



**Catalyst** is a semi-annual online newsletter designed to *advance* people and organizations that produce positive change, *promote* programs and policies that improve health and healthcare, and *connect* people, programs and resources across Georgia. **Catalyst** amplifies the voice of nonprofit health organizations and efforts to promote better health and health care in Georgia.

## President's Corner



### Join the Conversation in Our *New Health Forum*

It is my pleasure to announce the debut of Health Forum, an interactive web-based discussion addressing health and health care issues in Georgia. Located on the Foundation's website [www.healthcaregeorgia.org](http://www.healthcaregeorgia.org), the Forum presents health care consumers, providers, advocates, policy makers and others with an opportunity to introduce fresh perspectives on how we individually and collectively advance the health of all Georgians. [>> more](#)

## Foundation News

### Board Officers Named

Healthcare Georgia Foundation announces the following Board officers for 2011:

**Ted Holloway, MD,**  
Board Chair

**Francis J. Tedesco, MD,**  
Vice Chair

**Rich D'Amaro,**  
Treasurer

## In Support of Our Grantmaking Priority Areas

### Addressing Health Disparities

#### Two Awarded Grants to Examine Economic Impact of Highly Disparate Health Conditions

Children's dental health; hospital accountability; racial and ethnic disparities in Georgia. The topics are diverse, yet each is the focus of a 2010 Healthcare Georgia Foundation grant award addressing health disparities.

The Foundation strives to encourage and strengthen the state's capacity, leadership, readiness and focus for eliminating high disparity health conditions. Consistent with the Foundation's mission and goals, one grant-making priority is Addressing Health Disparities. Within this priority, the focus is on grants that create the necessary conditions to explore and address the commonly agreed upon causes of the health care gap: unequal access to health services and treatment; socio-cultural and informational barriers that prevent full access; and an inadequate supply of health care providers.

With these principles in mind, the Foundation announced the following 2010 grants, totaling \$160,000, to examine the economic impact of high disparity health conditions:

#### Georgia Southern University

\$80,000

To examine the economic impact of children's lack of access to preventive and routine dental care in rural communities in southeast Georgia.

#### Morehouse School of Medicine, Inc.

\$80,000

Awarded to the National Center for Primary Care at Morehouse School of Medicine to examine the impact of racial and ethnic disparity on health care in Georgia.

For more information, contact Lisa Medellin at 404-653-0990.

### Expanding Access to Primary Healthcare

#### Foundation to Shore Up Health Safety Net With Support for Free and Charitable Clinics

In response to a growing volume of uninsured and underinsured Georgians, Healthcare Georgia Foundation is receiving proposals from nonprofit health organizations that serve this population, offering health services at little or no cost and relying

**Lynn Thogersen,**  
Secretary

**Health Care Heroes:  
2010 Joseph D.  
Greene Community  
Service Award  
Recipients Honored**

Healthcare Georgia Foundation recognized five individuals and two community collaboratives for their dedication to improving health and health care across Georgia.

Presented during a special ceremony on March 31 at Connections 2010, the Foundation's grantee and partnership conference, the award embodies the legacy of the late Joseph D. Greene, a revered public leader and founding Board member. Mr. Greene helped steward the organization from its inception in 1999 through his retirement in 2006; he passed away in 2007.

Honored for their unselfish, charitable acts which have been given freely from the heart and with significant benefit to the health of Georgians, the 2010 award recipients are:

**Individual Recipients**

**Greg Block**

Volunteer organization:  
First Step

**Eleanor (Lee) Frances  
Brown, RN, CNP,  
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Volunteer organization:  
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**Bill Cohen**

Volunteer organization:  
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Impaired

**Susan Greene, RN,  
MSN, GNP**

substantially on volunteer health professionals to provide these services.

Free and charitable clinics are an important component of Georgia's health safety net for uninsured and underserved people in the state, particularly in rural communities. According to the Georgia Free Clinic Network, the state's free and charitable clinics delivered health services to approximately 175,000 low-income, uninsured Georgians in 2008. Eighty percent of free clinic patients have one or more chronic illnesses, requiring extensive and ongoing medical care, care coordination and patient education.

