USF AHEC Making a Difference in the Health of West Central Florida

By Anne Maynard, MPH

At the start of the 2010 Florida Legislative Session in March, USF AHEC leadership traveled to Tallahassee to meet with state legislators. Faced with a $3 billion budget deficit and a struggling economy, legislators focused on how cuts to programs will likely result from the state’s funding shortfall. Program Director Dr. Selleck, Gulfcoast South AHEC Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Edna Apostol and Gulfcoast North AHEC CEO Christina Mathis responded by showing legislators how their investment in the USF AHEC Program translates into significant services for medically needy constituents throughout the nine county service area.

Drawing on data from the 2008-2009 fiscal year, Dr. Selleck explained that through the placement of health professions students and residents with preceptors at numerous community-based sites, USF AHEC was able to provide over 350,000 health services to residents of West Central Florida. Ms. Mathis pointed out to legislators the state’s dire nursing and primary care shortages and the critical need for more than 4,000 future health-care professionals.

Expanded Availability of NHSC Loan Repayment Awards

There has never been a better time to recruit and retain clinicians through the National Health Service Corps (NHSC). Clinicians working in NHSC-approved sites with HPSA scores as low as zero have greater opportunities and access to funding than ever before in the history of the program. Visit www.nhsc.hrsa.gov for more details and for an online application.

More than $175 million in American Reinvestment and Recovery Act and FY2010 funds is providing unprecedented opportunities for the NHSC and approved sites to expand the number of participating clinicians. As many as 4,000 new NHSC clinicians are going to be placed in underserved communities by September 2010 and you can take advantage of this opportunity immediately.

Up to $145,000 is available in loan repayment for qualifying clinicians choosing a five year commitment to the NHSC. Shorter
Turning the Tides on Breast and Colorectal Cancer

Through funds awarded by the American Cancer Society, Florida Division, Inc., Gulfcoast South AHEC (GSAHEC) and the Newtown Wellness Program will implement the project “Turning the Tides on Breast and Colorectal Cancer.” This project will provide breast and colorectal cancer education and promote preventative behaviors among medically underserved African Americans in north Sarasota County. Trained Community Health Workers (CHWs), who many times come from the same neighborhoods and share similar cultural experiences as their target audience, will educate and guide community members to the services and resources they need. We want to instill in our participants that healthy, preventative behaviors and early detection can help save lives.

Resources:
- American Cancer Society www.cancer.org/docroot/home/index.asp
- National Cancer Institute www.cancer.gov/cancertopics
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention www.cdc.gov/cancer

GSAHEC Health Careers Summer Camps

Gulfcoast South AHEC offers funding to community-based youth serving organizations to develop and implement Health Careers Summer Camps in Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee, and Sarasota counties. An essential component of our youth programs involves the recruitment of students from underserved, rural, and inner-city communities and underrepresented populations into primary care health fields, including medicine, nursing, and other health professions. The purpose of the summer camps is to expose middle and high school students to health careers, assist them in establishing a career in health, and encourage them to work in underserved areas.

Congratulations to the following organizations that have been awarded funding for Health Careers Summer Camps 2010: Educational Consultants Consortium, Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Girls Incorporated of Sarasota County, Jewish Family & Children’s Service of Sarasota-Manatee, Laurel Civic Association, Macedonia Human Services Cultural Training Center, Sarasota Family YMCA, and Truvine Missionary Baptist Church.

NHSC from page 1…

two year service awards for $50,000 are also available. More than 80 percent of NHSC clinicians continue to work in underserved communities beyond their initial commitment, and 70 percent are still on the job five years later. Clinicians can apply today using the simplified online application at www.nhsc.hrsa.gov/loanrepayment. Applications are being accepted NOW through July 29, 2010.

Sites wishing to submit a vacancy for a specific clinician can do so by calling the NHSC’s Recruitment Training and Support Center (RTSC) at 1.877.313.1823.

