



News Release
For Immediate Release

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2009 “Public Health Champion of the Year”

Jefferson County Public Health’s diverse group of 2009 public health champions demonstrates the power of partnerships to improve health in our populations. A hand sink; blueprint for a healthier municipality; mass immunization clinics; nutritious school lunches; a curriculum for public health nurses and clients; and, tobacco free school and community policy -- all significant contributions made by community partners in 2009 toward the shared interest of a healthier Jefferson County.

Jefferson County Public Health will honor its 2009 Public Health Champions of the Year at a luncheon and awards ceremony on April 7, 2010 from 11:30 a.m. -1:00 p.m. in the Lookout Mountain Room of the Courts and Administration Building, 100 Jefferson County Parkway, Golden. The Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners and Board of Health will present the awards.

JCPH extends its gratitude to the following 2009 Public Health Champions of the Year for their work improving the health of Jefferson County:

- **It’s the Partnerships that Make It Happen . . . 2009 H1N1 Influenza Mass Vaccination Clinics**

The 2009 H1N1 Influenza virus presented a threat to all of our populations beginning in April of last year. When vaccine became available, at first in small amounts and for certain priority groups and then for the general public, Jefferson County Public Health was faced with a daunting task: protect as many people as possible from a virus that the world had never seen before. The JCPH Emergency Response and Preparedness Program called upon its partners and their diverse set of skills and expertise to implement what would become the largest vaccination effort in the history of the health department. The goal was important, decrease the spread of the H1N1 flu virus through vaccination and education. The planning, collaborations, teamwork and overall response were exceptional. Over 22,000 residents attended one of the free school-located clinics or special population clinics, and over 120,000 vaccines were distributed directly to local healthcare providers for their patients. The success of this large scale response would not have been possible without the dedication and support of the Jefferson County Public Schools, the Visiting Nurse Association, Urgent Care of Colorado and the Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office.

Jeffco Public Schools

Bob Smith, Chief Operations Officer of Support Services; John McDonald, Executive Director, Safety, Security and Emergency Planning and Lynn Setzer, Executive Director, Communication Services

A school facility provides the perfect place to hold a mass immunization clinic for a number of reasons including its size, layout, location and familiarity to the community. Jefferson County Public Schools went above and beyond providing multiple facilities to operate our H1N1 mass clinics. They were an integral part of the planning and facilitation process throughout the H1N1 response. Bob and John went out of their way to assure that the school-located clinics would run smoothly and that staff and families were safe. They not only attended planning meetings but acted as an essential liaison between public health and the school system; coordinated site visits and resolved scheduling conflicts with the school facilities. Lynn and her office made sure faculty, parents and children had up to date information on prevention, treatment and vaccination availability. Partnering with public health, Lynn provided regular updates with important prevention information via newsletters, the district web sites and letters home. Once clinics were opened to the general public, the school communications office saw to it that every school parent received a personal phone message of clinic times and locations. Bob Smith, John McDonald and Lynn Setzer with Jeffco Public Schools are public health champions for their time, effort and dedication to protecting children from influenza.

Jefferson County Incident Management Team

Tim McSherry

With the assistance and leadership of Tim McSherry, the Jefferson County Type III Incident Management Team was able to quickly and efficiently join the Public Health team to assist and facilitate the H1N1 response. The Emergency Operations Center was made available for public health and a multi agency coordination structure was set in motion. Tim McSherry and the Incident Management Team are public health champions for their work attending the JCPH planning meetings, assisting with the development of the incident command structure, organizing site maps for each school location, coordinating security and communications, and creating the incident action plan for each school located clinic.

West Metro Fire Rescue

Clint Fey

Clint Fey and his team at West Metro Fire Rescue were instrumental in the success of the response. Not only did they provide emergency services for the school-located clinics, they offered their training facility to hold special priority group clinics of their own. They administered vaccine from their facility to emergency management services personnel and their families as well as to childcare providers and other high-risk groups throughout Jefferson County. Public Health Champion Clint Fey and West Metro Fire Rescue made it possible for targeted vaccination efforts to continue in a timely manner for those at highest risk while mass vaccination clinics were being planned simultaneously.

