



# HCHA Newsletter

Harris County Healthcare Alliance

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

### HCHA Quarterly Membership Meeting

Wednesday,  
November 12th  
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
United Way  
Community  
Resource Center  
50 Waugh Drive

### Guest Presenters:

Camille Miller, Texas Health  
Institute, will  
facilitate a discussion  
regarding the  
81st Legislative Session  
with:

**John Hawkins**  
Texas Hospital  
Association

**Darren Whitehurst** Texas  
Medical  
Association

**Jose Camacho**  
Texas Association of Com-  
munity Health  
Centers

and a  
Representative of the  
Mental Health  
Association - Texas

## Member



## Spotlight

### HOPE Clinic Receives FQHC Look-Alike Destination

Through diligent effort and two years of work to meet all FQHC requirements, HOPE Clinic received notice of designation in early October. The successful application comes after a three year lag in Look-Alike awards in the Houston area. The Alliance is pleased to recognize member organization HOPE Clinic for this along with its other recent accomplishments.

In 2001, the Asian American Health Coalition (AAHC) established HOPE Clinic as a volunteer-run, non-profit community health center to provide culturally and linguistically competent care for Houston's underserved, low in-

come, and linguistically isolated Asian communities in the Alief Neighborhood, one of Houston's most racially diverse neighborhoods, HOPE soon began treating non-Asian patients. With support of the community, HOPE Clinic played an important role during hurricane Katrina by providing services to over 3000 evacuees. This incident transformed HOPE Clinic and opened many doors to growth and expansion and demonstrated the increased need for medical services in this area of Houston. HOPE Clinic soon began to prepare to become a FQHC, received State incubator funds and

moved to a new more accessible location at 7001 Corporate Drive in Houston.

In December 2007 HOPE Clinic hired a new CEO, Andrea Caracostis, MD MPH, who brings 10 years of experience working with FQHCs, both as clinician and as an administrator. The Clinic also added a new Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Richard Andrews, MD, MPH. Dr. Andrews has over 20 years experience working with FQHCs. He is a Family Practitioner and a Preventive Health Specialist from Johns Hopkins University. Shane Chen, BA, is the new Director of Community Development.

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### Alliance Team Grows with Addition of Senior Policy Advisor



The Alliance welcomes Harry Holmes, Ph.D., who joined the Alliance on September 1, as Senior Policy Advisor. Harry's expertise in state and federal healthcare policy and his knowledge of the Houston provider community make him ideally suited to this role with the Alliance.

Dr. Harry Holmes is President of Governmental Interface Strategies, a Washington, D.C. and

Austin, Texas based healthcare public policy consulting firm. Prior to joining the firm, Dr. Holmes was Senior Vice President of Public Affairs at the Texas Medical Center, the corporate entity of the world's largest medical center. Earlier, he was Vice President for Governmental Relations at The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center. During his twenty five years at the nation's largest cancer center he was re-

sponsible for developing, directing and implementing strategic policy initiatives for the center in its relationship with governmental entities at the federal, state and local levels.

Dr. Holmes has served on numerous state, national and local bodies for health and higher education including but not limited to the boards of directors of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network and the National Coalition for Cancer Research and the Na-

(Cont'd Pg. 2)

### Inside this issue:

Member Spotlight	1
New Staff	1
TexHealth Coalition	2
Legislative Agenda	2
Grant Awards	2

## TexHealth Coalition Conference Highlights 3-Share Programs, Including Economic Impact

On November 7, 2008, the TexHealth Coalition sponsored the forum, "Health Care in Texas: Current and Future Solutions." The day-long event included a number of sessions regarding the current status of increasing access for the uninsured. These included an update to **Code Red Texas** (report on the state of the uninsured problem in Texas), a keynote address by State Senator Kirk Watson, panel presentations by the TexHealth Coalition and community supporters, a presentation by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) regarding Medicaid Reform, and a presentation on state reforms of small-group health insurance market.

