



# Quarterly Newsletter

## October 2014

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## HEALTH CENTER NEWS

### Community Health Centers Celebrate Across Colorado

Community Health Centers (CHCs) are transforming communities through providing high-quality medical, dental, and behavioral health care; providing jobs in health care careers; and stimulating the economy. During National Health Center Week (NHCW) in August, CHCs held health fairs, provided health screenings, participated in local parades, gave physicals to help prepare children for the coming school year, and showed their appreciation for their communities.

With summer approaching its end, children and their parents took advantage of summer health advice and services, and prepared for the coming year. The Colorado Coalition for the Homeless (Coalition) hosted its annual Back-to-School Healthy Kids Fair in Denver, helping children living in shelters or transitional housing get a healthy start on school. The Coalition provided free health screenings, immunizations, dental care, hearing and eye exams, health education, and backpacks filled with school supplies.



Children receiving backpacks during the Coalition's Back-to-School Healthy Kids Fair on Aug. 16, 2014. Photos by Dennis Schroeder.



Metro Community Provider Network (MCPN) also helped families get ready for school with the Community Kids and Family Health Fair in Wheat Ridge, with health and dental screenings, back-to-school supplies for children in the community, and health education materials and demonstrations.

Sunrise Community Health (Sunrise) held a number of events targeted toward children. An open house at the Kids Care Clinic in Evans and Patient Appreciation Day at the Monfort Children's Clinic in Greeley included dental screenings, fun activities for children, and exercise and nutrition activities. School physicals were provided at Sunrise-Monfort Family Clinic in Evans.

In addition, the Sunrise mobile outreach team shared a booth with Northern Colorado Health Alliance's "Make Today Count" program at the Evans Safety & Awareness Fair. Nutrition coloring pages in English and Spanish, along with granola bars and sunscreen were distributed. Information on back-to-school physical clinics and mosquito awareness was also provided. The end of summer was celebrated at a fair at Sunrise-Loveland, which included blood pressure and glucose testing, face painting, healthy food demonstrations, and raffle giveaways.

Appreciation was a widespread theme. Mountain Family Health Centers (MFHC) held a series of community appreciation days, one at each of its five sites. Patients, staff and community were celebrated, with festivities including educational booths and information on Medicaid, with staff on hand to help people enroll.

In Lamar, High Plains Community Health Center (High Plains) celebrated its nineteenth anniversary and the community with healthy snacks at all of its sites, a community BBQ and raffle giveaways, and a "give back to the community" silent auction, raising funds to help High Plains patients pay for medication. As in prior years, High Plains staff participated in the Prowers County Sand & Sage Fair Parade, handing out healthy snacks from their float.

MCPN hosted a very special ceremony to celebrate the accomplishments of recent Bridges to Care Program graduates. The program's goal is to improve access to health care and empower the community to "take charge" of their health. At this event, U.S. Rep. Mike Coffman was presented the National Association of Community Health Center's (NACHC) Distinguished Community Health Advocate Award, an annual award given to members of Congress who support the Community Health Center program.

Ebenezer Ekuban, former Denver Broncos player, hosted MCPN's tenth annual Celebrity Golf Classic at the Lakewood Country Club, welcoming guests and golfers to the tournament benefiting MCPN and its patients.



From left: Miles the Mascot signs autographs at MCPN's Kids and Family Health Fair on Aug. 15, 2014. Former Broncos player Ebenezer Ekuban golfs with fellow tournament participants during MCPN's Celebrity Gold Classic on July 28, 2014.

Sharing an outdoor meal was also a common event. In Colorado Springs, Peak Vista Community Health Centers (Peak Vista) hosted their annual cookout and picnic for the community's homeless population. Salud Family Health Centers (Salud) hosted its annual Staff Appreciation Day, gathering employees in Fort Lupton with a BBQ picnic, t-shirt decorating contest, tug-of-war competition between the clinics, and prizes. Valley-Wide Health Systems (Valley-Wide) kicked off the week with a potluck for employees and board members of Valley-Wide and partner agencies and friends and family members. Colorado Sen. Larry Crowder (SD 35) was in attendance, as well as representatives from the offices of U.S. Sens. Mark Udall and Michael Bennet and U.S. Rep. Scott Tipton.



