

URBAN HEALTH BEAT

A PUBLICATION OF URBAN HEALTH PLAN

APRIL-MAY-JUNE 2009

Hi Associates,

I hope that you are all enjoying your summer. I'm so glad that so many of you enjoyed our drenched filled picnic...although a great time was had by all. Soon, we will all be back to the hustle and bustle of the school year. Hopefully, we will have a wonderful and beautiful Indian summer !!

Before anything else, let's hear it for Judge Sonia Sotomayor, the first person of Latino origin to be appointed to the Supreme Court of the United States of America. What an awesome accomplishment and one that began in the Bronx, as she grew up in this neighborhood. It is sure a sign that if she could do it, so can anyone else. Hard work, dedication, and endless hours of study will get you there too !! Let's make sure to teach our children that.

There is so much going on, especially with health care reform. This is important to you since it is the industry in which we work. Although the proposed legislation seems confusing, it is a good thing that is happening. A fundamental principle of Urban Health Plan is that if you want different results you have to do things differently. As it stands right now, primary care, which is what we do, should land in a good place under the proposed health care reform. The people in Washington finally understand

the value of the services that we provide and President Obama definitely recognizes it. Trust me, this is a very good thing !

In the past three months we have had many of our own successes. We hosted two ribbon cutting ceremonies, one for our Project HOPE, which is so close to my heart for all the potential that it holds for truly empowering the Hunts Point community, and the other for Plaza del Sol Family Health Center which finally opened (HOORAY) !!! The Robin Hood Foundation also awarded us with grant money to expand our Childhood Obesity program through our Fit For Life Performance Improvement Team and we received a small grant to sponsor the EBT machine at the Hunts Point Farmers' Market. Previously, food stamps could not be accepted at the farmers' market. Now, because of our commitment to sponsor the machine, it is easier for our community to access fresh fruits and vegetables.

Fiesta was outstanding this year and our first golf outing was lots of fun. We are now planning our 35th Anniversary Gala celebration with a special honor to Dr. Richard Izquierdo who will be celebrating a very momentous birthday in October.

In May, I had the opportunity to visit Cuba and learn about its

phenomenal health care system. I would love to share some of the things I learned and some of the things that we can learn from it. It was an awesome learning experience !!!

Before ending, I want to thank each of you for the work that you do. Despite being busier than ever and bursting at the seams, you continue to provide services in a positive, respectful manner and always with a smile. Expansions plans are in place and we will soon see a transformed 4th floor into a brand new clinical area. Be patient, it will happen.

Until next time, enjoy the rest of the summer,



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Project H.O.P.E. Celebrates Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

By ROBIN WEST

Project Health Outcomes through Peer Education (H.O.P.E.) had an outstanding turnout for its ribbon cutting ceremony on April 24th.

Councilman Joel Rivera, majority leader, New York City Council, Nazli Parvizi, Commissioner, Community Affairs Unit, New York City Mayor's Office, and Maryann Hedaa, managing director, Hunts Point Alliance for Children joined Paloma Hernandez, Ruth Santana, the program's coordinator, and others to celebrate the brightly decorated Hunts Point storefront.

Guests were entertained by members of Project H.O.P.E.'s yoga and dance classes. Karina Mercedes led a group of third graders from the School for Success and Achievement who showed off the nutrition skills they learned.

Project H.O.P.E. is a community-based strategy that targets the Hunts Point community to change health outcomes through health literacy, peer-to-peer counseling, the promotion of healthy behaviors and engaging the community in health education.

Project H.O.P.E.'s programs include health ambassadors, community representatives who teach other residents about community health issues; health educators, who provide information on health services; a health literacy resource center and free health and wellness programs, including yoga and fitness workshops. The storefront program also serves as a community resource. For example, residents who need a computer can use Project H.O.P.E.'s computer center, free of charge.

Funding for Project H.O.P.E. is provided by the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Minority Health.



