

METRO HEALTH



PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS, IDEAS, AND EVENTS IN THE CAPITAL REGION

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 2

SUMMER 2004

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MWPHA DISPARITIES COMMITTEE: ACTIONS TO DESTROY DISPARITIES (ADD)

By MWPHA Disparities Committee

The MWPHA Disparities Committee invites you to join our fight against racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic health disparities. We recognize that many factors influence our health, including poverty, political disenfranchisement, environmental issues, and the lack of access to medical care. The long and continuing history of differential treatment of black workers and immigrant groups results in the diminished health status we confront today. Since improving the conditions of those most hurt by poverty and racism improves living conditions for all people, we welcome individuals and organizations across all jurisdictions, racial/ethnic groups, and health issues to join us.

Our Vision and Strategy

MWPHA works to increase awareness of these disparities and to take joint action to fight racism in health status in the metropolitan Washington area.

Our objectives are to:

- *Increase awareness of the social determinants of health* and their contribution to health disparities.
- *Train participating organizations and individuals* on the use of the social determinants of health framework.
- *Increase individual and organizational voices* in this effort through collaboration across our region, racial/ethnic groups, and health concerns.

To achieve these objectives, our 12-member committee meets monthly to discuss issues and plan activities. **To increase awareness**, we have prepared position papers and leaflets, created a slide presentation on the social determinants of health, developed an exhibit displaying the historical and sociopolitical forces that influence health status, administered a survey about health disparities, and participated in several health fairs, including those at Congress Heights Health Center, the Black Family Reunion*, the Health Action Forum of Prince George's County, and Frontiers International. In July, we sponsored two presentations on HIV prevention given by Metro TeenAIDS to young people at the Glenarden Apartments Community Center in Landover, Maryland, and the Washington-Highlands Library in Southwest DC.

To train organizations and people in using a social determinist framework, we designed an interactive exercise called *Bernard's Story*, which tells the life story of a young man who develops HIV that provokes a discussion about the social causes of

(Continued on page 6)

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Support MWPHA!

MWPHA wishes to thank our members and friends who made cash contributions over the past two years. Increasing our base of contributors is an important part of our sustainability as an organization. Also, foundations and other funders typically expect organizations to demonstrate that their members and stakeholders contribute to the revenues of the organization.

As the 2004 tax year draws to a close, please consider making a tax-exempt contribution to MWPHA. Make checks payable to MWPHA and mail to P.O. Box 4843, Washington, DC 20008.

Thanks to the contributors to the Hyman Scholarship Fund who made it possible for MWPHA to award several scholarships to future public health workers.

Joyce Abram
Mildred Brooks-McDow
Linda Green
Barbara Guest
Lorraine James
Barbara Hatcher
Mary McCall
Henry Montes
Pat O'Malley
Karyn Pomerantz
Irene Sandvold

Thanks to the following for their contributions to the general fund or to special projects:

Mel Bergheim
Mildred Brooks-McDow
Lois Gray
Linda Green
Barbara Guest
Lorraine James
Barbara Hatcher
Sylvia Quinton
Sandra Land
Frank Ludin
PJ Maddox
Marcia Marks
Mary McCall
Henry Montes
Karyn Pomerantz

And in addition to cash contributions, many of our governing council members and others have made substantial contributions of supplies, materials and in-kind services, all of which help to hold down the costs of the annual conference, newsletter, Web site and activities.

WALK THE HILL FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

November 9, 2004

By Mary McCall, Affiliate Representative to APHA

On Tuesday November 9, thousands of public health workers attending APHA's 132nd Annual Meeting will be walking the halls of Capitol Hill to tell Congress, **it's time to make public health funding a national priority!**

Increasingly, the health of the US population is at risk. Without additional resources for a continuum of public health research, prevention, treatment and training programs, our nation's public health system will not be able to respond adequately to existing and emerging health threats. APHA's public health hill day will start with a rally at Upper Senate Park on Capitol Hill at 8:30 am. After the rally, we will walk the halls of Capitol Hill with state delegations distributing our message to legislators and their staff.

To make this hill day a success we need your participation!

Register to participate in the rally and hill day at <http://www.apha.org/legislative/walkhill/signup/>. A solid representation is absolutely necessary to help convince Congress on the importance of public health.

