


METRO HEALTH

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

SPRING 2008

Letter From the President ...

Dear MWPCHA Members:

I enjoy following all of the announcements and meetings discussed on our MWPCHA listserv as we share information and opportunities with each other. This strengthens our MWPCHA member community and provides us with an opportunity to communicate more quickly and effectively than ever before. On that note, see the great article submitted by MWPCHA member, **Andre Blackman** about “Next Generation Health” that discusses how public health and health communication can benefit from new media advances like the internet, text messaging, and social media marketing.

If you have not done so already, **sign up today for our Annual Conference!** See the flyer on page 4 in this newsletter. Our Annual Conference will be held April 15th at the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC. The theme of this year’s conference is “The Triple Threat: HIV, Substance

Abuse, and Mental Illness—Building Public Advocacy”.

I would like to thank all of you who took the time to respond to our call for Governing Council nominations, by-laws vote, and call for award nominations. Your participation in these processes is important to this association.

Finally, take some time this week to go for a short walk or spend some time meditating at your desk. Our physical and mental health are just as important as those we work to help.

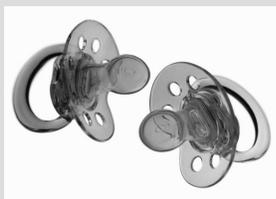
See you on April 15!



Ann Horton, M.S.
MWPCHA President

MWPCHA Elections

It is that time of year again when we elect new Governing Council members. Thank you to everyone who nominated a colleague (or yourself!) for this year’s election. You should have received a ballot by mail. If you did not, please contact Mary Kornak, Immediate Past President and Chair of the Nominations Committee, at mkornak@aol.com. **Ballots are due by April 5th.** Please return them in the envelope provided. And remember to vote for only 4 new Governing Council members. Thanks for your participation in our election process!



Congratulations Tia Younger!!!

Congratulations to Governing Council member Tia Younger (and her husband) who just had twins! The family is happy and healthy and we look forward to meeting our two future MWPCHA members. Tia is taking maternity leave from her role as Membership Co-Chair for MWPCHA during this time.

2008 MWPCHA Governing Council

Ann Horton, MS, President
annahorton@starpower.net

Linda Green, MD, Vice President
Chair, Annual Conference
green_linda@hotmail.com

Erica Stuart Schlosser, Secretary
ericaschlosser@gmail.com

Jared Shenk, Treasurer
shenkje@gmail.com

Mary-Frances Kornak, MPH, Immediate Past President
mkornak@aol.com

Clare Feinson, JD, MPH
CFeinson@erols.com

Hope Ferdowsian, MD, MPH
Chair, Legislative Affairs
hferdowsian@washingtonccr.org

Lorraine T. James, MA, RN
ljames@cnmc.org

Tarsha McCrae, MPH, CHES
Chair, Communications
mccraet@mail.nih.gov

Karyn L. Pomerantz, MLS, MPH
Chair, Health Disparities
kpomeran@gwu.edu

Ana Maria Puente, RN, MPH
Co-Chair, Membership
ambridge06@aol.com

Caroline Sparks, PhD
ihochs@gwumc.edu

Maranda Ward, MPH
wmaranda@hotmail.com

Tia Younger
Co-Chair, Membership
tiayounger@yahoo.com

Inside this Issue

Letter from the President	1
2008 MWPCHA Governing Council	2
Member article: <i>Next Generation Health</i>	3
National Public Health Week National Public Health Week Toolkit Available	3
New Documentary Series on Health Inequalities Launches	3
Public Health Calendar	3
Register Now! 2008 Annual Meeting Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association	4
National Human Genome Center Workshops	5
SOPHE Midyear Conference	5
Student Advocacy Group Updates Advocating for Menu Labeling in Washington DC Take Action! Save Lives: Free the Condoms	6-7

Honorary Lifetime Governing Councilor

Sam Seeman
samseeman@comcast.net

Please Consider MWPCHA When Making Your Charitable Contributions this Year

MWPCHA is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and we depend on the generous contributions of our donors to continue our work improving the public health of our community. To make an investment in our future, please go to our web site www.mwpha.org and make a secure online donation, or mail your tax-deductible check to: PO Box 4843 Cleveland Park Station, Washington, DC 20008.

Thank you for your support!

National Public Health Week

Communities across the country are gearing up for National Public Health Week 2008, April 7-13. The week marks an opportunity to celebrate the many contributions public health makes to creating safer, healthier communities. Join us this year as we focus especially on making the connection between the way we lead our lives, our impact on the planet and the planet's impact on our health.