Salud staff members from the Brighton clinic competed in the t-shirt decorating contest and showed off their best dance moves at Salud's annual Staff Appreciation Day on Aug. 15, 2014.

## Paul Melinkovich Honored with NACHC Award

Paul Melinkovich, M.D., Denver Health's Community Health Services (DCHS) was honored with NACHC's Samuel U. Rodgers Achievement Award at the annual Community Health Institute and Expo in August 2014. Established in 1977 in honor of Dr. Samuel U. Rodgers, a remarkable health care provider, community activist and national leader in health and civil rights, this award is presented to an outstanding primary care clinician who exemplifies excellence in clinician leadership.



Dr. Melinkovich with his wife, Barbara, accepting his award at the NACHC CHI on Aug. 26, 2014.

Dr. Melinkovich embodies excellence in clinician leadership in a variety of ways. As director of DCHS, his advocacy efforts have helped advance the CHC movement in Colorado and nationally, and ensured Denver Health staff and board members understand and support Community Health Services' connection to the CHC movement and NACHC's policy priorities. He also developed and maintained relationships with Colorado's members of Congress and state representatives that led to important policy achievements for CHCs and their patients.

Dr. Melinkovich said of his career in community health, "Through all of this time I have continued to provide care to a small panel of patients and I am reminded of why we do this – for our patients. From my early days in medical school to now, I believe health care is a civil right that all deserve."

Dr. Melinkovich retired in September 2014, after practicing community-oriented primary care for more than 30 years.

## New Stout Street Health Center Opens

The Coalition celebrated the opening of the new Stout Street Health Center and Renaissance Stout Street Lofts in downtown Denver on Sept. 9, 2014. The project integrates health care access for up to 18,000 homeless individuals each year with supportive housing for 78 formerly homeless households. It is the only development of its kind in the United States.

The new facility replaced the existing Stout Street Clinic, an aging structure that lacked adequate space to meet the needs of a growing homeless population.



The new Stout Street Health Center introduces a unique model of integrated health care targeted to the needs of homeless patients. It fully integrates patient-centered, trauma-informed medical and mental health care, substance treatment services, dental and vision care, social services, and supportive housing to more fully address the spectrum of problems homeless adults and children bring to their health care providers.

The new facility was made possible by expansion of Medicaid eligibility in Colorado under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Previously, only 15 percent of homeless individuals served by the Coalition were eligible for Medicaid. Now nearly 70 percent have been enrolled in Medicaid. The increased Medicaid reimbursements for services helped fund the new facility as well as increased the number of health care providers.

“While controversial to some, ‘ObamaCare’ has been a game changer for homeless and low-income individuals and families in Colorado,” said Coalition president John Parvensky. “It allows us to expand health care and supportive services for homeless families and individuals, while improving their health status and decreasing unnecessary emergency health care costs for the community.”

“We are grateful that the community has come together to support this vital resource in the struggle to end homelessness in Colorado,” Mr. Parvensky said.

For additional details about the Stout Street facility, click [here](#).



## Clinica Nurse Receives Rockies' Leadership Award

Laura Doanes, a nurse at Clinica Family Health Services (Clinica), was the recipient of the Colorado Rockies Hispanic Heritage Adult Leadership Award. Ms. Doanes, one of four finalists, received the award at the Rockies' pre-game baseball ceremony on Sept. 20.

Ms. Doanes has worked as a nurse at Clinica's Federal Heights clinic for almost a year-and-a-half. Within six months of starting she was promoted to a nurse team manager. Through Clinica, she had the opportunity to attend the Nursing Leadership Institute training in Sept. 2013-May 2014. It was during the training that her coach learned of Ms. Doanes' extraordinary efforts in support of her community and nominated her for this award.

When Ms. Doanes was 25, she immigrated to the United States from Mexico City to escape the poverty and periods of homelessness she experienced growing up. Upon moving, she made it her mission to learn English and become educated. She became a nurse and has since used her education and experience to help those in need.



Ms. Doanes receives her award from Dick Monfort, Rockies owner, chairman, and CEO, on Sept. 20, 2014, in Denver, Colo.

