, college admissions and financial aid workshops, tour various colleges and schools within USF Health and visit Tampa General, St. Joseph's, and Shriners Children's Hospitals. The Academy provides a unique opportunity for students to gain exposure to various different health careers and network with other high school students who share common career interests.

For more information on USF AHEC Health Professions Summer Academy please contact LaToya S. Clark, MPH at 813-974-5973 or [lclark2@health.usf.edu](mailto:lclark2@health.usf.edu).

**Health Professions  
Summer Academy 2008**  
**June 15 – June 28, 2008**  
**USF Tampa Campus**



## AHEC Partners with USF and Community Groups in Step Up Florida Initiatives

*By Ellen Kent, MPH*

“Step Up, Florida - On Our Way To Healthy Living” ([www.stepupflorida.org](http://www.stepupflorida.org)) is a statewide initiative promoting physical activity, nutrition and healthy lifestyles to Florida's citizens and visitors. The USF AHEC Program partnered with a number of groups to implement activities both at USF and in the community. These various activities have included:

The USF Step Up, Florida! Walk was held on Feb 19th, and featured a successful partnership between the College of Public Health (COPH), AHEC, Hillsborough County Health Department (HCHD), Campus Recreation, USF Police, Student Health Services, H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute, Sweet Tomatoes Restaurant of Brandon and the Graduate and Professional Student Council.

This year, the focus of the walk was “sustainable fitness.” The USF community was provided with information on the benefits of fitness and the many different options available on campus for staying fit year round. Programs highlighted included the COPH/USF Health Walking Club, Campus Recreation programs and Team Wellness seminars. Information was also provided about a number of community walks/bike rides being promoted through AHEC's USF Health Service Corps coordinated by Ellen Kent, MPH. By participating in these events, USF students, faculty and staff can stay fit while also benefiting valuable community health organizations. (Information on these and other events can be found on the Service Corps web site at <http://health.usf.edu/ahec/hsevents.htm>).

## Living Healthy with Diabetes: A Message from Health Care Providers

By Maureen Guthke, MPH, CHES

Uncertainty and apprehension are often feelings someone diagnosed with a chronic illness has. But if that was the case for any of 89 participants attending the Living Healthy with Diabetes Symposium held on Saturday, December 1, 2007 at the Brooksville Elks Lodge, it certainly wasn't so by the end of the day.

"This is amazing, thank you!" "The speakers are wonderful!" "I am learning so much about how to manage my diabetes!" "When is the next event?" Those were some of the comments told to Maureen Guthke, Coordinator for Community Health Education at Gulfcoast North AHEC, and other community partners throughout that eventful day. In Hernando County, diabetes is among the top ten causes of death. More than 15% of the respondents of the 2006 Hernando Community Health Needs Assessment stated they had been told by a healthcare professional they have diabetes. This is a particularly alarming statistic because it is twice the national and state averages.

Local health care providers from various health disciplines generously volunteered time from their busy schedules to emphasize the message that diabetes is preventable and can be controlled through proper self-management.

Scott Gebhardt, D.O., kicked off the day with a heart-to-heart discussion of what causes diabetes, how it's diagnosed, and an introduction to its acute and chronic complications. Participants appreciated Dr. Gebhardt's candidness as he emphasized the importance of lifestyle and behavior change as a means to



Sandra Dixon the CDE from the Hernando County Health Department shares great nutritional information with the participants of the Living Healthy with Diabetes event.

address obesity and physical inactivity, the two greatest risk factors associated with diabetes.

Following Dr. Gebhardt's presentation, an interdisciplinary panel discussion familiarized participants with the various health care providers that should be involved in diabetes care. The panel, "Putting Together Your Diabetes Care Team", was led by Shawn Anderson, PharmD (pharmacist) and included Dr. John Baker (podiatrist), Mary Jane Talty, RN (renal nurse), Srin Dutt, MD (ophthalmologist), and Sandra Dixon, MPH, RD, LD, CDE (Certified Diabetes Educator, Registered Dietician). The participants also had an opportunity to clarify many misconceptions and concerns they had regarding their health care as a diabetic patient.