National Public Health Week Toolkit Available

Now is a great time to get involved with this year's National Public Health Week (NPHW) from April 7-13 and to start planning events in your community to highlight the connection between climate change and health. The NPHW toolkit and planning materials are now available online to guide you in planning events in your state, city or local community. In the toolkit, you'll find fact sheets, media outreach materials, suggested community events and much more. It has everything you need to get started and plan a successful NPHW event!

You can also sign up to partner with APHA and get the word out about your NPHW events by posting them to the online calendar. And don't forget to make your voice heard by commenting on the topics posted each week on the NPHW blog. To learn more about NPHW, please visit www.nphw.org or contact Kaitlin Sheedy at kaitlin.sheedy@apha.org or (202) 777-2432.

New Documentary Series on Health Inequalities Launches

Unnatural Causes, a four-hour series premiering on PBS on March 27th, examines America's socio-economic and racial inequities in health and searches for root causes. Learn more about the series at www.unnaturalcauses.org.

Public Health Calendar

Upcoming trainings, conferences and other public health events can be posted to the APHA Public Health Calendar by visiting www.apha.org/programs/pubhealthcalendar/.

Next Generation Health

By Andre M. Blackman*

Who's happy that the weather is warming up? I know I am! Something about sunshine and getting fresh air does wonders for the mind and body.

Before you run outside to enjoy that fresh air, I wanted to talk about a passion of mine and I believe it will revolutionize the way we deal with health. That passion is something many of us engage with on a daily basis—the Internet; more specifically, the emerging **social** aspects of the Internet. For those of you not familiar with the term *social media*, let me give a brief description. Social media or new media, has to do with the relatively recent advances in the ways we are able to communicate with each other online. It consists of elements such as blogs, social networks (Myspace, Facebook), and user-generated videos (YouTube, Viddler).

Those new online social tools have completely changed how we interact with each other. Now, with social online communities that are geared toward individuals battling cancer, mental illness or diabetes (www.diabetesmine.com)—the online world has effectively become a well respected and genuine place to connect with like-minded individuals and share information. It is now possible to collaborate with other public health professionals who share your same interests, even if you all are in different parts of the world! Think about the ideas that can be generated, the networking opportunities and the friends that can be made!

Let me ask you a question—the public health/health education industry is about who? Answer: the

(Continued on page 8)



REGISTER NOW!
2008 Annual Meeting
Metropolitan Washington Public
Health Association

The Triple Threat:
HIV, Substance Use, & Mental Illness
Building Public Health Advocacy

Date: Tuesday, April 15, 2008
Time: 8:30AM to 4:30PM
Location: Westminster Presbyterian Church, 400 I St SW, Washington, DC 20024
Limited Parking—Waterfront SEU Metro Green Line



Program

The program will include keynote speakers, panel presentations on “best practices” for HIV prevention and care, and workshops to plan campaigns focused on the important social determinants of disease: **Housing, Jobs, Substance Abuse Treatment, and Youth Education.**

Keynote Speakers

H. Westley Clark, MD, JD, MPH, Director, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration

Shannon L. Hader, MD, MPH, Director, HIV/AIDS Administration, DC Department of Health



Fees

\$20 for members; \$25 for nonmembers; \$15 for students; \$10 for people earning less than \$30,000 per year



Sponsorship Opportunities

Co-sponsored with DC Fights Back, the National Capital Area Chapter of the Society for Public Health Educators, the MidAtlantic Public Health Training Center, GW Public Health Alumni Association, Metro Teen AIDS, Howard University Center for Urban Progress, and The Wright Group.



If you are interested in sponsorship or getting a letter from MWPCHA to submit to your organizational leaders, contact Ann Horton today at annhorton@starpower.net.

Now available on the MWPCHA web site, www.mwpha.org:

- Online Registration
- Applications for Public Health Scholarship Opportunities
- Poster Presentation Forms
- Exhibitors' Applications
- Public Health Award Nominations

CEUs available for nurses, health educators, and social workers.



Volunteer Opportunities

We need your ideas, your energy, and your time! Contact our conference chair, Linda Green, at 301-618-3371, green_linda@hotmail.com.



National Human Genome Center Workshops

Having a health fair or community event? Want to increase health awareness of your congregation? Concerned about the information on genetics and health you hear in the news? Contact us!!

The National Human Genome Center at Howard University has been busy developing genetics education materials for the African American adults in the Metro Washington DC area. Our materials contain information on family health history, genetics, race and health. The purpose of this project is to increase the knowledge and awareness to the African American community regarding genetics and health.