Sites, applicants, clinicians and other partner organizations can access newly created tools including an updated NHSC Website, YouTube, Facebook and NHSC Blog to help create a greater sense of community for the NHSC:

NHSC: www.nhsc.hrsa.gov

Resources: www.facebook.com/nationalhealthservicecorps

www.youtube.com/HRSAtube (search for NHSC)

http://nhsc.wordpress.com

Difference from page 1…
care professionals involved in AHEC’s health workforce development programs. Ms. Apostol emphasized that locally USF AHEC and its Centers provided almost 35,500 health promotion, wellness and screening services to improve the health of medically needy individuals and facilitate early detection of chronic conditions.

Legislators were given impact sheets that summarized these and other compelling facts about the USF AHEC Program. They were appreciative of the information; it will be valuable, they said, as they grapple with balancing the state’s tremendous needs with its lean budget. Copies of the sheets are available at www.health.usf.edu/ahec/Publications.htm.
By Christina Mathis, MBA

Gulfcoast North AHEC (GNAHEC) is proud to announce that after many years of diligent hard work and planning, Kevin B. Sneed, PharmD, was appointed as the founding dean of the University of South Florida’s (USF) School of Pharmacy. As Associate Professor of Family Medicine and Assistant Dean and Clinical Director of the USF College of Medicine’s Division of Clinical Pharmacy, Dr. Sneed was instrumental in submitting USF’s Doctor of Pharmacy program to the Florida Board of Governors, which approved the proposal in January.

Dr. Sneed’s experiences, expertise, and history of working with underserved populations have prepared him for his new role. In 1998, Dr. Sneed received his PharmD degree from Xavier University in Louisiana and completed a primary care residency with the Bay Pines VA Medical Center in St. Petersburg. Upon completion, he joined Florida A&M College of Pharmacy as a clinical assistant professor and was assigned to the USF Department of Family Medicine as a primary care clinical pharmacist. He immediately formed a partnership with Gulfcoast North AHEC, helping to offer invaluable educational programs to health professionals working with medically needy populations. His willingness and dedication to learning has always been appreciated and is magnified by the number of students that travel alongside him. The USF School of Pharmacy could not have made a better choice to lead our students into the future. Congratulations, Dr. Sneed!

FREE Online CME!
The Florida AHEC Network presents:

Naegleria and Primary Amebic Meningoencephalitis
An Online Clinical Update for Healthcare Professionals

Presented by: Douglas Holt, MD, Director, Hillsborough County Health Department & Associate Director of Infectious Diseases and Tropical Medicine, University of South Florida.

Continuing education available to physicians and nurses

Instructions for course registration:
1. Go to www.aheceducation.com
2. Create a User Profile (located under username and password)
3. Click on Clinical Updates Category
4. Click Naegleria and Primary Amebic Meningoencephalitis
5. Add Course to Cart and Checkout
6. Course is free of charge when using Activation Code CU001
7. Take the Pre-Test and follow directions to view the Course
8. Complete the Post-Test and Evaluation
9. Print Certificate

Congratulations!

AHEC faculty and staff from Gulfcoast North AHEC, Gulfcoast South AHEC and the USF AHEC Program Office have been accepted to present the following at the National AHEC Organization Conference in Las Vegas this June:

Joan Beatty-Lee – From Dreams to Reality: An Early Start Required for Inspiring Youth Toward Health Careers
LaToya Clark, MPH – USF AHEC Health Professions Summer Academy: A Recipe for Success
Christina Mathis, MBA – Interdisciplinary Community Health Scholars: Creating a Tobacco Free Generation
Cynthia Selleck, DSN, Laurie Woodard, MD, & Stephanie Peters, MA – A Scholarly Concentration in Health Disparities: Impact on the Primary Care Physician Workforce
Giving the Gift of a Healthy Lifestyle

Maureen Guthke, MPH, CHES, CTTS

On February 13, 2010, Gulfcoast North AHEC (GNAHEC) and the Hillsborough County Health Department presented the Giving the Gift of a Healthy Lifestyle conference. Over 75 participants attended the half-day event held at the Hillsborough County Children's Board in Tampa. The event was held to raise awareness of and expand the use of Community Health Advisors (CHAs) within the community.