Georgia's charitable clinics serve a diverse patient population: 40 percent Caucasian, 41 percent African-American and 16 percent Hispanic/Latino. Fifty-seven percent of clinic patients are female, and 85 percent are between ages 18 and 65. These vital clinics serve as an alternative to patients inappropriately utilizing emergency rooms to access care. In some communities, particularly in rural areas where resources may be limited, clinics are the only viable primary care option for the uninsured.

In December 2007 and June 2008, the Foundation provided \$1.3 million in funding to free and charitable clinics through two rounds of safety net grants. The grants were awarded to 16 organizations statewide to help them build capacity, improve quality and assess health outcomes associated with clinic services. With this current round of funding, the Foundation wants to help clinics:

- build upon prior funding efforts to ensure that clinics can respond to the growing number of patients seen as a result of the economic downturn;
- address gaps to individuals accessing quality health care; and
- move toward becoming a consistent source of health care, or medical home, for individuals in their communities.

Even with the passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, the Foundation believes safety net providers will remain essential to providing health care to the uninsured. Many components of the new law will not be fully implemented until 2014, and even after implementation, a fraction of Georgians will still be uninsured. It is, therefore, imperative that safety net providers continue to improve access to care through coordinated delivery systems to ensure patients' needs are met.

The Foundation anticipates awarding approximately 10 to 15 grants of up to \$40,000 to qualifying clinics throughout the state. Grants will be awarded in spring of 2011. For more information contact Andrea Kellum at 404-653-0990.

**Integrating Physical and Mental  
Health Care for Underserved Youth:  
Foundation Aims to Support Collaborative Concept**

Approximately 180,000 youth in Georgia, ages 9-17, are living with a serious emotional disturbance. Currently, Georgia ranks 44th nationally in per capita expenditures for mental health services. In 2007, the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice reported that 46 percent of the youth in its system who received mental health services were classified as "emotionally

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Happy Feet of Fannin  
County, Inc.

### **Alana Shepherd**

Volunteer organization:  
Shepherd Center

### **Collaborative Recipients**

### **Morehouse School of Medicine**

Prevention Research  
Center

### **Chatham County Safety Net**

Planning Council

The Foundation made a \$1,000 donation in each recipient's name to the nonprofit organization of his or her choice. The award is meant to continue to celebrate Mr. Greene's legacy and the values he held dear and to inspire others to dedicate their time and talents to improving health and health care for those they serve.

### **Grantee/Partner News**

### **Emory, UGA Receive Public Health Training Center Awards**

### **Central Georgia Regional Health Summit Held**

### **Campaign Seeks To Rebuild Georgia's Public Health System\_**

### **Alarming Trends Set Campaign in Motion\_**

### **By The Numbers\_**

### **Partnering Up To Rebuild\_**

disordered," and 10 percent were considered "severely emotionally disturbed."

In an effort to expand access to affordable, quality health care for underserved youth and improve outcomes for this at-risk population, Healthcare Georgia Foundation is providing grant support to eligible applicant organizations to implement a two-year demonstration project which would help identify best practice models for integrating primary and mental health care services.

Events over the past several years have resulted in opportunities to create real change in Georgia's mental health system. The current legal battle between the state and the U.S. Department of Justice, coupled with the creation of a new Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, have set the stage for positive restructuring. It will require strong leadership to create a comprehensive system that can meet the state's needs and set a national standard.

The Foundation aims to support the collaborative care model, which has proven to be an effective strategy for integrating primary care and mental health services. In collaborative care, physical and mental health providers partner to manage the treatment of mild to moderate psychiatric disorders and to stabilize severe psychiatric disorders in the primary care setting. Collaborative care can be implemented in a number of ways, but often services are collocated; that is, primary care providers and mental health providers are located in the same building or on the same premises. The idea is that the proximity of these services will make it easier for people to access care for both physical and mental health needs.

Healthcare Georgia Foundation has engaged in an extensive review of literature on best practice models for integrating physical and mental health services and worked closely with experts to assess Georgia's particular situation. The Foundation will provide up to \$150,000 over two years to support two to three demonstration projects in the state. These demonstration projects will help to document the successes and challenges of implementing the collaborative care model in a real world setting. Lessons learned will be used to guide the Foundation's future grant making and serve to inform the replication of this model across Georgia.

