



New Mexico Assembly on School-Based Health Care

Making Strides A Note from the Executive Director

by Howard M. Spiegelman

This year continues very exciting and dynamic for the school-based health care movement here in New Mexico and around the country.

The New Mexico Assembly on School-Based Health Care has grown these past months nearly doubling its budget and increasing its staff from one person to three. We have taken over operational control of the six-year W.K. Kellogg SBHC Policy Program grant from New Mexico Voices for Children, as well as its 4 Youth program. We have begun a series of advocacy-training workshops and will soon offer a course on “Grantsmanship 101 for SBHCs.” Our website (www.nmassembly.org) will be updated and revised by the end of the year, and the New Mexico SBHC Operations Manual, published in conjunction with the Office of School Health (OSH), is now being adopted for use by three other states.

While the NM Assembly can claim many accomplishments over these past months, we are eagerly looking forward to a very active legislative session. If we, as a movement and principal advocates for SBHCs, are going to have an impact on legislation resulting in more sustained funding for *all* SBHCs, we will have to work more closely as a statewide team and line up our legislators, supporters and champions this fall. So stay tuned. You will soon be hearing more from us on this.

Please mark your calendars for Thursday, Feb. 22, 2007, when the NM Assembly will host “SBHC Day 2007” at the state Capitol from 8:30am to 3:30pm. Twenty-four tables have been reserved for SBHCs from around the state on a first come, first served basis. The governor, Lt. governor, and legislators will be invited to speak at noon. We’ll also feature Native American SBHCs and expect to have a good number of students from our SBHC Youth Advocacy Groups. We will provide lunch.

At the national level, NASBHC (www.nasbhc.org), with the help and support of the National Association of Community Health Centers

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Letter from the President

On Target!

Dear SBHC friend,

The NM Assembly Board of Directors is enthusiastic, committed and on board! SBHCs and active community members from diverse areas of the state are well represented within the Board membership. We have four active committees: Native American, Membership, Advocacy and Finance. Each committee presented a full report at our first full Board meeting. These committees are open to all NM Assembly members.

Working together, the Board has created our strategic plan. I want to share the direction of the state Assembly with you. Our three-year strategic plan includes 11 goals, organized under three overall strategies. These strategies are: assuring effective policy advocacy, offering a broad range of member services, and establishing a fully functioning organization. Our goals for each strategy include: building congressional support for federal legislation, increasing funding from the state general fund, acquiring financial support through a diverse mix of sources, delivering technical assistance across New Mexico, implementing models for SBHCs that serve Native American youth through our 4 Youth project, doubling our membership, hiring adequate, full-time staff for the NM Assembly, and retaining a continued strong, active and diverse Board.

Because the NM Assembly is a membership organization, it is *your* organization and the Board is here to listen and act upon your needs, ideas, hopes, and dreams for the children of New Mexico that are served through SBHCs statewide. I want you to know that the Board exists to support you and your critical work with the children and youth of New Mexico. Having worked in SBHCs for more than 12 years, I have seen this program grow through creativity, commitment, perseverance and, at times, humor. I stand with you on this journey as we recommit ourselves this year to our adventure.

Together, we make the difference!

Maria Duran
President
NM Assembly on School-Based Health Care

Bringing 4 Youth into the Fold

by Aaron Carr, Program Manager

New Mexico's Native-American communities face many geographic, linguistic, cultural and economic barriers, and the resulting health disparities are of urgent concern to parents and tribal members. Addressing those issues is the main goal of the 4 Youth project, which was recently transferred from New Mexico Voices for Children to the NM Assembly.

Native Americans face some of the most dire health issues currently facing the country – namely, diabetes and substance abuse. According to a recent report from the Con Alma Health Foundation, Native Americans are 770 percent more likely to die from alcoholism and 420 percent more likely to die from diabetes than the rest of the nation's population. Native Americans now have the highest prevalence of Type 2 diabetes in the world.

Like the NM Assembly, 4 Youth works with policymakers and communities to establish school-based health centers. The difference is that these SBHCs are located in tribal schools. Working successfully with Native-American communities means understanding and acknowledging the unique cultural, economic, and historical context of these communities and their members – especially their youth.

Working with Native-American communities also means building long-term relationships on a basis of trust. That's why two of our key partners are the Northern Navajo Medical Center and Indian Health Services (IHS). We also partner with the state through the Department of Health, the Human Services Department's Medicaid Office, and the University of New Mexico's ACL Teen Centers. The Northwest SBHC Champions and NM Voices for Children round out our team.

Now in our second year, our current work revolves around our four project partners: the ACL Teen Centers/SBHCs serving Laguna/Acoma and To'hajiilee, both just west of Albuquerque, and the Teen Life Center/SBHC in Shiprock, on the Navajo Nation in the state's far northwestern corner. Through these centers, 4 Youth is working to establish SBHCs as the most appropriate service model for providing health care to students on Native-American reservations. This entails educating Native-American youth, parents, and community and tribal members about school-based health care and encouraging them to actively support SBHCs.

