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### “Emergency Preparedness”

#### Are Community Health Centers Ready to Answer the Call?



Attendees listen closely to the CREST presentation

Clinical management staff from community health centers across Arizona participated in the Critical Response and Emergency Systems Training (CREST) on Monday February 19, 2007. The session “*Answering the Call in Arizona, Health and Emergency Medical Preparedness and Response*” was presented during the Annual Meeting. The Association’s Clinical Program provides continuous trainings to health center staff to help increase the effectiveness and delivery of quality medical care.

The four module course, presented by Dr. J. Scott Lowry, Medical Director, provided core information for all health and emergency response professionals. The curriculum was a mixture of lecture and audience discussion activities. The training prepared staff to

recognize terror incidents, rapidly and effectively alert the public health system of terrorist or natural incidents, and locate local resources. All participants received 4.5 continuing education credits.

*CREST is sponsored by the University of Arizona-College of Medicine at The Arizona Health Sciences Center*



A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER PROVIDED BY:

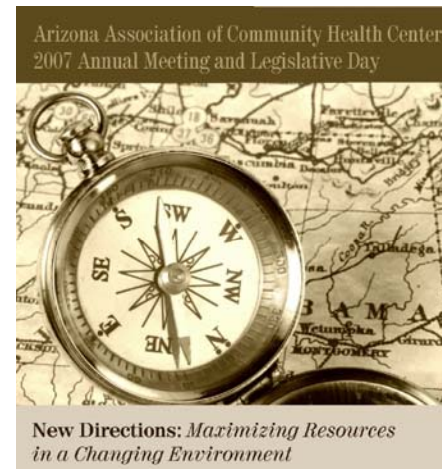
ARIZONA ASSOCIATION OF  
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS



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### Annual Meeting Brings Federal and State Policymakers, Award Recipients, Clinical, and Board Educational Sessions



The Association’s Annual Meeting convened February 19-20, 2007, to a host of speakers and educational sessions all focused on the need to increase access to healthcare services in Arizona. In addition, Association awards were presented for Leadership and Distinguished Service to two long serving members of the Association Board of Directors and an Award of Appreciation was presented to a former leader of the Arizona Department of Health Services.

More than 120 attendees at the Monday lunch listened intently to the remarks of Harry E. Mitchell, Congressman for Arizona 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, as he reviewed his recent arrival in Washington, D.C. and noted the efforts made to arrive at bi-partisan solutions to growing national problems. Congressman Mitchell, an Arizona State Senator and former Tempe Mayor and Councilman, also described the recent passage of the budget for the Department of Health and Human Services which contained a \$207 million appropriation increase for community health centers nationwide. Congressman Mitchell was sworn in to office in early January, 2007.

The Association’s, Director of Government Relations, Tara McCollum Plese, who has known and worked with the Congressman for many years, introduced the Congressman. Congressman Mitchell explained that it “*Was wonderful to be back in Arizona, where I know so many people, compared to Washington, D.C. where no one knows anyone.*”

Elisabeth A. Handley, Director of Development and Policy, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Bureau of Primary Health Care also presented information at the Annual Meeting describing the growth of health centers, the resources applied by the federal government to sustain such growth and an outlook for the future. Elisabeth was the featured speaker replacing Assistant Surgeon General, Donald Weaver, who was called away at the last minute by a severe illness in his family.

The participants appreciated the appearances of both Harry E. Mitchell and Elisabeth A. Handley and the information and approach to federal issues they described in their presentations.

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#### Calendar of Events

##### NACHC P&I

March 16-21 of 2007  
Washington, DC

##### Behavioral Health Provider Meeting

April 13, 2007  
Mountain Park Health Center

##### COPS Meeting

April 20, 2007  
United Community Health Center, Inc.

##### Healthcare Responds to Domestic Violence

April 20, 2007  
Cobre Valley Community Hospital

##### TAPI Annual Awards Dinner

April 25, 2007  
Phoenix Country Club

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**James Welden, Eladio Pereira, and Gordon Jensen Receive Honors**

Monday's lunch also featured an awards ceremony that honored three exceptional contributors to the growth of community health centers in Arizona.

James Welden, Chief Executive Officer, Mariposa Community Health Center, Inc., Nogales, Arizona, was presented with the Association's Annual Leadership Award for 27 years of exceptional service. James is the founding Chief Executive Officer of Mariposa Community Health Center, Inc. and actually wrote the grant that initiated the health center's FQHC status in 1980.

