

Employee UPDATE

Our Mission: To serve the people of North Carolina by enabling individuals, families and communities to be healthy and secure, and to achieve social and economic well-being.

A monthly publication for employees of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Secretary assembles new management team

DHHS has a new management team: Dr. Allen Dobson has accepted the position of assistant secretary for health policy and medical assistance; Allyn Guffey is acting assistant secretary for finance and business operations; and Dan Stewart is acting assistant secretary for policy, planning and compliance, Secretary Carmen Hooker Odom announced.

“We have also revamped our organizational chart to streamline department business operations,” Hooker Odom said.

“Allen is an incredible addition to our management team – a person that all of you will enjoy working with as we continue to shape the country’s best Medicaid program.”

Under the organizational plan, Budget and Analysis, Human Resources, Procurement/Contract Services, the Controller, DIRM and MMIS will report to Guffey; Internal Audit, Office of Policy and Planning, Facility Services, Property/Construction and the Senior Advisor will report to Stewart.

“I just can’t convey how pleased I am to have these two fine men moving up in

the management team,” Hooker Odom said of Guffey and Stewart. “They have both worked closely with all of our divisions, so they know the issues and the people. They have both agreed to take these positions on an acting basis, but I’m hoping we can convince them to make this permanent change in the next few months. Please join me in thanking them for taking on these new challenges.”

See New Team page 3



The Governor Morehead Middle and High School Chorus sings in celebration of the school’s 160th Anniversary. See the story on page 6.

INSIDE TOP FEATURES

iSalud y Saludos!, Page 2
EEO Office, Page 4
Aging Forum, Page 4

Mumford
named senior
assistant

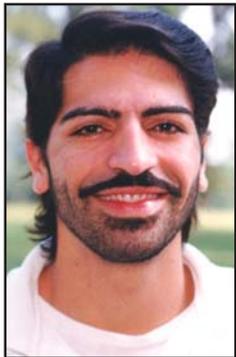
➔ Page 5



Employee
Wellness

➔ Page 8





Jalil Isa

¡Salud y Saludos!

El Foro Latino 2005 helps to lower barriers

Recently I had the chance to attend the 10th annual El Foro Latino. The two-day conference put on by the Hispanic advocacy non-profit El Pueblo has become a major event for both Hispanics and non-Hispanics throughout the state.

You may be familiar with El Pueblo from the annual 'Fiesta del Pueblo.' That festival now draws upwards of 60,000 people and has become the largest Hispanic-themed festival in the state.

Foro, however, is a more intimate affair and is more tailored to those in the community who either hope to learn more about the culture, or for those directly advocating for this segment of the community. For the first time this year, Foro organizers decided to move a little further away from the Triangle – its traditional venue up until now. Instead, about 600 people traveled to the Triad to UNC-Greensboro to hear several powerful keynote speakers, attend workshops covering a myriad of topics related to the growing Hispanic population in North Carolina, and to come face-to-face with many of these presenters during informal lunch and dinner gatherings that were included as part of the event. All the workshops were interpreted. I served as an interpreter for some of the presentations to help bridge the language barrier. Overcoming this obstacle was one of the goals of the organizers from the early planning phase.

This year's event featured Arturo Rodriguez, president of the United Farm Workers of America. He and his daughter Julie spoke of their decades-long struggle for farm worker rights. They spoke of Cesar Chavez, the legendary civil rights and labor leader who founded the United Farm Workers. They often punctuated their own address to utter Chavez's popular phrase: "*si se puede* (it can be done)." Lorraine Lee, vice president of Chicanos por la Causa, also gave an inspirational speech that had people on their feet. She emphasized the need to help Hispanics across the state on humanitarian grounds. She was vocal and shook the room with her booming voice. There were also workshops covering Hispanic/African-American relations, law enforcement concerns, non-profit start-ups, legislative analyses, and many other topics.

Another special component of Foro involves youth from across the state. El Pueblo holds a special Youth Foro that runs concurrently with the regular adult conference. But throughout the weekend there are times when the adults and kids can interact. The youngsters, mostly teens, come from various youth groups affiliated with El Pueblo.