Fueled and energized by an appetizing char-grilled chicken salad provided by Chick-fil-A,

the participants were eager to learn how to change their dietary behavior. People packed into the afternoon breakout session, "Healthy Eating for Diabetes", presented by Sandra Dixon of the Hernando County Health Department. Ms. Dixon, a passionate diabetes educator, discussed the importance of meal planning, how food (especially sugar free foods and alcohol) affects blood glucose, and the truth about carbohydrates in food.

Three other afternoon sessions included "Medication Management" presented by Shawn Anderson, PharmD, "Diabetes and Sleep Disorders" presented by Dr. William Kohler of the Florida Sleep Institute and "Medicare Coverage for Diabetes" presented by Beatrice Braun.

This amazing opportunity to connect a community to better health was made possible with

the help of our local health care providers and partners including Suwannee River AHEC, WWJB Radio, Vanni and Associates, Spring Hill and Brooksville Regional Hospitals, Oak Hill Hospital, The Nature Coast Community Health Center at the Hernando County Health Department, Hernando Today, News Channel 8, TBO.com and the Brooksville Elk's Lodge #2582 and funding from the Florida Department of Elder Affairs.

As a result of the Living Healthy with Diabetes Symposium, 10 participants signed up for diabetes education classes offered at the Hernando County Health Department. In addition, the Hernando Today newspaper began a three-part series on diabetes to further increase awareness of the problem facing many Floridian's today.

## Gulfcoast North Preceptor Recognition Event

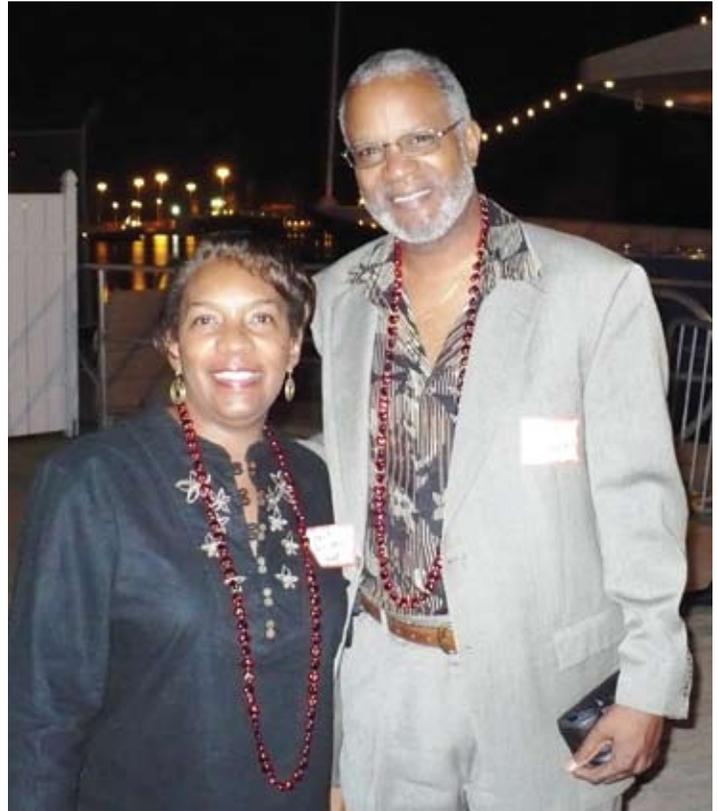
By Jody Lazzara, MS, LMHC

AHEC owes tremendous thanks to the dedicated individuals who volunteer their time to serve as role models for our health professions students and residents. Preceptors and community partners go to great lengths to supervise hundreds of health professions students and residents and provide them with opportunities to serve at rural and medically underserved sites so they can experience the rewards and challenges that go along with caring for the underserved.