(L-R) UHP President and CEO Paloma Hernandez and Project H.O.P.E. coordinator Ruth Santana join NYC Community Affairs Unit Commissioner Nazli Parvizi and Councilman Joel Rivera at the official opening of Project H.O.P.E.



Paloma with Maryann Hedaa, managing director, Hunts Point Alliance for Children (HPAC) one of Project H.O.P.E.'s partners in Hunts Point.



(l-r) Karina Mercedes leads students from the School for Success and Achievement through a nutrition demonstration learned from their weekly visits to Project H.O.P.E.



Project H.O.P.E. is located at 845 Hunts Point Avenue. For more information contact Ruth Santana at 347-271-3756.



Project H.O.P.E.'s health ambassadors provide peer counseling on health and wellness to the Hunts Point Community.



Along with a healthy, nutritious lunch, VIP guests were treated to special gift t-shirts.

Calling UHP associates!
Do you have an inspirational story?

Let your story inspire other associates

In future issues of Urban Health Beat, we'll profile UHP associates with a significant accomplishment.

Let us know if you:

- Improved your health and fitness
- Stopped smoking
- Went back to school for a degree

Plaza del Sol Opens in Corona

By Robin West

On Monday, June 15, Corona residents patiently lined up in front of Plaza del Sol, as the long-awaited health center opened its doors and began seeing patients.

One month later, community leaders, elected officials and staff gathered to officially celebrate the site's opening.

Director Helen Artega described the day as "un sueño realizado" - a dream come true - that she shared with her late father -- to build a community health center that would provide health care for Corona's medically underserved residents.

Guests included Queens Borough President Helen Marshall, New York Assemblyman Jose Peralta, New

York State Senator Hiram Monserrate, City Council Representative Julissa Ferreras, Michael Dowling, President and CEO of North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health Systems, and Chris Constantino, Chief Operating Officer of Elmhurst Hospital Center. All joined Dr. Izquierdo and Paloma for the official ribbon cutting ceremony.



Plaza del Sol is officially open for business!



Monsignor Healey blesses the building as Dr. Vazquez and guests look on.



Helen and her mom celebrate Plaza del Sol's opening



The Plaza del Sol team welcomes you to Corona, Queens!



Victor Luis (Helen's son) is ready to party!

Fit-4-Life Update

By Shamiza Ally, MD

Fit-4-Life is a weight management program that provides nutrition education and promotes physical activity to patients starting from birth through three years of age. The goal is to have children be at a healthy weight by age three, and minimize the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Following recent studies showing breastfeeding for the first year of life prevents childhood obesity, the OB prenatal classes and the pediatric departments are heavily promoting breastfeeding to new and prospective mothers. Families are invited to monthly workshops where they learn healthy snack preparation, how to get their kids more active, and take a field trips to the supermarket and the farmer's market with the health educator and nutritionist.

Urban Health Plan is collaborating with the Community Health Center Association of New York State to train other NYC health centers to implement similar weight management programs at their sites. The tools that we have used in our program, including waiting room presentations on sugary drinks and cereals, are being shared with these health centers, and will be used by them.

UPDATE: Fit-4-Life just received a \$250,000 grant from the Robin Hood Foundation to expand the program to all pediatric providers at El Nuevo San Juan.

We want to hear from you!

Have a story idea for Urban Health Beat? Tell us!

Email your suggestion to:
robin.west@urbanhealthplan.org

UHP in the Community

Hunts Point Farmer's Market to Accept EBT Cards for Purchases

By Robin West

Thanks to a collaboration between Urban Health Plan and Community Markets, a company that designs and runs farmers' markets throughout the city, Hunts Point residents can now purchase fresh fruits and vegetables sold at the Hunts Point farmers market with their EBT cards.

The Hunts Point site is the first to accept EBT/food stamps among the 20 Community Markets Farmers Markets located in Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn, Westchester and Rockland County.

The market is located at Southern Boulevard and East 163rd Street. The program works by swiping an individual's EBT card through a point of sale (POS) device. In return, tokens are issued to purchase fruits and vegetables from the market. Vendors turn in the tokens at the end of the day and are issued a check the following week.