Ms. Doanes' leadership in the community is vast, as evidenced by her dedication to support the Hispanic community in achieving healthy and successful lives. She helps families and individuals work toward better health by leading a Saturday hiking group; coordinates health care for members of her church; volunteers at Florence Crittenton School; serves as a secretary for the Colorado Student Nurses Association; tutors Hispanic nursing students; and more. She has been a strong, compassionate voice for Hispanic women and families in Colorado. Leading by example, she encourages others to make a positive difference in their lives.

**"I am passionate to help patients and my community. I believe as a Hispanic woman that came from nothing, that I needed to get educated and to find resources needed. And, if I could get educated and I could learn to understand health, life and the world better, I could then educate others and make their health, life and world better."**  
***Laura Doanes***

Her committed service has touched many lives in a powerful, kind way.

[Click here](#) to watch the video of Laura receiving her award at the Rockies game (her portion starts at 19:40 minutes in).

## CHC Clinical Staff Receive Loan Repayment

In October 2013, CCHN received a three-year grant from the Kaiser Permanente Community Health Fund to increase workforce and clinical quality efforts. CCHN staff used the opportunity to design the Kaiser Permanente Loan Repayment for Safety Net Clinical Support Staff Program (KPLRP). The program expands and modernizes the safety net workforce by providing educational loan repayment awards to high performing clinical support staff committed to serving in underserved areas.

In April 2014, CCHN awarded 26 safety net clinical support staff members with loan repayment. In addition to awardees' loan repayment checks paid to education institutions, CCHN staff traveled around the state to personally present them each with a certificate, journal, and pen to further honor their commitment to serving the underserved. To highlight the KPLRP program, three awardees shared their stories and why they love working in health care.

*Siouxanne Mease has worked at MFHC as a triage registered nurse for over a year, and is proud to be there. Ms. Mease is responsible for fielding calls and determining the best action, treatment, or intervention. She loves being a nurse because it allows her to help people learn and make empowered choices to take better care of themselves. Ms. Mease says, "Nursing is the best job in the world, next to being a mother."*



Siouxanne Mease with her KPLRP certificate.



Melissa Adams (middle) receives her KPLRP certificate from Dave Myers, MCPN CEO, and Sarah Macrander, CCHN.

*Melissa Adams is an expanded duties dental assistant at MCPN. At forty-four, Ms. Adams went to school to become a dental assistant. After obtaining her degree she returned to school to get her expanded duties certification. She is currently attending school to become a dental hygienist. Ms. Adams enjoys her job and the work she does makes her feel accomplished. She loves helping people and others describe her as a "giver."*

*As a young child, Athena Saenz developed a love for health care when her family lived with mentally challenged individuals. Once a patient of Pueblo Community Health Centers (PCHC), Ms. Saenz started working for the CHC as a medical assistant case manager. Ms. Saenz works with managing mammograms and breast biopsies and teaching preventative care counseling. She loves her job because it ultimately saves lives. She has a passion for continued professional development and looks forward to new opportunities with PCHC.*



Athena Saenz holds her KPLRP certificate alongside her supervisor, Linda Thurman-Sanchez, clinical programs nursing manager, PCHC.

[Click here](#) for a complete list of KPRLP awardees. The next rounds of loan repayment will take place in January 2015 and January 2016. To learn more about the loan repayment program, email Stephanie Auxier at [sauxier@cchn.org](mailto:sauxier@cchn.org) or Angela Rose at [angela@cchn.org](mailto:angela@cchn.org)

## Two Colorado Physicians Honored for Their Volunteer Services

Two Colorado physicians were honored during NHCW with CCHN's 2014 Volunteer Clinician Award. The awardees were Amilu Stewart, M.D., a general surgeon in Colorado Springs and Randy Maharry, M.D., a dermatologist in Estes Park.

The award honors volunteer clinicians who have been dedicated to serving the needs of the medically underserved of Colorado. Candidates are nominated by CHCs with whom they work and may be physicians, physician's assistants, nurse practitioners, certified midwives, dentists, dental hygienists, or mental health providers. To be eligible, nominees must provide direct patient services in or on behalf of a CHC, lead advocacy activities on behalf of the medically underserved, and must have provided volunteer services to a CHC for a minimum of three years.