As a way of saying thank you to these esteemed individuals (and the loved ones who support them), Gulfcoast North AHEC held a Valentine themed dinner cruise on Friday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Christina Mathis, Director of Clinical Training and Data Management for GNAHEC, coordinated the arrangements. The goal of this bi-annual event was to honor the valued guests for their contributions in educating future health professionals.

Over eighty people from Pasco, Hernando, Citrus, Pinellas and Hillsborough counties were acknowledged by Jody Lazzara, Executive Director of GNAHEC. Along with the staff and Board of GNAHEC, Ms. Lazzara expressed appreciation to the guests and gave them credit for helping AHEC succeed in its mission of creating community and academic partnerships for the health of underserved communities.

Mark your calendars for the next event scheduled for February 2010.



Clockwise from upper right: Guests included Dr. John Scrivens, Pharmacy Director of the Tampa campus of Florida A&M University accompanied by his wife, Molbert; Dr. Jamie Brownlee of the USF College of Medicine along with his wife, Barbara; and Charles Bottoms, CEO of Tampa Community Health Centers and his wife, Anne.

## Community Profile: Dr. Laurel Casey

By Tiffany Prater, MA

Laurel Casey, DDS, MA, began working in September 2007 for Manatee County Rural Health Services (MCRHS) as a dentist at the Lawton Chiles Children & Family Healthcare Center in Bradenton. Dr. Casey is also the newest preceptor for dental students from the University of Florida.

Dr. Casey is no stranger to working in a community health setting. She spent three years working as a Public Health Dental Hygienist in a rural health center in Rhode Island and two years working as a dentist at a county health department.

Dr. Casey has ten years of full-time teaching experience at the university level, having been a Special Instructor of Dental Hygiene at the University of Rhode Island, and then serving as an Assistant Professor of Dental Hygiene at the Virginia Commonwealth University, School of Dentistry where she trained both dental and dental hygiene students. Dr. Casey received a

Master of Arts degree in Adult Education in 1983 from the University of Rhode Island and earned her Doctor of Dental Surgery from Virginia Commonwealth University, Medical College of Virginia in 1999. In addition, Dr. Casey completed a residency program and earned a certificate in Advanced Education in General Dentistry from the University of Florida, College of Dentistry's Jacksonville Clinic in 2000. Dr. Casey looks forward to working with dental students once again, this time as a preceptor.

The Lawton Chiles Children & Family Healthcare Center creates an environment geared for



Dr. Maria Pardo and Dr. Laurel Casey

children and Dr. Casey greatly enjoys having the opportunity to introduce children to dentistry. “The kids are wonderful and the staff is amazing” said Dr. Casey. “Dr. Maria Pardo (MCRHS Dental Director) has created a great environment in which to provide dentistry to children.” Dr. Casey also enjoys having the opportunity

to educate parents about topics like healthy snacks, fluoridated water, and the effect of sugar intake on dental health.

Gulfcoast South AHEC is pleased to welcome Dr. Laurel Casey and is excited to place dental students under her mentorship!

## Helping the Helpers: GSAHEC's 4th Annual Community Health Worker Conference

By Ansley Mora, BA

“It was the best one yet!” exclaimed two participants. “Great speakers,” another commented. GSAHEC's 4th Annual Community Health Worker Conference, held February 9th at DaySpring Conference Center in Parrish, was a great success.

We hold these conferences to recognize Community Health Workers (CHWs) who work hard to educate members of their community on a variety of health topics and connect those in need to health and human

services. An added bonus this year was having some CHWs from Gulfcoast North AHEC join us for this special day. They contributed so much and really got a lot out of the day.

Pam Peplow, with Reveal Insight Company, facilitated a session entitled “Connecting Your Dots.” Time and time again, CHWs give of themselves, care for others, reach out a helping hand, and by going through this session of self-discovery, it was so clear as to why they do what

they do...it is just who they are...part of their core values. Carlene Harvin, first time conference attendee, told us “The conference was most informative and the first presenter (Pam Peplow) helped me really put my priorities in order. It was also very good to meet other people and to hear their views. Happy to do it again!”