Urban Health Plan has been approved to manage the POS device needed to process the transaction at the market, and will issue the checks to the vendors.

The Hunts Point community market is open Wednesdays and Saturday, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm through November 14th, 2009.

GOT A STORY THAT MAY INTEREST

OTHER ASSOCIATES?

SEND IT TO ROBIN AT

ROBIN.WEST@URBANHEALTHPLAN.ORG

BRINGING THE KIDS TO WORK



This group may look like the newest UHP associates at new hire orientation but they are the "Take Your Sons and Daughter to Work Day" participants, which was held on Thursday, April 23, sponsored by Human Resources.

Ten children of UHP associates, ages 9-14 spent the day learning about the work experience and how to manage work life balance and career role models. Each child was assigned to a specific site or department including Finance, Development, Call Center, WIC, Nutrition, Executive Office, Plaza del Castillo and Project H.O.P.E. All received a questionnaire from Rebecca Ajasin to complete with their department supervisors. The questions asked about the supervisor's daily activities, their position and responsibilities at UHP and what would they do on if they had a day off.

After lunch, the group reviewed their supervisors' responses with Rebecca. UHP associate Jose Otero from MIS spoke to the group about his upbringing and how he got back on track with his education and career development. Club TIA members provided membership information for the afterschool program and played games that taught teamwork and communications. Each participant received a certificate and an identification badge to commemorate their day "working" at UHP.

SITE UPDATES

News from El Nuevo San Juan, Bella Vista, Plaza Del Castillo and Plaza del Sol

EL NUEVO SAN JUAN

BY ALEX SONERA

As the summer comes to a close, I'd like to thank our summer youth workers. We had about 30 participants and hope they enjoyed the experience of working at Urban Health Plan.

Join me in welcoming our new nurse practitioner in Walk-In, Ella Masson!

Lastly, remember it is important to protect our patients' confidentiality. Please guard their information as you do your own. Our patients count on us to do our very best. If you are unsure of what to do, ask your supervisor or me.

PLAZA DEL CASTILLO

BY NOEMI CIRINO

We want to give a big Plaza del Castillo congratulations to our case manager, Guadalupe Lopez, case manager, who was selected as Employee of the Month. She is a great asset to our team with exemplary dedication to UHP's mission. She always goes the extra mile with a smile.

Congratulation to Steve Velez on his move to the Finance Department. We will miss him.

Fiesta San Juan was a joyful event. Everyone did an outstanding job and should be proud of the way you represented UHP.

BELLA VISTA

BY JEANETTE MELENDEZ

Bella Vista has a few staff changes. Join me in welcoming MA Desire Morales and new provider Dr Jennifer Genuardi from Pennsylvania. She's board certified in both internal medicine and pediatrics and is a National Health Scholar.

We were sorry to lose our health educator Chilein Rivera and patient services representative Alexia Vidal but wish them the best in their new endeavors.

PLAZA DEL SOL

BY HELEN ARTEAGA

UHP's Plaza del Sol hosted a 2010 Census kick-off in Queens on April 23, which included Assemblyman Jose R. Peralta, New York City Council Member Julissa Ferreras, and Rafael Dominguez, U.S. Census Partnership Coordinator. Helen Arteaga, director of Plaza del Sol, introduced the elected officials.

Each spoke about the importance of the Census data, which is used to distribute Congressional seats to states, make decisions about what community services to provide, and distribute \$300 billion in federal funds to local, state and tribal governments.

The census takes place on April 1, 2010 and will mail or deliver a questionnaire to every household in the U.S.



City Council representative Julissa Ferreras, Helen Arteaga, director, Plaza del Sol and Assemblyman Jose Peralta (D-Jackson Heights) discuss the impact of the 2010 census on the community.



What is the Census?