Dr. Stewart, a volunteer physician for Peak Vista since 2009, is known for her dedication to patients and commitment to her community. She is a retired surgeon, and provides direct care at Peak Vista's Volunteer Specialty Center. She lends her surgery skills to patients who do not have access to surgeons in the community, and she is active in fundraising to help Peak Vista accommodate the growing need for patient-centered care in the Colorado Springs community. Dr. Stewart improves the lives of her patients by always caring for them with compassion, integrity, and honesty. She is a loyal, respected member of Peak Vista, and serves as a role model for others.

Dr. Maharry has been volunteering at Salud's Estes Park clinic for eleven years. As a retired dermatologist, he sees a variety of patients from the Estes Park community who would otherwise not have access to dermatology services. In addition to seeing patients, Dr. Maharry has developed a rapport with local dermatologists, who perform procedures pro-bono that he cannot perform at the Estes Park clinic. He also started an annual skin screen clinic, which welcomes patients from across the community. He shows true concern for his patients, as evidenced by determination in achieving results that meet his standards and the patient's expectations. Fellow clinic staff describe him as, "Exemplifying the goodness of the human spirit, a practicing humanitarian we are honored to know."

CCHN congratulates Dr. Stewart and Dr. Maharry for their dedication and service for the good health of Coloradans.



## CCHN Hosts Special Populations Conference

CCHN hosted the Special Populations and Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Workshop Oct. 14-15, in Denver, Colo. Participants included staff from seven Colorado CHCs, including quality improvement staff, care coordinators, patient navigators, and information technology staff, among others. To discuss the scope of patients in Colorado, CCHN invited speakers from the Colorado Center on Law and Policy, the Denver Prevention and Training Center, and the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless. The dynamic setting gave participants an opportunity for an enriched discussion and community building.

The conference was part of CCHN's continuing strategy to support CHCs to develop work plans that build upon their on-going work with the special populations within their communities. It is CCHN's intent to develop these work plans further, in order to identify and disseminate best practices across the state. Working to enhance population management and identifying special populations within CHCs has an ever-increasing importance in the healthcare setting. This is emphasized by the focus of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) PCMH 2014 Standards on identifying and managing patient populations as well as addressing the needs of special populations, including vulnerable, complex, and high-risk patients. Workshop participants were provided a comprehensive overview of the newest NCQA PCMH Standards. Attendees contributed to engaged discussion, participated in interactive self-assessments and were provided with a multitude of resources to share with their teams. For more information about CCHN's quality improvement programs, [click here](#).

## Colorado Health Organizations Celebrate Primary Care

Corps Community Connection and Awards Ceremony was held Oct. 10 in celebration of participants of the Colorado and National Health Service Corps programs, which provide scholarships (NHSC only) and loan repayment assistance to providers who agree to work in underserved communities. The event was hosted by CCHN, the Colorado Rural Health Center, National Health Service Corps (NHSC), Colorado Health Service Corps (CHSC), Community Association of Mountain/Plains States (CHAMPS), and the Central Colorado Area Health Education Center.

Nearly one-hundred attendees gathered for a night of dinner, networking, and an awards ceremony honoring outstanding providers working at Colorado safety net organizations. The event kicked off with an ice-breaker and networking game to engage attendees, giving them a chance to learn more about scholarship and loan repayment programs and mission-driven career opportunities within safety net clinic sites.

Two primary care advocates, Kim Gillan, region VIII director at the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services; and Justin Wheeler, M.D., vice president of clinical services at Clinica, spoke about the importance and benefits of primary care.

Ms. Gillan promoted primary care, detailing the health benefits and highlighting the importance of ensuring Americans have access to health care by way of the ACA. Ms. Gillan reminded attendees to support upcoming open enrollment efforts, taking place Nov. 15, 2014-Feb. 15, 2015.

Dr. Wheeler shared experiences during his medical education that was paid through the help of an NHSC scholarship. His speech included a "day in the life" of being a doctor, where he explained that he followed his passion by working with the medically underserved in Colorado. Dr. Wheeler urged the audience to advocate for legislation to support CHCs and continued funding for NHSC and CHSC programs.



Justin Wheeler, M.D., vice president of clinical services at Clinica, addresses the crowd during the Corps Community Connection and Awards Ceremony on Oct. 10, 2014, in Denver, Colo.