Over the past three years, the Hillsborough County Health Department has trained and supported Community Health Advisors to facilitate free support groups at community sites, faith-based organizations, and worksites for their Get into Fitness Today (GIFT) program. The GIFT program, developed by registered dietitians, registered nurses, and health educators, has successfully helped participants learn how to prevent and reduce obesity through the adoption of a healthy lifestyle.

Dr. Leslene Gordon, Director of the Health Promotion and Education Department, shared with the attendees of the conference her desire for a larger network of Community Health Advisors in the Tampa Bay area. She encouraged participants of the GIFT program to become CHAs and extended the invitation to other healthcare providers and community educators to adopt and refer community members to the program.

After a motivational presentation on how to maintain a healthy lifestyle from Pamela Paul, Weight Loss Coach with Kardia Solutions, a panel of speakers shared their experience of participating in the GIFT program and being a Community Health Advisor.

The day finished with three informative breakout sessions: Engaging the Community presented by Maureen Guthke from GNAHEC; GIFT Community Health Advisors presented by Barbara Roberts, Public Health Nutrition Consultant from the Hillsborough County Health Department; and Benefits of Using CHAs and GIFT presented by Emily Korsholt, Community Health Nurse also from the Hillsborough County Health Department.

Ms. Barbara Roberts thanked GNAHEC for the support and the opportunity to share information including the success of GIFT with those not only in the Tampa Bay area but in Central Florida as well. “The response was wonderful and we have had many other community members, as a result of the GIFT conference, express strong interest and take the steps to adopt GIFT in their communities.”

GNAHEC continues to collaborate with community based organizations, health departments and health centers that employ outreach workers, providing them with training, professional development and financial support opportunities. GNAHEC is dedicated to supporting the work of CHAs in an effort to provide culturally appropriate health promotion and disease prevention education for at-risk populations in medically underserved areas. For more up-to-date information on the GNAHEC CHA Program, and to learn how GNAHEC can assist your organization in health outreach activities in our five-county service area, please contact Maureen Guthke at 813.929.1000.

Primary Care Preceptor: Making a Difference

By Christina Mathis, MBA

Gulfcoast North AHEC’s (GNAHEC) mission is to enhance access to quality healthcare, particularly primary and preventive care, by improving the supply and distribution of healthcare professionals in medically underserved communities. One way that Gulfcoast North AHEC fulfills this mission is by arranging clinical rotations for health professions students that expose them to the opportunities and challenges of caring for the medically needy. GNAHEC aspires to locate preceptors who share the love of primary care with their students. Brian Shaub, DO, does just that.

Dr. Shaub’s desire to work with people began at a young age growing up in a rural town in Pennsylvania. When starting college, he thought he was going to be a schoolteacher. Soon he figured out that he wanted to care for people instead, quickly changed his major and was accepted to medical school at Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM). After completing his fourth year and looking for a change in scenery and weather, Dr. Shaub attended a residency program at Northside Hospital in Pinellas County. He has remained in Florida ever since.

Dr. Shaub began his career in private practice and realized that there was a vast amount of low-income patients who needed specialty care, but had limited resources. He learned about the Community Health Center system and when a position became available in Dade City, he applied and quickly became an Assistant Medical Director at Premier Community HealthCare Group, Inc. After three years, he continues to drive from Valrico daily because he enjoys working within a system which has extensive resources available for

Preceptor cont. next page…
A Career to Last a Lifetime

Gulfcoast North AHEC’s (GNAHEC) Health Career Expeditions are designed to recruit high school students from the West Central Florida area into health careers. In 2009, for the second year in a row, GNAHEC received a grant from the Florida Medical Clinic Foundation of Caring to conduct a Health Career Expedition in Pasco County. Thirty-five students from Pasco High School were selected to take part in this unique two-day experience to see first-hand the numerous careers they can choose from and how healthcare professionals are trained.