- The census is a count of everyone living in the United States every 10 years.
- The census is mandated by the U.S. Constitution.
- Your participation in the census is required by law.
- There is only a short form, which takes less than 10 minutes to complete.
- Federal law protects the personal information you share during the census.
- Census data are used to distribute Congressional seats to states, to make decisions about what community services to provide, and to distribute \$300 billion in federal funds to local, state and tribal governments each year.

Sun shines on Fiesta San Juan

By MAGALY VALENTIN

After nearly three rain-soaked weekends in June, the Bronx was treated to bright sunshine and a healthy dose of entertainment and culture at Fiesta San Juan, Urban Health Plan's 14th annual health festival. More than 1,500 residents visited the colorful booths and kiosks to learn about health and wellness, while experiencing the cultures of the Americas and Caribbean.

Fiesta San Juan showcases Urban Health Plan's services and programs with great music, raffles, games and prizes. This year Fiesta San Juan celebrated UHP's 35th Anniversary. Nineteen departments promoted health education, Latin American culture, music, costumes and games in brightly decorated interactive kiosks.



Visiting Fiesta felt like a tour of the Americas and the Caribbean in one visit. At the Community Health Worker Program's travel agency booth; you could book a trip to Panama; kick a soccer ball into a net at Bella Vista's Nicaragua booth, or play dominoes in the shadow of El Morro at Dental's Puerto Rico booth.

Fiesta attendees also learned about important local services through community-based organizations including, the New York City Department of Health, Citywide Harm Reduction, Church Alive, among others.



It wouldn't be a fiesta without face painting and balloon animals, and Loopsy-Lou the clown kept the kids entertained. Outstanding dance and musical performances from The Affinity Dancers, Club Tia, Gansta, Coco Mama, LA Troupe Zetwal and Project Hope dancers kept everyone dancing to the rhythm.



Congratulations to the winners of the annual department contest. First place went to Walk-In celebrating Argentina; Second place went to New Patients celebrating Dominican Republic; tied for third place was Nutrition celebrating the United States and the Community Health Worker Program celebrating Panama.



Thanks to all associates for their hard work: the Facilities department, volunteers and PAB, whose tireless work helped make Fiesta run smoothly.

A special thanks to our sponsors: Montefiore, Healthfirst, Health Plus, Affinity, Sol's Pharmacy and Fidelis.

UHP's First Annual Golf Event is a 'Hole in One' Success!

By SUSAN DeMILLE

Leewood Golf Club in Eastchester, New York was the scene for golf, drinks and stray golf carts as Urban Health Plan held its first golf outing on Tuesday, June 30th.

Eighty-four golfers decked out in colorful blue Urban Health Plan golf shirts competed for prizes, including a Carnival Cruise for two and 2 tickets to a major local sporting event. The day was sponsored by Montefiore Medical Center, Third Avenue Imaging, Affinity Health Plan, Mccg, DEC copiers, Bronx Lebanon Hospital and Hebrew Hospital Home.

First, second and third place prizes were awarded to the foursomes representing Montefiore, Hudson Bay Environments, and DEC Copiers.



The day was full of challenges -- both on and off the course - for the Development team, who played bumper cars with the golf carts until they discovered where the brakes were. They spent the day driving around the course dispensing water and lunch, spraying sunscreen on golfers and dodging stray golf balls. The highlight of the afternoon was learning how to put the golf cart in reverse.

Mother Nature cooperated and provided a pleasant sundrenched afternoon on the 18-hole course until dinnertime when the skies darkened and opened up to a 3-hour thunderstorm.



After walking around the course all day, the guests were ready to feast on a delicious buffet dinner and an amazing dessert table. Golf chair Jack Flanagan introduced the winning golfers while Paloma and Dr. Izquierdo thanked the guests for helping UHP to make its first golf outing a success.



The guests clearly had a good time. When Jack Flanagan asked if they planned to attend the golf event next year and bring a guest, the answer was a resounding YES!

A SPECIAL LETTER:

By CYNTHIA MENDEZ

Taking a year off from work because of a personal injury was very difficult for me. Hearing medical providers say "You will not be able to use your right hand for the next 2-3 years and even then, your hand will not be 100% functional" was even worse.