Next we heard from Jessica Balos, Tobacco Cessation Specialist with GSAHEC. Jessica discussed and practiced moti-

vational interviewing with the group. The tools she covered will assist participants in understanding why people change their behavior and provide them with additional resources for their toolkit.

Many thanks to all of the CHWs, community partners, and the GSAHEC / GNAHEC staff for making this conference wildly successful. Was it the best one yet? We will have to see about that.

# AHEC & DeSoto Memorial Hospital Partner to Provide Quality Care in a Rural Community

By Amy C. Keys RN, BSN, CCRN  
Clinical Educator  
DeSoto Memorial Hospital

As Clinical Educator for DeSoto Memorial Hospital, a growing rural hospital in Arcadia that provides clinical rotations for students in EMS, nursing, and medical programs, one of my goals when I joined last August was to build an organized, reliable nursing education program for our staff and for the nursing students who perform clinical rotations with us. I would like to recognize Gulfcoast South AHEC and USF AHEC for their help reaching this goal.

GSAHEC provides on-site and local education programs for our nurses and preceptors. Charlene Chirillo, Continuing Education Coordinator for GSAHEC, provides many educational programs that form the foundation of our education program. For a rural hospital such as ours, one very important aspect of the programs Ms. Chirillo provides is that they are offered on-site or locally. This allows us to take less time away from patients and

spend more time with students rather than commuting 45 minutes or more for needed education.

Another unique resource is the library services provided by USF AHEC Librarian Jonathan Hartmann. Through his instructional sessions, Mr. Hartmann has been instrumental in educating staff on Internet research techniques. He also helps identify and retrieve articles and provides technical assistance. Physicians and other staff have taken advantage of this great resource for timely medical information. Mr. Hartmann also provides reference books that have been valuable in the development of policies and staff practice guidelines. These texts provide a tangible source of current practice guidelines for nurses in our medical-surgical, intensive care, surgical services, IV therapy, obstetrics, nursery and pulmonary departments. Without Mr. Hartmann's assistance, we could never afford these tremendously beneficial materials.

AHEC provides other types of



Left to right: Amy Coulter Keys, Clinical Educator, DeSoto Memorial Hospital; Edna Apostol, Executive Director for Gulfcoast South AHEC; Charlene Chirillo, Continuing Education Coordinator for Gulfcoast South AHEC.

assistance that would have been very costly or difficult to find in a rural area such as ours. For instance, DeSoto Memorial provides service to many Spanish speaking clients. With this comes certain challenges, one being barriers in communication. Edna Apostol, CEO of GSAHEC, was instrumental in helping us partially overcome this barrier through educational classes such as Medical Spanish and Medical Interpreting Training. Our clinicians are communicating more effectively with our Span-

ish speaking patients and families, and our bilingual interpreters have achieved a new level of professionalism.

I would like to extend thanks to Edna Apostol, Charlene Charillo, Jonathan Hartmann and all the other "behind the scenes" staff at AHEC for their willingness to provide services to DeSoto Memorial Hospital. They have enabled us to lay the foundation for quality improvements in our education department which in turn will impact the quality of care offered to our patients.

## ker Conference

For more information about GSAHEC's Community Health Partnership Project, please contact Ansley Mora, Community Education Coordinator, (941)361-6602 or email amora@health.usf.edu. For GNAHEC, contact Maureen Guthke, Coordinator, Community Health Education at (813)929-1000 or email mguthke@gnahec.org.

Right: Participants of the 4th Annual Community Health Worker (CHW) Conference



**The University of South Florida Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program, inspires, trains, recruits and retains a diverse and broad range of health professionals to practice in communities where the need is greatest. Your gift will assure improved access to health care for Florida's disenfranchised and medically needy populations.**

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