November is a critical time to advance our key issues to national policymakers. Both mandatory and discretionary public health budgets for the upcoming year face grossly inadequate allocations. Currently, appropriations for the CDC, HRSA, and other federal agencies stand to be either flat-funded or cut, despite the urgent need to greatly expand resources for disease prevention, wellness promotion, and safety preparedness in communities nationwide. Reduced expenditures on these essential programs both deprive and undermine the public health community's ability to improve the health outcomes of the American public.

Walking the halls of Capitol Hill on November 9 provides an excellent opportunity for us to address these shortcomings in both chambers of Congress. Because many senators and representatives are not fully aware of the implications of insufficient public health spending, much can be gained from using our experience and expertise to directly educate them and their staff. Our actions have the potential to both influence this year's legislation, and send a clear, strong public health message to incumbents and newly elected members of the 109th Congress.

For more information visit the Walk the Hill for Public Health at <http://www.apha.org/legislative/walkhill/index.htm> or contact Lakitia Mayo, Director of Grassroots Advocacy, at lakitia.mayo@apha.org or by telephone at 202/777-2515.

COME BY MWPHA BOOTH #1360!

The APHA Annual Meeting will be held in Washington, DC, November 6-10, 2004 at the new Convention Center. MWPHA will co-host an exhibit booth at the upcoming APHA Annual Meeting with both Maryland and Virginia public health associations. Since MWPHA is the local public health association in the city where the annual meeting is being held, APHA has made the booth available free of charge to us, and we intend to make the most of this opportunity for visibility and recruitment. There will be plenty of room for handouts and information to give out, and we will be featuring the tabletop exhibit developed by the Disparities Committee.

Come look for us at Booth #1360. Better still, sign up for a few hours to staff the booth. It's a great way to meet people and to help MWPHA grow. By the time this goes to press, we will have a sign up schedule available – watch the listserv or call Clare Feinson, 202/667-4701, or Sylvia Joice, 202/291-8839, for more information.

MWPHA Contracts for its Program Manager position through CHF grant

*By Personnel Committee of MWPHA Governing Council**

Earlier this year MWPHA received a \$25,000 grant from the Consumer Health Foundation (*see MWPHA summer 2004 newsletter*) to create a program of public health advocacy in the metropolitan Washington region. Through this advocacy effort the Consumer Health Foundation grant supports the organizational infrastructure of the MWPHA to enable it to develop an outreach program, and support the linkages of MWPHA's Governing Council with the membership through its committee structure, and in bolstering its membership.



*Nisha N. Branch,
MWPHA Program Manager*

MWPHA welcomes **Nisha N. Branch** as Program Manager. Ms. Branch has contracted with MWPHA on a half time basis to carry out the goals of its advocacy efforts. She is a candidate in the MPH program with a concentration in Epidemiology at George Washington University (GWU). Her undergraduate major is in psychology from the University of Virginia. A native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, her paid and volunteer experiences have been at the Children's National Medical Center, Washington, DC. Ms. Branch previously worked as a clinical research associate at the St. Christopher's Hospital for Children in Philadelphia, PA. She recently concluded a consulting contract with the National Association of Community Health Centers where she was a research associate involved in grant writing, literature reviews and searches, and assisting the association with conference planning. At GWU School of Public Health and Health Services (SPHHS), Ms. Branch is the executive board vice president of the Public Health Student Association. She is also the student body representative to the SPHHS Web Re-Design Task Force. Her volunteer work has been with children with sickle cell disease and Hodgkin's disease. Her interests include health disparities and research in the cancers affecting children.

The Consumer Health Foundation is a philanthropic membership organization that was established in 1994 and is dedicated to improving the health status of area communities of Washington, DC—particularly the most vulnerable members of those communities. It supports activities that enable people to be more actively involved in their own health. Consumer Health Foundation has been a champion in fostering the development of small grassroots health-focused organizations.

MWPHA, a member organization and Affiliate of the American Public Health Association, has been in operation since 1963. It currently has a membership of 150 public health professionals and others interested in public health. MWPHA has long been involved in grassroots advocacy, legislative work, and education in public health promotion and prevention. Its structure consists of the governing council with its officers and standing and ad hoc committees that have both members and potential members working on issues according to the MWPHA Strategic Plan.

The Program Manager, Nisha N. Branch will be working with MWPHA committees involved in public health outreach, health disparities, and policy and advocacy. In addition she will be involved in membership recruitment and retention, and legislative activity concerning health issues in the metropolitan Washington area.