In presenting the Leadership Award to James Welden, The Association's Chief Executive Officer, Joseph S. Coatsworth noted that, "Prior to the creation and continued expansion of Mariposa Community Health Center, Inc. the infant mortality rate in Nogales was twice the national average. Today the infant mortality rate in Nogales, where Mariposa manages 60% of the births, is one-half the national average." James is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin and one of the founding members and former Board president of the Arizona Association of Community Health Centers. He thanked the Association for the award and praised the staff at Mariposa for their continued commitment to excellence.



The Association Distinguished Service Award was presented to Dr. Eladio Pereira, Medical Director, Mariposa Community Health Center, Inc. in recognition of more than 20 years of service leading clinical operations and treating all patients with kindness and respect.

Joseph S. Coatsworth presented the Distinguished Service Award to Dr. Pereira, noting that he was a Magna Cum Laude graduate of Emory University Medical School in Atlanta and about to graduate from an MBA program from the University of Massachusetts. Joseph S. Coatsworth also explained that, "In addition to being a Board Certified practitioner in Internal Medicine, Eladio was known throughout Arizona as absolutely committed to patient centered care, listening to patients, and treating them with kindness." He has also served on the Board of the Association and is currently Board President.



Dr. Eladio Pereira in his remarks thanked the Association and his colleagues, wife, and children, and noted an experience when a patient was faulted by another provider for not adhering to the prescription regimen provided by the physician. In fact, the patient was unable to afford the medication according to Eladio, and had tried to comply with medical directives as best he could. He explained, "Listening to patients is as important as medical knowledge and this is a key element of sensitive patient care."

The Association also presented an award of Appreciation to Gordon Jensen who recently retired from the Arizona Department of Health Services. Joseph S. Coatsworth in presenting the award noted, "Gordon Jensen, time and time again, provided essential support to community health centers when others were too busy

or preoccupied with other matters. The community health centers of Arizona are deeply grateful for the assistance provided by Gordon Jensen throughout his long and distinguished career in public health."

**Association Board of Directors Presents Award to Sarah Allen**

Sarah Allen, Association board member for 14 years and Chief Executive Officer, Canyonlands Community Health Care for the same period, was presented with an award for her service during the Board meeting earlier in the day. Sarah is leaving her position to accept a leadership position with the Arizona Department of Health Services in Phoenix. The Association's Chief Executive Officer, Joseph S. Coatsworth, and Board President, Dr. Eladio Pereira, M.D., presented the award and noted the many contributions Sarah Allen has made to the community health center movement in Arizona.

**Four Lawmakers Receive Annual Legislative Awards**

Four state lawmakers were named 2007 Legislators of the Year at the Association's Legislative Day at the Capitol on February 21, 2007. The awards were presented to Senate President Tim Bee, Senate Minority Leader, Marsha Arzberger, Representative Marian McClure, and Representative Trish Groe. All the recipients were chosen for their outstanding support of community health centers.



Senator Tim Bee (LD 30), who was not able to attend the awards luncheon, but met with several Association members in the Senate Caucus room where the award was presented. The members thanked him for his efforts on behalf of community health centers. He expressed his appreciation for the community health centers in southern Arizona and thanked the members for the award.

Ginger Ryan, Chief Executive Officer, Chiricahua Community Health Centers, Inc. presented the award to Senator Marsha Arzberger. For many years, Senator Marsha Arzberger has fought for funding and additional resources to provide healthcare services to her rural district. Senator Arzberger has often referred to the CHC's in District 25 as "her" community health centers. The staff and the users of the health centers are grateful for her commitment to quality healthcare.

Association Lobbyist, Kristen Boilini, thanked Representative Marian McClure (LD 30) for her hard work and perseverance. The restoration of primary care program funding for CHC's in the 2007 budget was due, in large part, to Representative McClure's persistent efforts during last year's budget negotiations.

Sarah Allen, Chief Executive Officer, Canyonlands Community Health Care, presented the final Legislator of the Year award to Representative Trish Groe. She also emphasized the preponderance of need for healthcare services in Representative Groe's district and thanked her for her efforts to secure capital funding for much needed clinics in Mohave County and throughout Arizona. All of the Legislators recognized have been extraordinary and consistent supporters of community health centers throughout Arizona and the Association appreciates their dedication and leadership.