Urgent Care of Colorado

Susan Sipay

Urgent Care of Colorado also played an important role in H1N1 response efforts. Susan Sipay, Attending Physician and Medical Director, is a long-standing, active member of the JCPH PanFlu/All Hazards committee and was one of the first private providers to volunteer to administer vaccine. Under the coordination of Susan, Urgent Care of Colorado administered 320 vaccines to patients at no cost. It was with the support of private providers such as Public Health Champion Susan Sipay and Urgent Care of Colorado that we were able to keep vaccination efforts going while we planned the mass clinics.

Visiting Nurse Association

Dani DeBardi

Nicki Sabin

Dani DeBardi and Nicki Sabin played a tremendous role in the H1N1 response and recovery efforts. They went above and beyond attending the planning meetings and facilitating the nursing staff during the vaccination clinics. These two champions pitched in wherever help was needed. The Visiting Nurse Association held clinics at their own location, assisted with JCPH special clinics, linked their web site to the JCPH site, helped with getting flyers and educational materials out to community members and kept a smile and a positive attitude throughout the response. The VNA also offered clinics at their location once the JCPH mass clinics were complete. This provided an important resource for families needing a booster shot. Thousands of people were vaccinated, and many praises were received regarding smooth clinic flow and customer friendly staff thanks due in large part to the efforts of public health champions Dani DeBardi and Nicki Sabin.

With the support and commitment of these Public Health Champions from Jeffco Schools, West Metro Fire Rescue, Visiting Nurse Association and Urgent Care of Colorado Jefferson County Public Health was able to successfully administer and distribute over 142,000 H1N1 vaccinations to our community.

- **One Hand Sink Protects Thousands of Jefferson County Children**

Columbia Sanitary Service, Inc.

Sheila and Denny Nessler

In August of 2009, with the school year approaching and the threat of H1N1 illness increasing Jefferson County Public Health was immersed in encouraging hand washing in the county's schools to prevent the spread of disease. That meant making sure there were sufficient facilities for handwashing – in ALL schools. A visit and evaluation of Mount Evans Outdoor Lab School revealed there were not enough facilities for hand washing in the dining hall. With just two sinks and an average of ninety 6th grade students, eating three meals a day, a different group of students every week for the entire school year, one case of H1N1 could easily turn into an outbreak. Time was running short - Outdoor Lab was scheduled to start in less than a month. We began making calls looking for rental companies willing to donate the use of a portable hand washing station. Call after call, we were turned down. Companies were willing to rent us the sinks we desperately needed, but couldn't donate their use. We were losing hope until we called Columbia Sanitary in Golden. Upon explaining the situation to Sheila, her only question was "when do you need it?" On September 9th, Sheila and her husband Denny drove 30 miles of mountain and dirt roads to donate and deliver a portable, double basin hand washing station to Mt Evans Outdoor Lab. They also donated soap and paper towels to stock the station.

Over 3,500 people circulate through Mount Evans Outdoor Lab each year. Thanks to public health champions Sheila and Denny Nessler of Columbia Sanitary they can now do so with clean hands thus greatly reducing the risk of many illnesses, including the Flu.

- **Healthy Eating, Healthier Kids . . . Jeffco Schools Director of Food and Nutrition Services Places Nutrition at the Top of the Menu**

Jeffco Public Schools Food and Nutrition Department employs approximately 600 full and part-time employees who prepare over 6 million meals a year. That is a lot of meals and a huge opportunity to make a difference in the nutritional health of students. Linda Stoll, the schools Director of Food and Nutrition Services is a Public Health Champion for her work providing healthy food choices to the County's 86,000

students. Linda and her staff introduced many important changes in 2009 that will positively enhance the nutritional status of students for years to come.