**Members of Personnel Committee of MWPHA Governing Council are:*

Lois Gray, Barbara Guest, Mary Kornak, Henry Montes, Rochelle Rollins, Sam Seeman

MWPHA AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS TO LOCAL COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS TO ATTEND 2004 APHA ANNUAL MEETING

By MWPHA/APHA Scholarship Committee

MWPHA congratulates its 2004 APHA scholarship awardees:

- Evelyn Ramos, medical interpreter with La Clinica del Pueblo in the District of Columbia
- Thomas Pruski, SHARE Health Project Coordinator with the SHARE Food Network program in Prince George's County
- Rosa Lidia Fernandez, health promoter with the Latino Health Initiative of Vias de la Salud in Silver Spring

The MWPHA APHA Scholarship Committee joined the Public Health/Health Administration Section of the Medical Library Association and the Community Health Workers Special Primary Interest Group of APHA to secure funding and select the successful candidates. Scholarships will support conference costs for health sciences librarians and community health workers attending and presenting at APHA. The scholarship program honors and supports their work, and recognizes the necessity to embrace all people working to improve public health.

MWPHA thanks the Harold and Grace Sewell Trust for this support and committee members Henry Montes, Linda Green, Kay Eilbert, Barbara Guest, Karyn Pomerantz, and Mary Villedrouin.

BECOME A COMMUNITY HEALTH ADVOCATE FOR D.C. !

By Sam Seeman

Members of MWPHA are aware of the disparities in health status that seriously affect the residents of the District of Columbia. The Community Health Indicators hold the story, but the story needs to be told, needs to be conveyed, needs to be gotten out. to the people in the city. Examples:

- Annual incidence of AIDS, 10 times the U.S. rate
- Cases of gonorrhea, 6 times the U.S. rate
- Incidence of tuberculosis, nearly three times the U.S. rate
- Teen-age births, twice the U.S. rate
- Diabetes deaths among African Americans at twice the rate for whites.

MWPHA is organizing a program to achieve the objective of conveying a message to the residents, and you can help. A working group has developed the tools, and you can help put the tools to work.

We have prepared a PowerPoint presentation, backed up by a pamphlet and a data sheet. These tools make it possible to reach residents of the District with two simple but important messages:

- You can do something to protect your health and prevent illness, and here are the measures you need to follow.
- You can become an advocate for better community health in D.C., and here is what you can do.

We have the tools – the PowerPoint file with the projector and the pamphlets that the audience can take home. We need community advocates who can deliver the message.

Join us in this significant effort to advocate for prevention and improve health in D.C. We will provide the tools and the training. If you can present the message to any number of groups in the city, join us. Call Sam Seeman, chairperson of the effort, at 301-681-5017, or e-mail at samseeman@starpower.net.

CUA School of Nursing Awarded Grant to Educate Community Nursing Teachers

By Eileen Sarsfield

The Catholic University of America School of Nursing will recruit and prepare more teachers for the nursing profession, through a new **\$788,000 grant** from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Division of Nursing. The grant proposal scored 96 out of 100 possible points from the funding committee.

The Community/Public Health Nurse Specialist Educator Program seeks to improve the quality of health care for the vulnerable and underprivileged by preparing more nursing educators to teach nursing students at community colleges and universities and to offer staff development in hospitals and outpatient/community clinics.

The program prepares community/public health specialists for a blended role, as nurses and as teachers, and will begin accepting new students this fall. The master's level program, open to students who already hold bachelor's degrees in nursing, could be completed in two years of full-time study. In addition to classroom work at Catholic University, students will be placed with faculty for practicum experience at Columbia Union College, George Mason University, Marymount University, Northern Virginia Community College, Prince George's Community College, University of the District of Columbia, Howard University and several local community hospitals and clinics including Children's National Medical Center, Bread for the City, Christ House, and So Others Might Eat.

"We're very excited about this program," said Sister Rosemary Donley, grant director. "It fits perfectly with our mission of service, as we prepare people to teach others to care for the most vulnerable people in our society: the uninsured, immigrants, those with sexually transmitted and other communicable diseases, and homeless people who are often mentally ill or suffer from addiction," added Sister Donley.

For more information regarding this program, please contact grant manager Eileen Sarsfield at 202/319-5502 or (toll-free) 1/866-531-4053.

Health Disparities (Continued from page 1)

disease and health, and possible solutions. The committee presented *Bernard's Story* at the Northwest Settlement House, George Washington University's School of Public Health and Health Services, and the Glenarden Apartments Community Center.