**Congressman Harry Mitchell Speaks at Annual Meeting Reaffirms Support for Community Health Services**



The Association had the pleasure of hosting one of Arizona's favorite sons, The Honorable Harry E. Mitchell, during the Annual meeting on Monday, February 19, 2007. Congressman Mitchell was a featured speaker at Monday's Annual Meeting luncheon. He shared his thoughts on being a new member of the U.S. House of Representatives and addressed the pending issues facing the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress which included the long awaited passage of the budget for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The Congressman noted that the HHS budget increased funding for community health centers nationwide and should help in providing medical care for the indigent and uninsured in many communities.

Prior to being elected to the United States Congress, Congressman Mitchell served eight years in the Arizona State Senate, as well as sixteen years as the Mayor of Tempe, and eight years as a Tempe City Councilman. Improving the quality of life for his constituents has always been a focus of his public service, which includes making sure that all Arizonans have access to healthcare.

“Passing the Legacy”

The S.E.A.R.C.H. Program awards were presented during the Association’s Annual Meeting. The program presents two exemplary awards annually to a Preceptor and Partner Clinic for their outstanding performance. All community health centers who participate in the program take pride in passing on their legacy of knowledge.

The following health centers have provided continuous support and training to health professions students:

- Canyonlands Community Health Care
- Clinica Adelante, Inc.
- El Rio Health Center
- Marana Health Center, Inc.
- Maricopa Integrated Health System
- Mariposa Community Health Center, Inc.
- Mountain Park Health Center
- North Country Community Health Center
- St. Elizabeth of Hungary Clinic
- Sun Life Family Health Center, Inc.



Wendy Reinos, Arizona Association of Community Health Centers, Andrew Saal, Sean Clendaniel, and Della Goodwin, from North Country Community Health Center after receiving their award

The 2006 S.E.A.R.C.H. Partner Clinic of the Year Award was presented to North Country Community Health Center. North Country Community Health Center is one of the premier health centers that train students annually. North Country provides rotations for nurse practitioners, medical students and residents, physician assistants, pharmacy, dental, and other allied health students. North Country will continue to provide rotations for students who seek to deliver primary medical care to the underserved, and thus increase access to health care in Arizona.



James Dumbald, St. Elizabeth of Hungary Clinic, with his 2006 Preceptor of The Year Award

The 2006 S.E.A.R.C.H. Preceptor of the Year Award was presented to Dr. James Dumbald, Medical Director, St. Elizabeth of Hungary Clinic in Tucson. Dr. James Dumbald is an NHSC Alumni, as he completed his NHSC obligation with United Community Health Center, Inc. in 1987. His dedication for teaching primary care clinicians the commitment to improve the health of Arizona residents is commendable.

Speakers Demonstrate Maximizing Resources

This year’s Annual Meeting hit a record high in attendance. Members of The Arizona Association of Community Health Centers met to network and participate in the two-day training activities. The 2007 line-up of speakers included: Elisabeth A. Handley, Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Primary Health Care, and Roger Schwartz, The National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC).

The first day luncheon included guest speaker, Elisabeth A. Handley, Director of the Division of Policy, who spoke about, “The Business of Caring” her presentation provided insight to the expansion of community health centers nationwide and in Arizona. She also emphasized the need to, “Continuously demonstrate value to patients and payers”, and the need to improve and create innovative methods to improve the delivery of medical care.

Roger Schwartz, Director of the Office of State Affairs and Legislative Counsel, provided a session on Tuesday morning titled “Update on America’s Health Centers.” He summarized the major accomplishments and challenges affecting health centers. Roger continued by outlining NACHC’s Legislative priorities for 2007, which include the following:

- Reauthorizing Health Center “330” law without change
- Appropriating increases of at least \$181 million in FY2007, to complete President Bush’s initiative, and \$225 million in FY2008 to begin New Growth Plan
- Medicaid reforms must not hurt people or safety net providers
- State flexibility must not violate Congressional intent to protect FQHC’s and preserve PPS
- Also, revising Medicare FQHC payment cap, make FTCA available for volunteers and emergencies, and allow CHC staff to have FEHBP coverage

Other important topics Roger addressed in the session included: Medicaid/Medicare and Community Health Centers, DRA-Benchmarking, 1115 Waiver Trends, and other major policy issues.

Elisabeth A. Handley and Roger Schwartz presented a substantial amount of valuable information to help members navigate reimbursement systems and maximize resources for their communities.



Roger Schwartz, National Association of Community Health Centers, during his presentation on Monday



Elisabeth A. Handley, Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Primary Health Care, speaking about the expansion of community health centers