In addition, a presentation was made regarding the economic impact of 3 Share programs. The presentation was made by representatives of RH2 and TXP, consultants in public policy and economic impact analysis who are completing a comprehensive economic impact study of the 3 Share

coverage programs that the Coalition is implementing in communities across the state, including Harris County.

According to the consultants, the total economic impact of implementing 3-share programs across Texas could be significant, based on studies of similar programs and the potential number of Texans who could be eligible for coverage under these programs. If coverage was expanded to the estimated 386,000 eligible small business employees who currently do not have any form of insurance, the potential impact would be:

- Almost \$600 million in direct spending on health care,
- \$1.4 billion in total direct and indirect (i.e. related industries – such as medical supplies, office rent, etc.) spending,
- \$486.5 million in earnings, and
- 13,407 new jobs

In Harris County, coverage would be expanded to almost 70,000 lives, employment would rise by over 2,000, total direct spending would increase by \$248 million, and earnings to \$65 million. Other benefits of providing health cover-

age to those currently uninsured include: decreased morbidity and mortality rates, increased labor force participation and productivity, and improved job mobility.

In light of the worsening economy and expected "tight-fistedness" of lawmakers in upcoming legislative sessions, State Senator Watson in his presentation made the point that this is the "argument to use" when advocating for the enactment and funding of 3 Share programs. The HHSC request for a Medicaid Waiver that is currently under review by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) includes provisions for including multi-share programs among those that could be funded by the Health Opportunity Pool.

The TexHealth Coalition is the collaborative effort of Harris County via the Alliance, and five other Texas communities including the Brazos Valley, Central Texas (Austin and surrounding area), El Paso County, Galveston County, and North Texas (Dallas/Fort Worth area) to share resources, experience and knowledge in efforts to expand coverage for Texas residents.

nity investment partnership called "Health Through Action for Asian Americans (AA), Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (NHPIs)."

Through the initiative, AAHC will address urgent health and health care issues facing AA & NHPIs in Harris County.

(Source: Andrea Caracostis, AAHC CEO and Zzine News, Feb. 2008)

the Elimination of Hepatitis B Disparities; and

- Has received grant awards including 1) a planning grant award of \$79,000 from HRSA that will be used to conduct a community needs assessment and strategic plan for the next 3 years and 2) a \$600,000 award over four years from the Kellogg Foundation as lead agency to build organizational capacity among Asian-serving agencies.

The AAHC is one of eight community organizations from around the country selected to receive the Kellogg community grants totaling \$4.8 million, part of its national commu-

## Legislative Agenda

The 140-day regular session of the 81st Texas Legislature will convene January 13, 2009. The Alliance Legislative Committee has been hard at work in preparation for the session, ready to advocate on members' behalf concerning a number of healthcare and access-related policies and reforms. These include, but are not limited to: Medicaid/CHIP reform, insurance regulation, and strengthening the healthcare workforce. The complete Consensus Agenda may be found on the Alliance website.

## Grant Awards

Congratulations to El Centro de Corazon who will receive an award of \$100,000 per year for two years from Bank of America on Nov. 20th. The Neighborhood Builders program supports general operating costs and leadership development.

## Cont'd—New Staff

tional Alliance of Dedicated Cancer Centers.

A graduate of Rice University, Holmes earned his Ph.D. degree at the University of Missouri – Columbia in American Urban Development and later was appointed Assistant Professor at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. He has also completed executive management programs at the Rice University Jesse H. Jones School of Management, the Wharton School of Business, Stanford University and The Harvard School of Public Health.

## Cont'd—Member Spotlight

HOPE Clinic's list of accomplishments is extensive. The clinic has:

- Developed a well-child program to meet the needs of the 13,000 children located in the clinic's service area which seeks to promote healthy habits in children, outreach to schools and increased access to health services;
- Developed a Hepatitis B program to reduce the Hepatitis B health disparities in the Asian population through screening and immunization initiatives with support of the B Free National Center of Excellence in