Grants will be awarded to organizations that demonstrate resource capacity and readiness to implement a collaborative care/collocation model from the start of the grant award. The target population is children and adolescents (ages 5-18), and their families. Partnerships are encouraged among community-based health centers, nonprofit health care organizations, community service boards, nonprofit primary health care centers and community-based mental health centers serving low-income populations. Grants will be awarded in spring of 2011. For more information contact Lisa Medellin at 404-653-0990.

## **Strengthening Nonprofit Health Organizations**

### **Capacity Building Project Enters Next Phase**

As part of its continuing commitment to assist underserved populations and the organizations that serve them, Healthcare Georgia Foundation is moving forward into Phase IV of its

Capacity Building Project as a way to help nonprofits assess their performance and achieve their goals.

The Foundation awarded the Georgia Center for Nonprofits, Inc. a \$140,000 grant to implement the next phase of this multi-year project. Twenty-one organizations have been selected to participate in one or more specific services offered by the Foundation's Capacity Building Project. These services include the provision of organizational assessments, support for executive coaching, delivery of customized technical assistance, and other consulting services. Additionally, all participants are eligible to attend a number of capacity building workshops over the next two years.

The following tentative schedule of workshops has been announced from Fall 2010 through Spring 2012:

- Fundraising Strategies and Best Practices (last quarter 2010)
- Leading and Managing High Performance Teams (first quarter 2011)
- Organizational Performance Planning and Annual Reviews (second quarter 2011)
- Confidential, Facilitated Discussions for CEOs and Executive Directors (third quarter 2011)
- Marketing and Community Engagement Strategies Using the Web and Social Media (fourth quarter 2011)
- Program Evaluation and Communicating Results (first quarter 2012)

More than 40 organizations have participated in the Foundation's multi-year Capacity Building Project to date. Eligible to access one or more specific project services are the newest participants:

Auditory-Verbal Center  
Camp Kudzu  
Center for Black Women's Wellness  
Center for Visually Impaired  
Christ Church Health Service, Augusta  
Coastal Counseling Center  
Columbus Wellness Center  
Friends of Disabled Adults and Children  
Georgia Cancer Coalition  
Georgia Lions Lighthouse  
Georgia Mountain Health  
Good Samaritan Health and Wellness  
HealthMPowers  
Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies  
McIntosh Trails  
Mercy Medical Clinic and Foundation  
Metropolitan Counseling  
New Horizons Community Service Board  
Prevent Blindness Georgia  
Rally Foundation  
Wholistic Stress Control



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The on-line conversation went live on December 1, 2010 and will continue in the weeks ahead. The Foundation invites individuals and organizations throughout Georgia to participate in this first exchange. We begin with a discussion of Health Care Reform in Georgia, specifically focusing on the underlying question: **How do we make health reform work for Georgians?** I cannot think of a more pressing or pertinent topic for this initial discourse.

With the passage of the **Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act** on March 23, 2010, health care reform became law. The legislative process surrounding this bill was filled with intense debate — much of it emotional and heavily politicized. Even today, months after the fact, we find challenging, thought-provoking discussions continuing on many fronts with elected officials, providers, payers and consumers all seeking to interpret the intent and consequence of this historic legislation. In fact, the debate is the focus of the Foundation's [HealthVoices: Health Reform in Georgia: Perception or Reality?](#) published in August 2010.

With Health Forum, the Foundation is seeking to engage the voices of policymakers, researchers, the health care workforce, legislators, nonprofit and for-profit organizations, citizens and community stakeholders in an effort to identify health care gaps and discern opportunities for our state. The Forum is meant to bring together a range of perspectives in one place, create effective health policy, and ultimately help us fine-tune our grant-making approach to advancing health in Georgia.

We invite you to join our Forum. Visit our newly revised, website home page and select the Health Forum option in the right-hand

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column. Take a moment to register or log in, and then join the conversation!