The evening concluded with the Corps Community Day Award ceremony, presented to providers for their outstanding leadership, collaboration, and service in health care. Award recipients (pictured left) included Emily Millner, registered dental hygienist, Summit Community Care Clinic; Tiffany Knudsen, physician

assistant, MCPN; Preston Boone Karr, DDS, Sunrise (accepted by Shelly Rios); Elizabeth Kane, physician assistant, MCPN (accepted by Brooke Wagenseller); and Amy Clauss, M.D., Peak Vista.

The host organizations thank all the past and present Health Service Corps participants for the dedication and quality care provided to Colorado's medically underserved communities.

## Adult Dental Benefit Has Life-Changing Impact

Adult dental benefits may be new to Medicaid, but the impact is already making a positive difference. As the gateway to the body, the mouth is increasingly being understood to be intimately connected to overall health. The health of the mouth has been linked to the health of the heart, and a healthy smile is increasingly a pre-requisite for stable employment in the service industry. This means that the more-than-550,000 adults in Colorado who now have dental coverage have a new path to improving their lives.

The full dental benefit has been in effect since July 2014, and CHCs with dental programs have seen their appointment slots book up months out with patients who have been in need but unable to afford oral health care. Dental hygienists who do oral health screenings and parent education for children enjoy being able to tell parents they now have coverage and can set up an appointment. [Research](#) shows access to dental care for parents results in increased use of dental care for children, so Colorado's investment in parents also invests in healthier children.

[Research](#) also has confirmed that treating oral health issues results in lower annual medical costs and reduced hospital admissions. Within the first month of the new benefits Dr. An Nguyen from Clinica spoke about a long term patient who, even with the sliding fee scale, had only been able to afford having one cavity at a time addressed. "Cavities are communicable, and, without prompt care, the untreated decay and bacteria in his mouth caused his overall oral condition to worsen, even though he was actively seeking the care he knew he needed. As a long-time Medicaid recipient, the new benefit has allowed him to access more comprehensive care so his treatment plan could be completed quickly and in a more cost-effective manner," Dr. Nguyen explained.



Salud dental employee providing care for a patient.

MFHC staff also reported on the significant impact access to dental care can have on a person. A woman with degenerative joint disease due to rheumatoid arthritis was in need of a cardiac procedure and five joint replacements. However, none of these procedures could be completed until her advanced periodontal disease was addressed. Within two months, MFHC oral health care providers were able to complete her fillings and periodontal treatment, allowing her to proceed with multiple surgeries. The next time dental staff saw her it was like seeing a new person. "She was smiling, standing up straight, and walking without a cane or a limp. She said without our teamwork, none of this would be possible," reported Dr. Garry Millard, dental director at MFHC.

## Colorado CHC Staff Gather for First Annual O&E Summit

More than 50 CHC Outreach and Enrollment (O&E) staff from 15 CHCs across the state gathered for CCHN's O&E Summit in Golden, Colo., in Sept. 2014. Participants included O&E staff supported by the Bureau of Primary Health Care and health coverage guides funded by Connect for Health Colorado (C4HCO).

The purpose of the Summit was to bring together CHC O&E staff to learn, collaborate, and share best practices before the 2015 private health insurance marketplace open enrollment period begins on Nov. 15.

Guests from the Colorado Consumer Health Initiative and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services presented on the value of health insurance and how to help patients and community members use their coverage effectively once it is attained. Experts from the Medicare program, the Colorado Program Eligibility and Application Kit (PEAK) Outreach Initiative, and C4HCO provided in-depth information to participants on complex eligibility rules for coverage programs and application systems.



Participants listen to their peers share best practices during the Sept. 29, 2014, O&E Summit in Golden, Colo.

CHCs play a key role in helping patients and community members understand and apply for health coverage. Participating in the Summit is just one of many ways CHC O&E staff are sharpening their expertise to continue to be a trusted source of information and assistance for community members during the open enrollment period.

## ***Health Center News From Around Colorado***

### ***News Briefs***



### **Mountain Family Clinician Named Non-Physician Provider of the Year**

On Sept. 23, the Colorado Coalition for the Medically Underserved presented Ken Davis, PA-C, with the 2014 Non-Physician Provider of the Year award during their annual luncheon. This award recognizes community members who have made outstanding contributions to improve the health care systems and provide care for at-risk patients. Along with the award, Mr. Davis received a donation to his CHC, MFHC.