These students are blessed to be able to count on the leadership and experience of Jennifer Wilson, RN. Mrs. Wilson was born and raised in the state of Florida where she aspired to be a pediatrician or a pediatric nurse. While in high school, Jennifer served as an officer of the Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) organization and graduated from Pasco High School’s Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program in 1987. Continuing her professional development, she trained to be a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN). Working as an LPN for 10 years, she realized it was time to continue her education and became a Registered Nurse (RN) in 2005. Today, she is the clinical nursing instructor and the HOSA advisor for Pasco High School’s Health Academy. Mrs. Wilson shares with GNAHEC the common goal of inspiring students to choose a career in health.

During her first year at Pasco High School, Mrs. Wilson encouraged students to participate in the HOSA club - a powerful instructional tool that provides students with knowledge and experience to choose careers in healthcare and become leaders in the community. Three years ago, Pasco High School’s HOSA chapter had only one student qualified to attend the Florida State Leadership Conference. Now, with Mrs. Wilson’s passion to inspire our future health professionals and with GNAHEC’s assistance, the HOSA club has 32 members and seven of them will be competing at the 2010 State Leadership Conference in Orlando, April 8-11.

Currently, National HOSA has over 107,000 members in 47 states and Puerto Rico; of those, more than 10,300 are from Florida. This year, 1,800 members will be competing at the Orlando conference, including 13 members from Martha B. King Middle School in Manatee County where Joan Beatty-Lee, Youth Recruitment Coordinator from Gulfcoast South AHEC, has served as their technical advisor for the past three years. The students’ hard work and diligence have paid off immensely with their placements at the State leadership Conference. Best of luck to all of them!

It is with great leadership and excellent educational programs such as the Health Career Expeditions and HOSA that students learn to develop self-confidence, clinical skills and leadership qualities that enable them to choose a career to last a lifetime.

GNAHEC Receives Grant for Skin Cancer & Sun Safety Program

Gulfcoast North AHEC is pleased to announce that Moffitt will be providing funding to them to implement a Skin Cancer and Sun Safety program throughout Hillsborough County. As part of the program, GNAHEC will deliver the Sunwise (EPA Program) to third grade classrooms within Hillsborough County Public Schools. In partnership with Moffitt, GNAHEC will develop two 2-hour CME and CE programs for healthcare professionals and will also train health professional staff to conduct community-based outreach and medical assessments to the general public. In addition, GNAHEC will provide follow-up services within 30-90 days of the assessments. Thank you Moffitt for your commitment to sun safety and skin cancer prevention!
What is Workplace Violence?

By Charlene Chirillo, RN, BSN

We have all seen the headlines the past few months regarding the increase in workplace violence incidents. Whether it occurs at a military base, retail store or office building, we all need to be educated on the problem.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) defines workplace violence as “violence or the threat of violence against workers.” It can occur at or outside the workplace and can range from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and homicide.

Violence in the workplace is a serious safety and health issue. Its extreme form, homicide, is the fourth leading cause of fatal occupational injury in the United States. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), there were 564 workplace homicides in 2005 in the United States, out of 5,702 fatal work injuries. According to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), 2 million assaults and threats of violence against Americans at work occur annually.

OSHA warns that workplace violence can strike anywhere and no one is immune. Some workers, however, are at increased risk. Among them are workers who exchange money with the public; deliver passengers, goods or services; or work alone or in small groups during late night or early morning hours, in high crime areas, or in community settings and homes where they have extensive contact with the public. This group includes healthcare and social services workers.