UNC-G dorm rooms served as their on-site motel. The youth are battling all sorts of issues in their neighborhoods – from pressures to join gangs, to the pressures of dropping out of school and start working. During the day, the kids were treated to a wealth of educational workshops planned just for them, along with sessions designed to build leadership skills. As one of the adult youth leaders pointed out, "Many people claim these are the future leaders of America; in fact, they are *today's* leaders of America!"

I am happy to see that there are still young people out there that have a hopeful future. Now if we could only help tear down the barriers that still get in the way of these kids' path to success...things might get even better.

New Team continued from Page 1



Allyn Guffey

Guffey

Guffey began his career with DHHS in 1977 as an accountant in the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services. He has held a number of positions in DHHS, and has served as director of Budget and Analysis since 1999. He is a Certified Public

Accountant and received a B.A. in accounting from Belmont Abbey College.

In the interim, Jim Slate has accepted the position of acting director of the Division of Budget and Analysis.

Stewart

Stewart started out with DHHS in 1976 as a government accounts auditor in the Secretary’s Office. Since that time, he has held a number of positions including positions in the departments of Correction and Environment and Natural Resources. He has headed DHHS’ Internal Audit Office since 1999. He is a Certified Public Accountant and holds a BBA in accounting from Emory University. During the interim, Eddie Berryman will serve as acting director of the Office of the Internal Auditor.



Dan Stewart

Dobson

Dobson is chair of the Medicaid Physician’s Advisory Group, Community Care of North Carolina and the ACCESS program. At Cabarrus Family Medicine (CFM), he has been a constant champion of Community Care of North Carolina. What is now Cabarrus Family Medicine began in 1983 when Dobson



Dr. Allen Dobson

founded Mount Pleasant Family Physicians. That practice now includes seven office sites, a residency program and 200 employees in Cabarrus and Stanly counties.

“Allen is exactly the kind of person that we can look to during these crucial times for our Medicaid program,” Hooker Odom said. “He is the kind of leader who has always been able to inspire others to be the best they can be. So many young doctors have grown under his tutelage at CFM. Now he is going to bring that leadership and vision to this very important role.”

Dobson has a strong vision for the North Carolina Medicaid program.

“Over the next few months he will be articulating that plan, which includes a strong accountability program and the transformation of DMA from a solely regulatory and financing agency to a health management and healthcare planning agency,” Hooker Odom said. “Allen understands our Medicaid program better than most people at the state, or even national, level. Most importantly, he recognizes from his own work with Community Care that we have one of the best-managed Medicaid programs in the country – a message that he is going to work to deliver across this state. He also recognizes that Medicaid is not a stand-alone program – it is crucial to our mental health and public health efforts.”

A native North Carolinian, Dobson received his undergraduate education at North Carolina State University. He attended medical school at Bowman Gray School of Medicine and completed his residency in family medicine at East Carolina University, where he served as chief resident.

In 1992, he was named the North Carolina Family Physician of the Year. In 1993, he was the recipient of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine and a finalist for AAFP Family Physician of the Year. He has been actively involved in medical student and resident education for many years and holds faculty appointments at Duke University Medical Center and UNC-Chapel Hill. He has participated in many state and national activities. He is past-president of the North Carolina Academy of Family Physicians, past chair of the North Carolina Joint Committee on Medicaid, past president and chair of the Board of the North Carolina Physicians Advisory Group, sat on the boards of the Association of Family Practice Residency Directors and the North Carolina Licensing Board for Athletic Trainers, and is currently on the Board of the North Carolina Institute of Medicine.

Aging forum provides insight for planning

The N.C. Governor's Advisory Council on Aging (GAC) sponsored a pre-White House Conference on Aging Forum at the Holiday Inn Brownstone Hotel on May 18.

"The forum was designed to reflect input from North Carolina's diverse groups who are concerned with aging issues," said Ann Johnson, GAC chair. "In addition, it will help prepare this state's delegates to the national conference to address such national policy as is needed to prepare for the huge increase in the number of older adults."