### **Salud Hosts Free Farmers Market**

Salud Community HealthCorps members volunteered their time at the Back to Health, Back-to-School farmers market hosted at the Fort Collins clinic on Sept. 5. Along with Sproutin' Up and other local agencies, the no-cost farmers market featured healthy snacks and recipes, nutrition information, and giveaways.



From left: Community HealthCorps members Rachel McAuley, Khyla Burrows, and Amelia Davis; Anne Genson, Salud Fort Collins HIV clinic coordinator and director and founder of Sproutin' Up; and Community HealthCorps members Faria Ahmed and Lisbeth Labrada.

## Salud Hosts Longmont Open House

On Oct. 8, Salud hosted an open house at their Longmont clinic to celebrate the facility's expansion. Additions to the clinic include 13 new exam rooms, two shared medical rooms, two procedure rooms, and six new dental operatories. Guests at the event included Longmont Mayor Dennis Coombs and local community leaders.



Danny Norton, PA-C, center director of the Longmont clinic, addressed guests at the open house event held in Longmont on Oct. 8, 2014, to honor the newly expanded clinic.

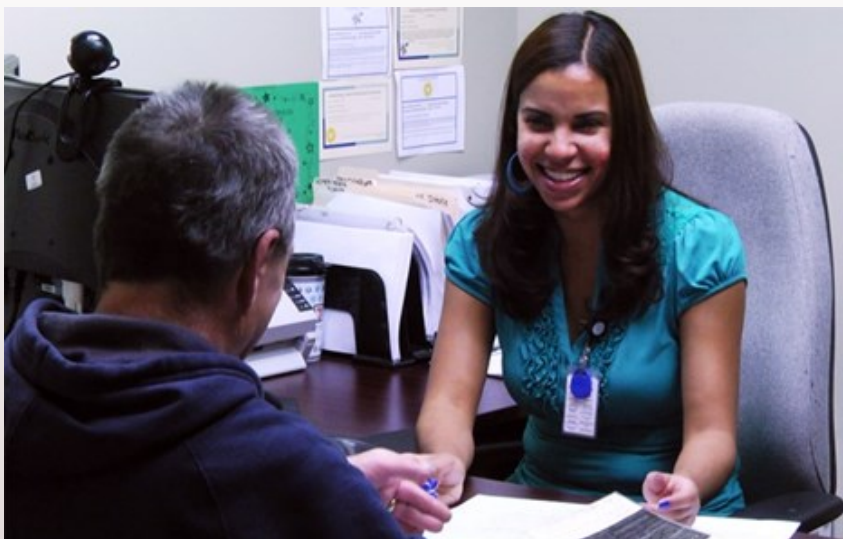
## Mountain Family Educates Students on Voter Registration

On Sept. 23, MFHC celebrated National Voter Registration Day with employee Christian Roa, along with Denise Gomez of Nonprofit Vote, visiting Glenwood Springs High School to educate students and help them register to vote.

## Peak Vista Reaches Out to Community on ACA

Peak Vista's enrollment staff continues its community outreach in the Pikes Peak region, sharing information about the ACA, Medicaid eligibility and coverage products available through C4HCO. Two Peak Vista enrollment supervisors, Herbie Garcia and Cinthya Munoz, utilize their patient guide training to educate the community by visiting local events and businesses. "There is still a lot of confusion and misinformation out there about what is available and how much it will cost," said Mr. Garcia. "People have so many questions and it's been a great opportunity to get out to where people work and help them understand the programs and eligibility standards."

During the last enrollment cycle Peak Vista assisted nearly 8,000 households, the vast majority of whom qualified for Medicaid. "While we've been able to help so many people, we need to continue educating the community on what C4HCO offers," stated Ms. Munoz. "People appreciate having patient guides take time to walk them through the products." Mr. Garcia and Ms. Munoz have visited numerous groups in the Pikes Peak community, including assisted living facilities and non-profits.



Peak Vista enrollment supervisor Cinthya Munoz guides a patient through the C4HCO system.