A number of different actions in the work environment can trigger or cause workplace violence. It may be the result of non-work related situations such as domestic violence or “road rage.” Workplace violence can be inflicted by an abusive employee, manager, supervisor, or co-worker, customer, family member, or even a stranger.

There is no sure way to predict human behavior and while there may be warning signs, there is no specific profile of a potentially dangerous individual. Although nothing can guarantee that an employee will not become a victim of workplace violence, OSHA offers these steps to help reduce the odds:

- Learn how to recognize, avoid or diffuse potentially violent situations by attending personal safety training programs.
- Avoid traveling alone into unfamiliar locations or situations whenever possible.
- Carry only minimal money and required identification into community settings.
- Alert supervisors to any concerns about safety or security and report all incidents immediately in writing.

According to OSHA, the best protection employers can offer is to establish a zero-tolerance policy toward workplace violence against or by their employees. OSHA further recommends that employers should establish a workplace violence prevention program or incorporate the information into an existing accident prevention program, employee handbook, or manual of standard operating procedures. It is critical to insure that all employees know the policy and understand that all claims of workplace violence will be investigated and remedied promptly.

Gulfcoast South AHEC is committed to keeping our healthcare community partners safe and protected as they provide the much-needed medical services to our most challenging populations. They answered that call by providing the training, “Preventing Workplace Violence: Steps to Make Your Workplace Safer,” on March 26, 2010 at the Community Foundation of Sarasota County. The speaker, Retired Captain Stan Duncan, is a 29-year veteran of the Sarasota Police Department. In 2001, he won the Criminal Justice Officer of the Year award from the Florida Attorney General’s office, and is an FBI National Academy graduate.

GSAHEC’s 6th Annual Community Health Worker Conference

“I now know the importance of choosing foods with fewer calories,” noted one participant. “All presentations were helpful, with information that can be shared,” another commented.

GSAHEC’s 6th Annual Community Health Worker Conference, held February 27, 2010 at DaySpring Conference Center in Parrish, was a great success.

GSAHEC holds these conferences to recognize Community Health Workers (CHWs) who work hard to educate underserved community members in Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee and Sarasota counties on a variety of health topics and connect those in need to health and human services.

For a short day, the agenda was filled. First, we made time to share our success and hear from the various programs in our four county service area. Current projects, progress, greatest strengths, challenges and plans for the future were reviewed and discussed.

Next, we heard from Jill Collins, RD, Director of Nutrition Education at All Faiths Food Bank. In addition to providing an overview of services at the Food Bank, Jill offered the participants information on specific foods that reduce stress, help with sleep and improve heart health as well as provided time and money saving tips.

To end a nearly perfect day, Deidre Dingman, MPH, CHES, PAPHS, presented “What Does it Take to Change?” The goal of her presentation was to give tools to the participants to help them effectively motivate their clients, neighbors, family and friends to improve their health.

Many thanks to the presenters, CHWs, and community partners for another great conference. For more information about GSAHEC’s Community Health Worker Program, please contact Ansley Mora, Community Education Coordinator at 941.361.6602, or email amora@health.usf.edu.
King Middle School HOSA members are winners!

Congratulations to the Martha B. King Middle School members of Health Occupation Students of America (HOSA) on your awesome success at the HOSA Regionals competition!

8th Grade

Chelsea Stump 3rd place prepared speaking, 4th place first aid/rescue breathing
Desiree McDonald 4th place prepared speaking, 5th place career health display team
Merlin Gutierrez 3rd place HOSA creed contest, 5th place career health display team
Maria Cedano 1st place medical terminology, 5th place prepared speaking
Andre Sanchez 4th place extemporaneous writing, 4th place extemporaneous health poster
Emilie Jones 1st place first aid/rescue breathing, 3rd place medical terminology
Damaris Arias 2nd place HOSA creed contest
Emma Jones 2nd place medical terminology
Jennifer Zebracki 5th place extemporaneous writing

7th Grade

Katelyn Billy 4th place medical spelling, 5th place HOSA creed contest
Samantha Heikkila 4th place medical terminology
Nick Rambone 2nd place job seeking skills

Community Partner to the Core

By Ansley Mora

It’s clear from the moment you meet Eleanor Ball that this Sarasota native not only loves her community but also wants everyone in it to be sound and healthy. An educator and advocate for health awareness, Eleanor teaches a message of wellness and self-empowerment that crosses all boundaries of age and race.