Lt. Gov. Beverly Purdue addresses forum

The information gathered at the forum will help prepare North Carolina's delegates for the upcoming national White House Conference on Aging (WHCoA) being held in Washington, D.C. The 2005 White House conference is intended to produce policy recommendations to guide national aging policy through 2015.

This will be the fifth White House conference held and the first of the new century. Others were held in 1961,

1971, 1981 and 1995. The White House conference is held periodically as a vehicle to make aging policy recommendations to the president and Congress and to assist the public and private sectors in promoting dignity, health, independence and economic security of older generations.

This year Dorcas Hardy, the WHCoA Policy Committee chair, urged the national conference policy committee to look at aging in terms of both "today and tomorrow" and to "identify emerging trends....to help our nation prepare for the changes anticipated over the next decade

[the aging of the baby boomers]." For more information about the conference, please visit <http://www.whcoa.gov>.

The GAC makes recommendations to the governor and secretary of DHHS on how to improve the quality of life of older North Carolinians. For a list of current members, please see <http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/aging/gaclist.htm>. ■

Equal Employment Opportunity Office created in DHHS

The N.C. Office of State Personnel has approved the DHHS 2005 Equal Employment Opportunity Office plan for 2005.

The office consists of a director and three full-time EEO consultants, one for each of the three geographic regions of the state: west, central and east.

As a result, leadership of each division and institution is required to appoint an EEO designee. The chief objective of the office is to assure that all employment practices of the agency are administered without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, creed, age, sex, disability or political affiliation. An additional objective is to promote within the department a greater understanding and value of diversity in all aspects of employment.

In December of 2004, Secretary Carmen Hooker Odom ordered the creation of an Office of Equal Employment Opportunity within the department's Office of General Counsel. This came as a result of OSP rejecting the department's 2004 EEO Plan.

This presented the secretary with an opportunity to tailor an office to meet the needs of such a large and diverse agency, as well as to correct the mistakes made in the past regarding equal employment opportunity services.

For further information on the EEO office and/or the name of your agency designee, you may contact your division director's office or call M. Terry Hodges, acting EEO director at (919) 733-4534. ■

Patriotic Employer Award presentation

Mumford named senior assistant to state health director

Dr. Rick Mumford is the new senior assistant to the state health director.

Mumford's promotion, announced April 14, puts him in charge of rebuilding operational capacity and helping the Division of Public Health respond to the many demands that come to the division on a daily basis.

"As many of you know, Rick has recently returned from serving on active duty in the U.S. Army, including a tour of duty in Iraq," said State Health Director Dr. Leah Devlin. "As we welcome Rick back home to his family and to our public health family, I am excited to have Rick take on this challenging new role. This will enhance the division's responsiveness to major public health issues."



Mumford presents Devlin with Patriotic Employer Award

Mumford's promotion "presents an opportunity to enhance the division's responsiveness to major public health issues and could not have been more timely and appropriate," Devlin said. His primary responsibilities will be to bring a focus to the division's work on eliminating health disparities as well as the area of workforce development /diversification.

In addition, Dr. Rebecca King, who served as acting chief of the Oral Health Section, has been named section chief, concurrent with Mumford's appointment.

"Our N.C. Oral Health Section continues to lead the nation in many areas of dental public health programming and service," Devlin said. "I am extremely proud and thankful to our Oral Health Section staff."

Cherry Picks Top Admin

Cherry Hospital has selected Richard Phillips as this year's Administrative Professional of the Year award winner. Phillips, an office assistant in the nursing office, was chosen for exhibiting demonstrated extraordinary service, dedication, and commitment beyond normal job duties, according to Cherry Hospital Director James Osberg. Phillips received the award at a recognition ceremony on April 25. Left to right are: Ruby Simmons, assistant director of Nursing; Phillips; Osberg; and Peggy Hardison, director of nursing.



Sculpture unveiled

Governor Morehead School celebrates 160th Anniversary



Left to right: Cyndie Bennett, superintendent of the Office of Education Services, unveils the sculpture of Louis Braille; DHHS Secretary Carmen Hooker Odom shakes hands with artist Jon Hair. Irwin Belk, who donated the sculpture, is also at right.