I was determined to get better. Although I would like to take all of the credit for my strength and motivation, I cannot. Most of my motivation came from UHP associates and our patients.

Being away from UHP taught me a valuable lesson about the staff and patients. Two of our operating CREDOS are: #1 - Treat patients, associates, and myself with dignity and respect and #3 - "always put patients and their needs first." Practicing both credos on a daily basis while employed really paid off. You never know whose life you may impact.

Associates called to see how I was doing. They told me that I was missed and that patients were asking about me. Patients would also see me in the street or at the hospital where I was receiving my occupational therapy and motivate me as well. Hearing their comments really encouraged me and made a difference in my life.

During the past year, I learned:

- Being nice to others really pays off.
- Our patients are grateful for the things we do for them.
- People know when you are genuine and care about them. When you least expect it and in your time of need, the ones you least expect are the ones to help you and motivate you to keep fighting. In my case it was our patients and staff.

A special thanks to the Plaza Del Castillo staff and our patients.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

•CANYON RANCH LIFE
ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM AT
UHP

•PALOMA'S TRAVELS

•"HOW I DID IT" - UHP
ASSOCIATE PROFILE

UPCOMING EVENTS:

September 24: DIABETES EXPO

OCTOBER 28: UHP DONOR LUNCHEON

OCTOBER 29: CANYON RANCH INSTITUTE

WELLNESS CENTER OPENING

OCTOBER 29: UHP GALA

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2009 BIRTHDAYS

August 2009

Angela Amendola (8/15)
Laisa Araujo (8/23)
Helen Arteaga (8/2)
Dimitrios Asters (8/8)
Arthur Berger (8/20)
Dawn Marie Beza (8/15)
Natasha Borrero (8/21)
Angela Caba (8/3)
Cheraine Case (8/6)
Marlon Castillo (8/18)
Ernesto Curras (8/20)
Samuel DeLeon (8/15)
Christian Diaz (8/31)
Ann Rochell Escalona-Deolall (8/18)
Maria Gonzalez (8/14)
Alexandria Green (8/16)
Marwan Hammoud (8/31)
Lynette Hargrove (8/11)
Aristotle Iringan (8/3)
Rachel Knopf (8/23)
William Liverpool (8/26)
Guadalupe Lopez (8/16)
Tuneisha Mitchell (8/8)
Julissa Pellerano (8/14)
Damaris Rivera (8/9)
Jessenia Rodriguez (8/31)
Arpana Shivdasani (8/9)
Colette Sturgis (8/8)
Melissa Torres (8/14)
Miller Vaca (8/26)
Luz Vargas (8/14)
Alexsa Vidal (8/8)

September 2009

Dorka Blanco (9/16)
Mercedes Brito (9/24)
Pilar Caldero (9/25)
Carlene Campbell-Gal (9/21)
Jacinto Casas (9/2)
Luis Cintron (9/13)
Jeannette Denizard (9/3)
Venus Fernandez (9/22)
Laura Forti (9/8)
Grant Greeley (9/17)
Bernadette Hernaiz (9/18)
Marlin Hilton-Ponce (9/16)
Prenda Jimenez (9/18)
Stephanie Jimenez (9/25)
Thomas Johnson (9/25)
Moufditi Lerebours (9/6)
Yelena Lindenbaum (9/4)
David Lisojo (9/19)
Madhavi Madhurapantula (9/19)
Elmer Maldonado (9/8)
Karina Mercedes (9/12)
Jean Mevs (9/21)
Marino Munoz (9/30)
Mateo Paca-Alvarez (9/14)
Catherine Pettie (9/26)
Maria Rosales (9/11)
Angel Ruiz (9/12)
Daisy Santiago (9/25)
Evelyn Segura (9/10)
Maria M. Serrano (9/27)
Latoya Thompson (9/26)
Magaly Valentin (9/21)
Brenda Viguera (9/8)
Charlotte Washington (9/7)



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