We would like to conduct a 1.5 hour workshop with your church group or organization. During the workshop we will give a 20-30 minute presentation on family health history and have a 20-30 minute discussion about race, genetics, and health. The other time will be reserved for registration, and collecting consent forms and questionnaires. There is no risk to participate and no information will be revealed without consent from the individual. Incentives will be provided to all persons who participate at the end of the presentation.

The workshops will begin in March and run through May 2008. The presentations can be held during the day, evenings, and weekends. This workshop is for churches and other organizations within the Metro Washington DC area including surrounding counties of Prince George's and Montgomery counties.

This project is sponsored by grant# U33MC00157 from the March of Dimes Foundation and the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA).

Please contact Valerie Hill at 1-866-455-0501 to set up a date and time for your presentation. Also visit our website at www.genomecenter.howard.edu/community/welcome.htm.

This project cannot be a success without you.

SOPHE Midyear Conference

May 21–24 in Chicago

The Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) takes on the windy city of Chicago as this year's host to its 25th Midyear Scientific Conference, *Harnessing the Winds of Change: Learning from our Past to Build Our Future*, May 21–24, 2008, at the Renaissance Chicago Hotel.

This year's conference focuses on the subthemes of transformative practices in health education, skill building for the future, innovations in health education research, and ethics, values, and philosophies in health education. Among the featured speakers are **Noreen M. Clark, PhD**, Myron E. Wegman Distinguished University Professor, University of Michigan; **Ronald M. Davis, MD**, President of the American Medical Association; **Jeffrey Goldhagen, MD, MPH**, Associate Professor of Pediatrics, University of Florida/Jacksonville; **Ronald Labonte, PhD**, Canada Research Chair in Globalization and Health Equity, University of Ottawa; and **Stephen K. Siemens**, motivational speaker and founder, Siemens People. Another unique feature will be Discourse and Dialogue sessions addressing the "hottest" topics in health education.

As a meeting participant, you can engage in 5 skill-building workshops as part of the program, 4 plenary sessions, and 20 concurrent sessions that tackle an extensive range of health education issues. Pre-conference workshops will also be available to those interested in obtaining credits for CHES. In addition, the meeting will feature **Exhibits, Silent Auction, Roundtables, and student scholarship opportunities**. You can also take advantage of the optional tours around the city of Chicago during the Memorial Day holiday weekend.

Conference registration and exhibiting information is now available on the SOPHE website at www.sophe.org. **Pre-Registration deadline is April 25, 2008**. For additional information, please contact SOPHE at 202-408-9804.

Student Advocacy Group Updates

Advocating for Menu Labeling in Washington DC

A group of graduate students at The George Washington University's School of Public Health have created **DC Voices for MEAL Choices** (DVMC), a new committee under the Metro Washington Public Health Association advocating for menu labeling in Washington DC. DVMC is actively encouraging DC residents to contact their lawmakers to support the MEAL Act as a measure to protect the health of DC residents.

The DC MEAL Act stands for the DC Menu Education and Labeling Act. The bill, introduced by Council member Phil Mendelson, would require restaurants with 10 or more locations nationwide to post nutrition information on menus or menu boards. Calories, grams of saturated, grams of trans fat, grams of carbohydrates and milligrams of sodium would have to be available to customers at the time of purchase.

Efforts to implement point-of-sale menu labeling at chain restaurants are increasing throughout the United States. Introduction of legislation at both the state and local levels has occurred across the country. New York City, King County, Washington, and San Francisco have enacted menu labeling. Menu labeling legislation has been introduced into the DC City Council on three occasions beginning in 2003. Such legislation has yet to receive a hearing from the Committee on Health and therefore has not yet been presented to the council as a whole.

DC Voices for MEAL Choices held an informational meeting on February 21, 2008, at the George Washington University's School of Public Health for individuals interested in helping with upcoming events.

Throughout the spring of 2008, DVMC will continue to meet with council members, staff and Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs) to determine their level of support for menu labeling. Additionally, DVMC will continue collecting letters of support, meeting with opposing groups,



holding coalition meetings, contacting local restaurants to find out their views about this legislation, promoting positive coverage of menu labeling and encouraging community members to write letters to the editor.

DVMC is planning another "eat-in" during National Public Health Week on April 7, 2008, during which committee members will display foods from local restaurants and quiz passersby on the calorie and fat content of the items. Check www.dcvoicesformealchoices.org for more details.

Take Action!