As a program coordinator for the Newtown Wellness Program and director of church ministries for the 90-year-old Truvine Missionary Baptist Church in Newtown, a predominantly African American community in north Sarasota, Eleanor coordinates programs on health awareness and prevention and oversees the education ministries. For the past six plus years, Eleanor has coordinated Community Health Worker (CHW) programs in partnership with Gulfcoast South AHEC (GSAHEC) and other community-based organizations. She and her CHWs have provided countless hours of education, outreach, support and referrals to community members who need it most. Educational programs on cancer awareness (breast, prostate and cervical), chronic disease prevention (diabetes, cardiovascular) and tobacco prevention are provided.

When it comes to connecting, this community partner really goes the extra mile. Eleanor is always rallying GSAHEC and its programs. She is sure to provide a good showing for as many activities as possible. Her focus on the underserved has also crossed into youth development and for a second year Eleanor will be facilitating GSAHEC health careers summer camps in the Newtown area.

Eleanor graduated from River-View High School in Sarasota, earned her BS degree in food and nutrition from Tennessee State University and her MBA degree from Argosy University. For 32 years, Eleanor worked in various departments at Sarasota Memorial Hospital before retiring as a manager of hospitality services in 2005. Over the years, she became keenly aware of the need for health and wellness education in minority populations. Moreover, she has dedicated herself to becoming a one-woman source of scores of programs and information. “I’m venturing into overall life and quality of life issues,” the tireless Eleanor says. “This is just my life. It’s what I do and I enjoy it,” she explains. “When I worked, I worked really hard and then it was the time in my life for me to fly. I’ve been afforded such a great life and so many opportunities—I want to share and give back to others.” Eleanor thanks her late mother, Mattie Ball Sims, for teaching her a lesson that still resonates: “Do all the good you can to everyone you can for as long as you can—and that’s it.”

Thank you, Eleanor, for being such a wonderful friend and community partner, and for your dedication and support in improving the health of the underserved.
My Life: Serving the Medically Underserved

By Sherrilyn McSheehy, RN, Nurse Practitioner student, University of South Florida

Growing up in Rhode Island with my parents, five sisters and one brother, we lived in a low income neighborhood where dealing drugs and crime were the predominant professions; then, when I was ten, we moved to the country and maintained a small farm. In both the inner city and rural settings I was blessed to have had my medical needs met through community-based services. As I became an adult and continued to use the same services, I suddenly realized how fortunate I had been to receive such great care for myself as well as for my own four children. That was when I decided I was going to “give back” to the community in the form of medical services.

As a registered nurse, I have practiced for almost 18 years and have been blessed to work with children in pediatric intensive care, neonatal intensive care, and the emergency room. My interest and passion to care for and meet the needs of the underserved has strengthened as I have progressed toward my educational and professional goals. Moreover, mothers, adolescents, and children have become my focus - they are often the populations most underserved or lacking of additional services, yet often have the greatest needs.

In August 2010, I will graduate as a pediatric nurse practitioner from the University of South Florida College of Nursing. I would like to thank Gulfcoast South AHEC and the Desoto County Health Department for facilitating my community-based clinical placements in women’s health, pediatrics, and family medicine. My plan after graduation is to work in dual arenas of community health as well as private practice. I hope this way to maximize my clinical experience and knowledge while serving the populations I have come to care so much about - the undersized (children) and the underserved.

Sherrilyn McSheehy, RN