On May 12, the Governor Morehead School (GMS) celebrated its 160th year of serving North Carolina's children who are blind or visually impaired.

Students, staff, guests and friends of the GMS community gathered in an afternoon ceremony to celebrate the school's long history and to dedicate a sculpture of Louis Braille that was donated to the school by Charlotte businessman Irwin "Ike" Belk.

"I would like to thank Ike for his generous donation to our school," said Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Carmen Hooker Odom. "This sculpture will, I'm sure, be enjoyed by our students, staff and guest for many, many years to come."

The sculpture is mounted in the Martha Frank Fragrance Garden on the GMS campus. The garden is a project of

the North Carolina Garden Club and serves as a sensory and tactile learning experience for the students.

"We decided to make a bronze statue of Louis Braille and place it in the Martha Franck Fragrance Garden so that visitors to our campus, as well as our students and staff could enjoy it," said Office of Education Services Superintendent Cyndie Bennett.

"The profile of Louis Braille is a detailed raised sculpture that the children can touch and easily distinguish the details of his face. The inscription is written in English and raised Braille dots. Even 150 years after Braille developed his basic system of six dots, its benefits to the blind remain unmatched by any later technology."

The statue was created by artist Jon Hair and reads:

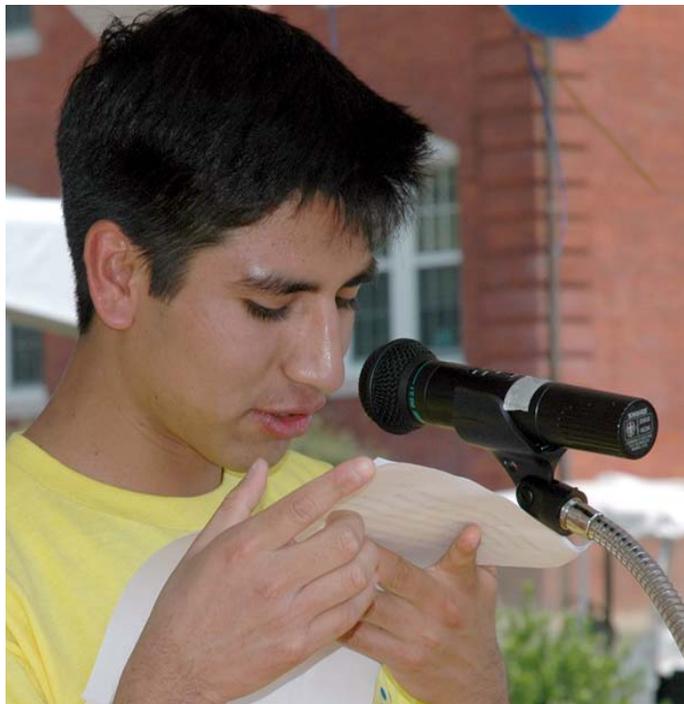
Louis Braille 1809-1852

Born in Coupvray, France, Louis Braille was blinded by an accident at the age of three. He triumphed over his disability, becoming an accomplished teacher, musician, author, and inventor. His most important contribution is the Braille system of reading and writing for the blind. He is buried in the Pantheon in Paris.

"I commend the sculptor, Jon Hair, for his fine craftsmanship," said Bennett. "He is the official sculptor of the U.S. Olympic Team, and his work has been commissioned by the U.S. Air Force Academy, Purdue

See Morehead School page 7

Morehead School continued from page 6



GMS Student Council President and Class of 2005 Valedictorian Francisco Chavez reads a speech about his time at GMS.

GMS currently serves as a resource center for all blind children in North Carolina. The K-12 program is on the Ashe Avenue campus and serves children from across the state.

The GMS Outreach program has provided services in 81 counties this school year – through low vision assessments, teacher training, demonstration teaching and observations. The program also provides week-long short-term sessions for public school students who need intensive work in vision-specific areas.

The Governor Morehead Preschool program has also served more than 680 children from birth to five years old this school year through its satellite programs across the state that enabled children with vision disabilities to transition successfully to public schools in their home communities.