To increase collaborations that address health disparities, committee members work with other organizations that strive to improve living and social conditions that ultimately influence health outcomes. We work with *Jobs with Justice* to win better working conditions and health benefits for workers; *Latino Health Initiative* to improve the health of Latino residents in Montgomery County, MD; *Metro TeenAIDS* to prevent HIV among the area's young people; and *Health Information Partners* (HIPS) to bring reliable health information to our region.

This fall, the committee will organize a forum about the relationships between public health and labor struggles, and return to Glenarden Apartments to meet again with teens and families. On October 16th, the committee will participate in the Metro workers' union conference, "What Creates Social Change?" to raise health issues. From this conference, we will develop a plan to focus our efforts to improve health conditions for all.

* Article by Daisy Hannah, MWPHA member, in MWPHA Summer 2004 newsletter

Thanks and appreciation to MWPHA Disparities Committee members:

Mackenzie Baris
Gayle Bernabe
Jacquelyn A. Brown,
Kay Eilbert (founding chair)
Linda Green, Bob Griss,
Tarsha McCrae (co-chair)
Nancy Lin, Eduardo Pezo,
Karyn Pomerantz (co-chair)
Howard Straker
Nekose Wills.

Call 202/416-0408 to get involved.

RENEW YOUR MWPHA MEMBERSHIP OR BECOME A MEMBER

YES! I would like to join MWPHA/renew my membership
(Please delete that which is not applicable)

Enclosed is a completed acceptance form and a check made payable to MWPHA.

Date: _____

Annual Membership Fee is (Circle one) :

	<u>Regular Member</u>	<u>Retired or Student</u>
One Year: _____	\$30	\$25
Two Years: _____	\$50	\$40

APHA Member: ___ Yes ___ No

Primary Section: _____

Tax-deductible Contribution: _____

Total Enclosed: _____

Name: _____

Degree(s): _____

Employer: _____

Areas of Expertise: _____

Areas of Interest: _____

Mailing Address:

No. and Street _____

City _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work phone: _____

Fax number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Please send check to :

MWPHA, P.O.Box 4843, Washington, DC 20008

DONT FORGET TO CHECK OUR WEBSITE www.mwpha.org to learn what Committees you might want to join.

MWPHA MEMBERSHIP MEETING in MAY

By Barbara H. Guest

MWPHA held its Annual Membership Meeting in May 2004 at the Summer School in Washington D.C. The meeting agenda consisted of the annual reports of the President, MWPHA Standing and Ad Hoc Committees of 1993-1994 activities. The new officers for 2004-2005 and Governing Council members were introduced to the membership.

Vickie L. Shavers, Ph.D., was the invited speaker for the continuing education lecture entitled, *Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Colorectal, Oral and Breast Cancer Diagnosis: Treatment and Outcomes*. Dr. Shavers is an epidemiologist at the National Cancer Institute where she focuses on health disparities and health services research. Her research includes studies that examine factors that impede African American participation in medical research studies, access to care and its influence on behavioral risks, the relationship between obesity and SES among African-Americans, and racial/ethnic disparities in the receipt of cancer treatment. The findings of her research point up the need to address health disparities in prevention research and treatment.

WANTED

New members to join the
MWPHA Development Committee to work on grant applications, events and other revenue generating efforts.
We welcome your ideas!

Contact Mary-Frances Kormak,
Chair, at 202/442-9394
or mkornak@aol.com



PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS, IDEAS, AND
EVENTS IN THE CAPITAL REGION

P.O. Box 4843, Cleveland Park Station, Washington, D.C. 20009

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER 6-10

2004 APHA Annual Meeting

132nd Annual Meeting-
"Public Health and the Environment", Washington, DC
Details on www.apha.org/meetings/highlights.htm

NOVEMBER 5-7

SOPHE Annual Meeting

Society for Public Health Education
55th Annual Meeting-
"The Power and Influence of Health Education: Promot-
ing Monumental Change", Washington, DC
Details in www.sophe.org or call 202/408-9804

2005

MARCH 12-14

**8th Annual Health Education
Advocacy Summit**

Sponsored by the Coalition of National
Health Education Organizations
Details in www.healtheducationadvocate.org or
call 202/408-9804

MWPHA Seeking NEW Governing Council Members and Officers for 2005-2006

MWPHA is seeking members to serve
on the Nominating Committee for the
Governing Council, as well as on the
Governing Council.

If interested please contact Lois Gray,
MWPHA president, at sociomet@aol.com.

MWPHA will post a roster of available
positions, prepared by the Nominating
Committee, on our website and listserv by
the end of December.