We look forward to your insights and ideas on how we can collectively improve health and health care in Georgia. Please share your thoughts on consumer education, leadership, and what successful health reform in Georgia looks like. New forum topics will be introduced periodically along with featured guest commentators. Let us hear from you!

Gary D. Nelson, Ph.D.  
President  
Healthcare Georgia Foundation



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## Grantee/Partner News

### Emory, UGA Receive Public Health Training Center Awards

Healthcare Georgia Foundation congratulates Emory University and the University of Georgia on recent Public Health Training Center (PHTC) awards by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius announced awards totaling \$16.8 million to 27 PHTCs at schools of public health and other public or nonprofit institutions across the country. The PHTC program helps improve the public health system by enhancing skills of the current and future public health workforce. Institutions accredited to provide graduate or specialized training in public health are eligible for funding. Emory's award totaled \$650,000, while Georgia was awarded \$630,032.

Secretary Sebelius said the awards represent "a dramatic increase" in support for Public Health Training Centers. "Investing in prevention and public health is the foundation for improving the health and well-being of all Americans," she commented.

"Whether facing public health emergencies such as natural disasters, or chronic conditions like obesity, a well-trained public health workforce is critical to ensuring the nation's health and welfare," said Mary K. Wakefield, Ph.D., R.N., administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, which oversees the PHTC program.

### Central Georgia Regional Health Summit Held

Kudos to organizers, planners, presenters and participants for the second annual Central Georgia Regional Health Summit, held November 9 in the Georgia National Fairgrounds in Perry, Georgia. The event kicked off the second year of programming for the Regional Health Summit, a three-year initiative led by Community Health Works (CHW) to improve health literacy and health outcomes in seven central Georgia counties—Bibb, Crawford, Houston, Jones, Monroe, Peach and Twig.

The summit helps bring together community leaders to build partnerships and share information necessary for creating effective and sustainable solutions to health care problems facing the central Georgia region. In October of 2009, CHW convened more than 100 community leaders representing the top minds in health care and health policy, local government, local school districts, faith-based and civic organizations. The purpose of the summit was to discuss the impact that unhealthy behaviors have on regional communities with a primary focus on the prevalence of obesity and related chronic diseases, including diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

After a year of creating action plans within each county, CHW reconvened community members to hear from statewide and national speakers on the specific focus areas for each county: school wellness, worksite wellness, and local government. CHW intends to continue working with organizational partners and community leaders to develop and promote the best ideas rising from this second summit.

## Campaign Seeks To Rebuild Georgia's Public Health System

Healthcare Georgia Foundation is spearheading a multi-year campaign aimed at educating policy makers and the public about the need to reinvest in and rebuild the state's public health system. With planning begun in 2009, the campaign, "Partner Up! For Public Health," saw great progress in 2010, including a website roll-out ([www.togetherwecandobetter.com](http://www.togetherwecandobetter.com)); organization of a statewide advisory board of nearly 30 organizations; and the development of advocacy leadership academies in Tifton, Savannah, Rome and Athens.

Initiated and funded by the Foundation, the campaign is in reaction to nearly a decade of funding cuts that have decimated the state's public health system. "This initiative is aimed at building public and political will," said Gary D. Nelson, president, Healthcare Georgia Foundation. "Georgia's public health system stops the spread of infectious diseases, ensures food safety, promotes good health and manages chronic conditions. If it is to continue that work, it is necessary to reverse the dangerous and harmful trends that have severely compromised public health capacity in recent years."

The time to reinvest in and rebuild Georgia's public health system is now, Nelson said. The campaign aims to achieve the following:

- Move Georgia from the bottom to the top of state health rankings;
- Restore a decimated state health budget;
- Revitalized a dramatically downsized public health workforce;
- Ensure that public policy results in desirable public health outcomes; and
- Position public health leadership with greater authority, autonomy and resources.

Interested persons are encouraged to visit the campaign Web site and get involved. In addition to relevant news articles and resource postings, the Web site offers opportunities for people to lend their names to pertinent petitions, sign up for e-mails and e-mail alerts, and volunteer.