“Educating North Carolina’s children who are blind and visually impaired has been and will continue to be the work of Governor Morehead School for many years to come,” said Bennett.

University and the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. We are thrilled to have a piece of his work on our campus.”

The Governor Morehead School has a rich history of serving children with disabilities. Originally known as the North Carolina Institution for Education of the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind, it operated from a rented building on Hillsborough Street in Raleigh in 1845.

The school has always been responsive to the needs of North Carolina, changing the scope and breath of services based on the deaf and blind populations in the state.

Historically, there were several campuses, with the campus on Ashe Avenue becoming the official site for the school in 1923. The name was changed to the Governor Morehead School for the Blind when it was integrated with the Garner Road School in 1964.



GMS students Edie Bentley of Oxford, left, and Josh Russ of Fayetteville experience the sculpture of Louis Braille located in the Martha Frank Fragrance Garden.

Employee wellness is focus of effort



Suzanna Young

Suzanna Young is the new wellness director for the Department of Health and Human Services, a position that promises to help assure that department employees have more opportunities to be healthy in their work environment.

Young brings 19 years of experience in the public health profession to the position.

“I am pleased to announce that DHHS is implementing a wellness initiative that will provide our employees with resources, programs, incentives, and support in their efforts toward improved health and wellness,” said Secretary Carmen Hooker Odom. “We are grateful to the N.C. State Employees Health Plan for their support of this new initiative and to the Division of Public Health that will oversee its implementation within the department.”

Young said she is looking forward to coordinating improvements throughout the department. “This is going to be driven by what the employees want and need,” she said. “And we’ll be helping to support that.”

Young will work across the department to organize and advise employee wellness committees. Each division and agency in the department will use its wellness committee to develop worksite policies and activities that promote and support positive health behaviors among employees. This includes encouraging employees to take a more active role in their personal health promotion and disease

management activities. Worksite policy and environmental changes that promote good health may include improving the type of snack and meal options available for employees or creating opportunities like stairwell initiatives for employees to increase their daily physical activity.

Young received her master’s in public health in nutrition at the University of North Carolina, where she coordinated



several health projects for the School of Public Health. A registered dietitian, she worked as a clinical nutritionist with Johnston County Health

Department. Since coming to the

Division of Public Health in 1992, Young managed multiple statewide programs and served as the state migrant health director as well as

Refugee Health Program manager. This

also included heading the division’s Worksite Wellness initiative in 1993. Since 2000, she has worked primarily in the area of health promotion, coordinating the N.C. Statewide Health Promotion Program and the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant.

“In the next few months, you will be hearing more about this exciting new initiative for our employee,” said DHHS Secretary Carmen Hooker Odom. “I encourage you to participate and enjoy the benefits of this great opportunity to improve our work environments and promote good health for all employees in the department.” ■

Adoption Profile

Introducing Tomas...

His foster mom says no matter what she asks Tomas to do, he does willingly. He gets along well with people of all ages and is respectful and has good manners. Tomas loves sports, whether he's watching them or playing them. He enjoys playing football in both an independent league and for his school's team. Tomas has a delightful sense of humor and loves to joke with and entertain his friends. His foster family adores him and includes him in all family activities and outings.

Tomas attends a specialized class at school with an Individualized Education Plan that allows more time for him to take tests and be excused from some of the work. One day a week Tomas goes to a resource room where he is learning about times when talking and joking are acceptable and when they can be disruptive. Counseling is helping him understand his circumstances. Tomas has been



Tomas
b. Jan. 1, 1999

working on always telling the truth and, since he started living with them, his foster family has seen a great deal of improvement in this, as well as in his attitude and personality.

A Family for Tomas

Tomas would benefit from a family with a strong, positive male role model. He has developed a close, loving relationship with his foster family and will need a slow transition to move into an adoptive home. His adoptive family will need to be patient and show their commitment by being supportive of and participating in counseling with him. Tomas has a sister with whom he will need to have continued visits and contact.
(NC #060-2168)

For more information on this child or adoption and foster care, call NC Kids Adoption and Foster Care Network toll free at 1-877-NCKIDS-1 (1-877-625-4371). ■