Here are some of the ways you can help:

- Write a letter to your DC Council member, sign our online petition at www.petitiononline.com/DVMC/petition.html or send us an email at dcvoicesformealchoices@gmail.com to show your support.

- Help us find out if restaurant owners in DC know about menu labeling, the MEAL Act, or DVMC. Just pick a restaurant in Washington DC and ask the owner the following five questions:

Restaurant Name:

Owners name and contact information:

1. Do you know what menu labeling is and what it entails?
 2. Do you know the nutritional information of the food in your restaurant?
 3. Are you aware of the MEAL Act?
 4. Do you know what the MEAL Act requires restaurants to do?
 5. Do you support this bill being passed in DC? If yes, would you consider being one of the first restaurants to do this voluntarily? If not, why don't you? What parts of the bill don't you support?
- Do you have any media contacts? Are you interested in writing an op-ed or letter to the editor in favor of menu labeling to our local paper?
 - Do you want to help us during our "eat-in" event during National Public Health Week?
 - Do you want to go to the offices of the DC City council with DVMC as we hand them our support letters and petition directly?

If you are interested in helping us in any of these ways, send us an email at dcvoicesformealchoices@gmail.com. For more information, go to www.dcvoicesformealchoices.org.

Save Lives: Free the Condoms



In a 2006 survey, Save Lives found that in 22 of the 50 CVS stores in DC condoms were under lock and key, creating a significant barrier for customers trying to buy them.

Customers either have to ask a cashier for assistance or push a button to send an announcement over the store's intercom. The stores with locked condoms were overwhelmingly located

in minority neighborhoods where the HIV/AIDS rates were the highest.

In response, we launched a public campaign to persuade CVS—the largest drugstore in America and the dominant chain in the District—to stop restricting condom access in all DC communities. In 2007, our campaign was successful and CVS agreed to unlock condoms in the District. A follow-up survey, however, found that not all stores were compliant and that other problems, including poorly stocked shelves and broken racks, were widespread. On World AIDS Day, we held a protest in front of the CVS on Georgia Avenue which was still did not provide available access to condoms. Within an hour of our protest, Save Lives achieved success when the store unlocked their condoms. In the past six months, we have faxed CVS over 200 letters from consumers demanding that CVS unlock condoms in their stores. We have distributed over 2,500 condoms in the District of Columbia.

Recently, we have gathered information that CVS also locks up condoms in other cities around the country such as Detroit, Los Angeles, New York City, Baltimore and Miami. And similar to the patterns we observed in the District, the CVS stores with restricted access in these cities are overwhelmingly located in minority neighborhoods.

CVS's primary drugstore competition—Walgreens and Rite Aid—already have policies against condom lockup in place.

Save Lives is now in the process of building a nationwide coalition base in the aforementioned affected areas. We are also continuing our aggressive negotiations with as many CVS executive officers and board members as possible. CVS continues to ignore the public's demands. Save Lives will also present at the MWPHA's annual conference on April 15th.

Save Lives: Free the Condoms coalition is fighting to improve condom access for everyone because condoms are a proven and effective method for preventing unwanted pregnancy and the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases like HIV.

Next Generation Health (*continued from page 3*)

people. Messages that help reduce the risk of diabetes, prevent the transmission of HIV and even educate the next generation of superstar health professionals, can all be created and disseminated in the online spaces. I believe if more people in the health world took a serious look at harnessing the resources (and increasingly user focused) aspects of the Web and social media, we would see prolific benefits and long lasting results. So go ahead and start exploring—the opportunities are out there!

Andre M. Blackman (andre.blackman@gmail.com) is a local resident of the Washington DC area. He is also a blogger and writes at mindofandre.wordpress.com, which focuses on the intersection of health and emerging technology such as Web 2.0 and social media. He currently works at New Media Strategies, a social media consulting agency (www.newmediastrategies.net).

* Member articles do not necessarily represent the views of MWPHA.

CALLING FOR ARTICLES!!

You are welcome to submit for publication in the MWPHA newsletter any new or previously-published articles on public health in the DC metropolitan area. Just e-mail them to info@mwpha.org.

Share Your Good News

We want to support our MWPHA colleagues who are presenting at APHA! Submit your poster or presentation information to info@mwpha.org and we will send out a master schedule on the MWPHA listserv. Also, let us know news about you for inclusion in our next newsletter!

- Recent awards
- New jobs
- Promotions
- Conference presentations
- Lectures given
- Achievements

**Send your updates to
info@mwpha.org today!**