## Alarming Trends Set Campaign in Motion

Since 2000 Georgia's population has grown 20 percent, but per capita state spending for the public health system has been cut 21 percent. Today, per capita state spending on public health in Georgia is less than a nickel a day, among the lowest in the nation. Most recently in the FY 2011 budget the Division of Public Health's (DPH) general fund budget was cut from \$158.6 million to about \$148.9 million, a reduction of about \$9.75 million.

Georgia ranked 38th in per capita state public health appropriations, according to the March 2010 "[Shortchanging America's Health](#)" report by the Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Georgia's budget was substantially less than its neighbors, including South Carolina, Florida, Tennessee and Alabama.

Lost positions, low pay and high turnover hinder Georgia's public health system. More than 1,000 of approximately 7,500 public health positions across the state are vacant, according to the DPH.

In addition to vacancies, hundreds of positions have been eliminated over the past decade. For example, during a time when the state's population grew by more than a million, the public health nursing workforce declined nearly 22 percent, falling from 1,817 positions in 2002 to 1,423 this year, according to DPH.

Years of inadequate funding and staffing have had serious consequences, said Bob Stolarick, executive director of the Georgia Public Health Association: "Georgia historically ranks near the bottom of state-by-state rankings of overall health indicators. Our state has some of the nation's worst measurements of health determinants and outcomes (see below). Cutbacks are impacting environmental health inspections and there continues to be serious concern that the system will collapse during a major emergency or pandemic because of the shortage of public health nurses."

Georgia did poorly in rankings such as The Commonwealth Fund's "[Aiming Higher](#)" (38th in 2009) and "[America's Health Rankings](#)" (43rd in 2009), a joint effort of United Health Foundation, the American Public Health Association and Partnership for Prevention.

"It's difficult to overstate the damage done to Georgia's public health system in recent years," said Charles Hayslett, CEO of Hayslett Group LLC, an Atlanta-based public relations firm that is managing the campaign. "Long-term, our goal is to persuade the General Assembly to restore the funding they've cut in recent years, and to get the state's public health system back to a footing where it can truly meet its responsibilities. But before we get to that point, we have to come to grips with just how little the public – and many of our political leaders – understand about the role of our public health system." The Hayslett Group has received Foundation grants totaling \$430,000 to support the implementation of this statewide campaign.

### **By The Numbers**

Among the 50 states, Georgia earns these poor health rankings, according to the "[2008 Health Rankings: Georgia and Georgia's Children](#)":

- 31st for the percentage of adults who smoke
- 37th for the percentage of adults who do not exercise regularly
- 38th for the percentage of overweight high school students
- 39th for the percentage of adults who are obese
- 41st for the percentage of adults with diabetes
- 40th for infant mortality
- 41st for teen birth rate
- 43rd for pre-term births
- 45th for low birthweight babies
- 47th for the prevalence of infectious diseases like tuberculosis, hepatitis and AIDS

Georgia's most recent dismal health grade came this summer in the 2010 "[F as in Fat](#)" report: Georgia trailed only Mississippi in the percentage of children between 10 and 17 who are obese. The report is produced by the Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

### **Partnering Up To Rebuild**

An advisory board of nearly 30 stakeholder organizations shares the vision of rebuilding Georgia's public health system:

AARP; American Cancer Society; American Diabetes Association; American Lung Association; Armstrong Atlantic State University; Association County Commissioners of Georgia; Community Health Works of Georgia; Dougherty County Board of Health; Echols County Board of Health; Emory University; Fort Valley State University; Georgia Breast Cancer Coalition Fund; Georgia Budget & Policy Institute; Georgia Chapter - American Academy of Pediatrics; Georgia Free Clinic Network; Georgia Municipal Association; Georgia Public Health Association; Georgia Rural Health Association; Georgia Southern University; Georgia State University; Georgia Women for a Change, Inc.; Georgians for a Healthy Future; Gwinnett County Board of Health; HealthStat; Medical College of Georgia School of Medicine, Savannah; Morehouse School of Medicine; Society for Public Health Education (Georgia); and, University of Georgia.

**Leading the Way:**

**Advancing Public Health in Georgia**

Leading the Way:  
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