## Free Program Builds Self-Management Skills for Chronic Conditions

River Valley Family Health Center (River Valley) has been offering a free six-week course on managing chronic conditions. Mary Lou Garcia, lay-navigator for River Valley (formerly Olathe Community Clinic), teaches the six sessions, one a week for two hours each, for adults with chronic conditions and caregivers. Topics include techniques to deal with problems such as frustration, fatigue, pain and isolation; appropriate exercise; appropriate use of medications; communicating effectively with family, friends and health professionals; health eating; and how to evaluate new treatments. This evidence-based program from Stanford University is sponsored by the Tri-County Health Network in Telluride, and is also offered at both the Uncompahgre Medical Center in Norwood and the Basin Clinic in Naturita.



River Valley lay-navigator Mary Lou Garcia (left) and Tri-County Health Network navigator Olivia Gonzales facilitate a Chronic Disease Self-Management Program class.

## Physician Assistants Celebrated in October

River Valley gave special recognition to their physician assistants during National Physician Assistant Week, Oct. 6-12. Many physician assistants (PAs) work at CHCs and are important members of care teams.

PAs are nationally certified and state-licensed medical professionals, practicing medicine on health care teams with physicians and other providers. They take medical histories, conduct physical exams, diagnose and treat illnesses, develop treatment plans, counsel about preventive care, write prescriptions, and assist in surgeries, plus additional responsibilities depending on where they work, their level of experience, and the areas of medicine they specialize in.



Colorado CHCs employ nearly 160 PAs across the state. To learn more about PAs, please visit [www.aapa.org](http://www.aapa.org).

## POLICY UPDATE

### Get Active! And Influence Policy: Your Voice Needed Now



Please join CCHN's grassroots network and make your voice heard by your elected officials, helping to ensure that health care bills benefit CHCs and the people and communities they serve. The voice of every CHC advocate will be needed in the coming months – now is the time to make a difference. This year is a pivotal, make-or-break year for the CHC movement, both in ensuring that the growth of the CHC network and the people served continues, and to protect the very foundations of the program. Please join us in this effort.

Sign up for CCHN emails about legislation affecting health care and your CHC. You will receive action alerts that have specific, easy-to-understand ways to talk to your legislators. Go to [www.cchn.org](http://www.cchn.org), click on Get Active!, and your information will be added to CCHN's grassroots network. For more information please contact Alice Gibbs, policy analyst, at [agibbs@cchn.org](mailto:agibbs@cchn.org) or (303) 867-9531.

## CHAMPS UPDATE

### CHAMPS Honors Coloradans for Health Center Leadership

Four Coloradans were honored by their peers at the CHAMPS/Northwest Regional Primary Care Association Annual Primary Care Conference in Denver, Colo, on Oct. 20. Robert “Jay” Brooke, chief executive officer at High Plains, was selected to receive the CHAMPS 2014 Exceptional Administrative Leadership Award. Kenneth Floyd, Board Chair at DCHS, was selected to receive the CHAMPS 2014 Exceptional Board Leadership Award. Greg Morris, PA-C, director of the homeless health center at Peak Vista, received the CHAMPS 2014 Outstanding Advocate for the Underserved Award. John McFarland, DDS, executive vice president of dental services at Salud, was selected to receive the CHAMPS 2014 Stanley J. Brasher Legacy Award.

Mr. Brooke started High Plains in 1995 in Lamar and has built it into a leading CHC, which cared for more than 7,000 individuals in 2013. High Plains has several primary care clinic sites, a pediatric clinic, dental clinic, and in-house behavioral health care. Mr. Brooke is also a co-founder of Integrated Community Health Partners, which has done tremendous work to decrease ER visits among High Plains’ patients.

Mr. Floyd was first appointed to the Denver Health Board of Directors in May 2003 by former mayor Wellington E. Webb. Mr. Floyd served faithfully as an active board member for several years and in 2007 he was asked to assume the chairmanship of the board. During his tenure, the clinic network has grown by almost 50 percent to serve more than 128,000 individuals in 2013. He has provided excellent guidance to the Denver Health Board over the years.



Jay Brooke (right), executive director of High Plains, accepts his award from John Santistevan, CEO of Salud.