First off, an Executive Chef and Trainer whose mission is to help the schools transition from its current system of “heat and serve” meals to a system of minimally processed foods obtained from local sources. Chef Paul, as he is called, is working with staff on menu development, recipe modification, as well as establishing relationships with local providers. Chef Paul will serve as their expert trainer, training all of the employees in the proper methods to prepare the new menu items.

Preparing healthy foods means having updated equipment and in 2009 the schools received over \$179,000 in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Stimulus Funds for food service equipment. Major pieces of equipment including ovens, ranges, freezers, walk-in coolers will be updated as well as serving lines at 11 sites. They also installed steamers at 64 sites, bringing the total of schools with steamers to 102. Steamers will be a valuable piece of equipment to assist with preparation of many new healthy recipes.

Serving healthier foods also necessitated getting rid of unhealthy ingredients and purchasing healthier ones. Chocolate and strawberry milk has been reformulated so that it contains no high fructose corn syrup. The yogurt at the elementary schools doesn't have high fructose corn syrup anymore. Jeffco Schools now serves 100% whole wheat products that are 100% natural with no additives, no preservatives and no dough conditioners. Canned vegetables have been replaced with either fresh or frozen. And, local products from places like Phil's Fresh Foods in Boulder and marinara sauce from the Blue Parrott in Louisville are now standards.

Finally, Linda Stohl and Jeffco Schools Nutrition Services have worked hard to become “greener”. Beginning this coming Fall, they will return to washing plastic trays in the elementary schools in place of using the Styrofoam plates. As the School implements a district recycling program, all of the many milk containers will be recycled.

In the words of Jeffco PTA Health and Nutrition Chair, “Linda Stoll has a creative approach to problem solving and working through the road improving the National School Lunch Program. She collaborates not only with her wonderful staff, but with area businesses and student and parent communities. Her determination to improve the nutritional offerings for students is greatly appreciated by PTA, Parents, Students, Faculty and Staff across the district.” Public health Champion Linda Stoll has been an invaluable addition to the Jefferson County School District, and the many changes she has already implemented are making a huge difference in the lives of many Jefferson County children.

• **Patricia Gorman Barry, RN, PhD and the BrainWise Curriculum**

Dr. Patricia Gorman Barry is a public health champion for her work developing BrainWise, a curriculum that teaches sound decision-making and then partnering with public health to improve the lives of some of our most vulnerable populations. The BrainWise curriculum has been selected as the foundation for all nursing interventions in the Jefferson County Public Health/Human Services Collaboration Program. BrainWise has enabled our Human Services clients to have both the belief and the skills they need to overcome the patterns of family functioning and environmental factors that led them to involvement with Human Services.

In 2009, Jefferson County Department of Human Services contracted with Jefferson County Public Health to provide public health nursing services to their clients receiving TANF benefits or involved with the Division of Children Youth and Families. These clients are frequently families in crisis with multiple children and

complex health issues including child abuse, substance abuse, domestic violence, mental and physical health problems. They often have multiple resources available; however they do not know how to utilize them to attain their goal of self-sufficiency. It quickly became apparent that providing effective and relevant public health nursing services to these clients, without being overwhelmed by the diversity and complexity of their needs, required a very different approach from other well established nurse home visit programs. To that end, the BrainWise curriculum was selected as the primary nursing intervention for the newly created Jefferson County Public Health Nursing/Human Services Program.

BrainWise enables nurses to teach clients, skills that will help them to make better choices and decisions. It allows nurses to address multiple problems with clients of all ages simultaneously and provides a common language. Clients readily relate to the “10 Wise Ways” of the curriculum and appreciate its non-judgmental approach to help them overcome barriers to being self-sufficient! One client told her nurse “Yeah, you can come over and help me work on my brain”!

In addition to developing the BrainWise curriculum, Dr. Barry has generously donated her time to provide ongoing education and consultation to our program’s nursing staff. Dr. Gorman is a Public Health Champion for all of her work assisting vulnerable populations served by public health nurses.