Much of this work falls to our community organizers, who themselves are members of the Native-American communities they serve. Training of the four community organizers is ongoing and includes frequent team meetings where we strategize, share events and activities, and discuss the long-term sustainability of school-based health care in Native communities.

Through various activities, such as meetings in which prevention information and public policy issues are discussed, 4 Youth offers kids and their parents opportunities for broadening their perspectives on, and supporting, more positive attitudes to prevention, wellness, and mental health.

For much of our second year, we have been developing one-on-one relationships with and identifying and recruiting members for Youth Advocacy Groups (YAG) and School Health Advisory Councils (SHAC). These group members assess the health needs of their communities and advocate for more culturally appropriate and accessible, quality care. We train our YAG members

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in leadership skills, and many have begun speaking publicly about the importance of school-based health care. As a result, our YAG members participated on health-related panels at the state Head to Toe 10 conference, the Warrior Spirit Indigenous Psychology conference, and NM Voices' Race Matters conference. They are currently preparing presentations and identifying policy priorities for the next state legislative session.

We seek out opportunities for networking and resources for site-specific activities and cultural awareness at health-oriented and culturally specific conferences and workshops, such as the recent one on legislative advocacy offered through the NM Assembly.

The needs of Native American youth should be a priority. Because they are not as visible as other populations, these youth are often an “afterthought” when it comes to health care. Given the current health crisis of widespread diabetes and substance abuse, it’s time we put them front and center.

We want to meet you and help you meet each other!

Email the NM Assembly your pictures – of your SBHC staff, building, SHAC, students and families. Please send pictures and a clear description of what (and who) they are to howard@nmassembly.org, and we’ll post them on our website!

SBHC News from Around the State

Each issue of the NM Assembly newsletter highlights new and existing SBHCs. If you’d like your SBHC to be highlighted in the January edition, please contact Nissa at nissapatterson@hotmail.com.

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(NACHC; www.nachc.com), is backing a first-time \$50 million Federal Authorization, called the “School-Based Health Clinic Establishment Act of 2006.” This will be introduced during the lame duck session in November. As your representative on the NASBHC Government Affairs Committee, I will meet in Washington, D.C., with staff from the offices of both Senators Pete Domenici (R-NM) and Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) to request that they sign onto this bill. The bill’s original co-sponsors are Senators Susan Collins (R-ME), Christopher Dodd (D-CT), Ted Kennedy (D-MA), Gordon Smith (R-OR), and Olympia Snowe (R-ME).

None of this could have been accomplished without the help from our dedicated, active volunteers. Our outgoing Board president, Nissa Patterson, spent countless hours in service and did an amazing job supporting me and the Assembly’s mission. Our incoming president, Maria Duran, has started out in the same fashion. The new, dynamic NM Assembly Board, statewide SBHC staff, OSH staff, and our many friends have also contributed to our success. We are blessed to have such a dedicated volunteer corps supporting us at the NM Assembly.

Meet the Assembly Board

The NM Assembly has an 11-person Board of Directors. This Board is responsible for guiding the organization's strategic planning and priorities, overseeing our financial development, and providing leadership on SBHC issues. The full Board meets four times a year, and the Executive Committee of the Board meets monthly. All Board members are elected for one-year terms, July through June. Our current Board is composed of:

<u>Executive Committee</u>	<u>At-large Board Members</u>
Maria Duran- President (Albuquerque)	Colleen Catanach (Raton)
Susie John- President Elect (Shiprock)	Chris O'Donnell (Albuquerque)
Position open- Past President	Laura Owen (Albuquerque)
Fred Gordon- Treasurer (Albuquerque)	Charleen Poola (Albuquerque)
Mary Kay Pera- Secretary (Santa Fe)	Dan Rifkin (Albuquerque)
	Rhonda Sparks (Clovis)

If you are interested in a term on the Board please, contact Maria Duran at: mptduran@msn.com



NM Assembly Website - Make Us a "Favorite!" www.nmassembly.org

The NM Assembly website is *the* website for information on SBHCs in New Mexico.

Current features are:

- Information on how to become a member of the NM Assembly
- Job postings
- Page on upcoming PE/MOSAA trainings
- Grant information
- A downloadable "SBHC Manual"
- Assembly membership form

In the next few months we will be adding:

- Special information for administrators, school nurses and parents
- A set of sample "Standard Operating Procedures" for SBHCs
- Legislative updates
- Information on how to market your SBHC effectively



SBHC Day 2007 at the Roundhouse!

**OPEN to ALL New Mexico School-Based
Health Centers**

Reserve Your Space Now!

Thursday, February 22, 2007

8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

State Capitol Rotunda

Santa Fe

**THIS IS AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITY FOR
ALL SBHCs TO MEET WITH AND EDUCATE THEIR
LEGISLATORS ABOUT SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CARE**

Twenty-four tables have been reserved for SBHCs from around the state on a first come, first served basis. **To register, contact Howard Spiegelman at howard@nmassembly.org.**

The governor, lt. governor, and legislators have been invited to speak at noon.

There will be a special focus on Native American SBHCs and we expect to have a good number of students from our SBHC Youth Advocacy Groups.

We will provide lunch.