Mr. Morris has been championing health care for the homeless for almost two decades. In 1997, he took direction of Peak Vista’s Homeless Medical Center in downtown Colorado Springs. Quickly realizing the unique challenges of bringing medical, dental, and behavioral care to this population, Mr. Morris slept on the streets of Colorado Springs for several days to gain insight into the reasons that chronic homeless individuals were not accessing care. This effort resulted in the formation of the Medical Backpack Outreach Program, and Peak Vista acquired a fully equipped medical van to extend health care to the rural homeless in El Paso County.



Greg Morris (left), director of Peak Vista’s Homeless Center, receives his award from Keith Horwood, M.D., associate medical director of Community Health Centers, Inc.

In 2011, Mr. Morris founded Ascending to Health Respite Care, a program that provides a safe place for homeless persons to recuperate after being discharged from the hospital. This initiative has resulted in a decrease of required inpatient days and the avoidance of patient discharge to shelters and streets, where follow-up care is nonexistent.

Dr. McFarland has dedicated his 42-year career at Salud to building and expanding dental services for migrant farmworkers and other medically underserved populations. Dr. McFarland built Salud's dental program from a single dentist to a program that operates in eight clinics and provides nearly 4,500 visits per month in a 10 county service area in northeastern Colorado. Over the years, Dr. McFarland has served on numerous boards and committees that have shaped how dental services are delivered and integrated into primary care practice.

Other winners of CHAMPS awards included: Keith Horwood, M.D., associate medical director at Community Health Centers, Inc. in Utah, received the Exceptional Medical Leadership Award.

Stephen Stemm, D.M.D., dental director at Northland Community Health Center in North Dakota, received the Exceptional Dental Leadership Award.



John McFarland (middle), executive vice president of dental services at Salud, accepts his award from John Mengenhausen (left), CEO of Horizon Health Care, Inc., and Stanley "Jerry" Brasher, retired, former CEO of Salud.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Murder Mystery Dinner Fundraiser Aids Pueblo CHC**

The PCHC Foundation will host its annual fundraiser, "Murder Mystery Dinner: Time to Kill", Oct. 24, 5:30 p.m. MT, at the Pueblo Union Depot. The Dinner Detective will be performing the show and dinner will be served. All proceeds benefit the PCHC Foundation. For more information, contact Laura Kelly at [lkelly@pueblochc.org](mailto:lkelly@pueblochc.org).

### **Colorado Coalition for the Homeless Hosts Annual Home for the Holidays Run**

The Coalition will hold their annual Home for the Holidays 5K and Family Fun Run on Nov. 1 at City Park in Denver, Colo. Proceeds will allow the Coalition to provide street outreach, housing, health care, and education programs to Colorado's homeless adults and children. To learn more and to register, click [here](#).

### **Tennis Champ Headlines Peak Vista's Breakfast of Champions**

Peak Vista's tenth annual Breakfast of Champions, presented by the El Pomar Foundation, will be held on Nov. 4, 7:30 a.m.-9:00 a.m. MT, at the Broadmoor International Center in Colorado Springs, Colo. The event will feature four-time tennis Olympic gold medalist Venus Williams as the keynote speaker. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

### **Smart Mouths Smart Kids Conference Coming in November**

Oral Health Colorado, the state oral health coalition, is hosting the [Smart Mouths Smart Kids: A Whole Child Approach for Health Conference](#) on Nov. 13-14, at the Denver Tech Center. Join oral health, physical health and behavioral health advocates for this conference where the new "Smart Mouths Smart Kids" toolkit will be unveiled and participants can discover ways to implement school-linked oral health in their communities. The conference will focus on the whole child across the ages and stages of development, so kids are healthy and ready to learn. [Click here](#) to register.

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## About CCHN

*The Colorado Community Health Network (CCHN) is the unified voice for Colorado's 18 Community Health Centers (CHCs) and their patients. CHCs provide a health care home to almost 650,000 of their community members - one in eight people in Colorado - from 60 of the state's 64 counties. Without CHCs, hundreds of thousands of Colorado's low-income families and individuals would have no regular source of health care. CCHN's mission is to increase access to high quality health care for people in need in Colorado. For more information about CCHN, please visit [www.cchn.org](http://www.cchn.org).*

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