- **City of Wheat Ridge Community Development Staff . . . Blueprint for a healthy and sustainable Wheat Ridge**

The City of Wheat Ridge’s Community Development Department is a public health champion for its work developing and implementing the “Envision Wheat Ridge, City of Wheat Ridge Comprehensive Plan” in October of 2009. This visionary document provides a blueprint for creating a healthy and sustainable Wheat Ridge.

Working closely with Jefferson County Public Health’s Live Well Wheat Ridge Project, the Community Development and Public Works staff have been actively engaged on a myriad of projects to support the successful implementation of the Comp Plan. Planning for safe bicycling lanes and pedestrian crossings, improving and planning for the 38th Avenue corridor community and developing a Mixed Use Zoning District website that allows citizens to be directly involved and learn more about the public health benefits of mixed use zoning.

Developing a Comprehensive Plan that has community support can be challenging. The Community Development Staff utilized a highly participatory process to ensure a variety of community-level involvement. For example, the City hosted community workshops, a Citizen Advisory Committee meetings, technical advisory meetings, interviews, city council study sessions, and online portal to harness community input. The rich and diverse community input helped develop a very comprehensive and dynamic plan.

Not only does the document provide strategic guidance and direction for future development, but it prioritizes areas for reinvestment and revitalization, targets corridors for mixed use to support commercial growth, and identifies neighborhoods for reinvestment. Additionally, the comp plan prioritizes the need for increased public transportation, enhanced bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure, improved trail connectivity, and roadway design to ensure “safe, attractive and comfortable access and travel for all users.” Finally, the plan establishes a Sustainability Task Force to prioritize and establish goals to conserve, reduce resource consumption and educate, invest in community gardens, identify regulations to support farmer’s markets, and to support urban agriculture. Furthermore, written into the plan is a priority for partnering with

the Police Department, schools and neighborhoods to promote safety programs and to support Safe Routes to School programs and to work with Jefferson County to maintain and enhance parks, recreation and open space. Wheat Ridge's Community Development Department didn't just come up with a comprehensive plan, they came up with a plan that improves and promotes public health and for that, they are public health champions.

- **Lakewood High Students Come Together to Reduce Youth Tobacco Use**

Lakewood High School students Nikayla Strauss, Katie Rohwer, Yaa Asare and Kelsey Kerr made a significant impact increasing the awareness of students and staff at Lakewood High School about youth tobacco use and the new school tobacco possession policy. In addition, these four students have worked to educate members of the community and the Lakewood City Council, about best practices and strategies to reduce youth tobacco use. Their commitment and dedication to health, along with the impact they have made in their community make them Public Health Champions.

The Lakewood Breathe Easy or BE Team members led a number of school-based projects to prevent youth from picking up the tobacco habit and supporting those that do use, to quit. This has included school-wide Great American Smoke-Out challenges and Through with Chew Week. During both of these activities, the students educated their peers on the dangers of tobacco use and secondhand smoke and connected them with resources. In the spring of 2009, they worked with all of the 6th graders at Eiber Elementary on a tobacco awareness day.

The Lakewood BE Team members have also been busy outside of the schools. In August of 2009, their compelling testimonies about the rates of tobacco use and strategies to prevent tobacco use helped move the Lakewood City Council to begin a process to consider strengthening the city's smoke-free law and to include provisions that would help reduce youth access to tobacco products. On Earth Day 2009, the students partnered with other tobacco control advocates and Exempla Lutheran Medical Center to help cleanup cigarette butts on Exempla's campus, raising awareness of Exempla's Tobacco-Free policy and how cigarette butts are the number one source of litter. These dynamic and self-driven young students have contributed to every major area of tobacco control in their community. They are tomorrow's leaders and the work they have done and their commitment to health makes them 2009 Public Health Champions.

Jefferson County Public Health extends its gratitude to all of the 2009 Public Health Champions.

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