

May 2013

Volume 11, Issue 2

BRAZOS VALLEY COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY NEWSLETTER

Special Interest Articles:

- A Community Services Innovation
- Meals on Wheels Receives Awards
- Health Service
- Welcome New Directors
- Spring into Healthier Habits
- HealthPOINT
- 2013 Employee of the Year Nomination form

A Community Services Innovation!

Beginning **May 2**, BVCAA Community Services division will be bringing even greater value to our clients! Partnering in-house with each other and externally with the Brazos Valley Food Bank, BVCAA clients from Head Start, WIC, Weatherization, MOWs, etc., will receive a fresh produce distribution. Although we will be hammering out the details through trial and error, we anticipate we can provide an additional 4 pallets of food to our clients weekly.

Providing healthy food is a way to contribute to food security. "Food security is access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life." [i] Think food **in**security is just for developing countries like Zambia?? Think again! 1 in 6 Americans is considered to be "hungry."

Check out our local statistics:

In Texas, 4,672,780 people or 18.5% of the population were food insecure. That's above the national percent of 16.1%. Look at our local county statistics; Brazos 18.5%, Burleson 17.3%, Grimes 19.6%, Madison 20.8%, Robertson 21.6%, and Washington 18.5%. [ii]

Thanks to our Community Services teams and the Food Bank for helping to feed our Brazos Valley neighbors!

[i] World Bank. 1986. Poverty and hunger: issues and options for food security in developing countries. Washington, DC: World Bank.

[iii] <http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap.aspx>

Good food
for today
fights
hunger.



Ways to get involved:

- Volunteer at a food bank, pantry or distribution center
- Volunteer at a church, non-profit, or Meals on Wheels
- Donate money
- Develop your own recycling center

Sorting food:



Meals On Wheels

Congratulations to Amanda Keoughan

*Meals on Wheels is going **GREEN!***

Amanda is our Meals on Wheels Coordinator and was recently an award recipient for the annual Keep Brazos Beautiful *CAN Do Recycling Award*. Keep Brazos Beautiful celebrated her at their recent event.

Amanda established a recycling program for the Meals On Wheels operation. As of now the City of Bryan offers no curbside recycling for residents or businesses and, with our high volume of goods that can be recycled we decided to turn our building into its own recycling center. Now all our milk and cleaning jugs, water bottles, cans, white paper, and magazine are kept in old boxes or trash cans, cardboard is kept in an old Cargo Van and our used laser cartridges are sent back to Dahill for recycling and shipped free by U.P.S. Once a week or so we will load everything into the van and drive it over to the Bryan Wal-Mart recycling center to recycle. **It is amazing how much can be recycled and how rewarding it is.**

Here are several websites that will help you recycle. We should all do our part to keep the earth clean!

http://eartheasy.com/live_recycling.htm

<http://www.epa.gov/recycle/recycle.html>

<http://earth911.com/recycling/>



Amanda Keoughan helping with the recycling at Meals On Wheels.



Meals on Wheels- cont'd

The Star Award for Outstanding Performance

At the recent Community Services retreat held at the Sons of Hermann hall, Meals on Wheels was awarded a Star Award for outstanding performance. We scored 100% compliance on a recent audit with many new detailed metrics and measurements tools. In addition to our Star Award, two of our faithful hard-working staff were given service awards. Odis Thornton had 10 years of service and Sandra Sullivan 25 years. Yeah!

Monday through Friday Meals on Wheels delivers around 550 clients a hot noontime meal that are prepared here at our kitchen by our staff. The meals are then delivered to local and rural homes as well as to our six senior centers where the more mobile elderly can gather to socialize, and participate in activities. Nothing warms your heart more than being thanked by a needy elderly person when you have the pleasure of bringing them a meal. We presently provide these services in Brazos, Burleson, Grimes and Robertson.

Due to the high interest in the meals program there is a waiting list. This list is administered through the Department of Aging and Disability and has increased from 700 to over 900. Due to this increase we have started a program called Meals for Friends which allows us to serve a few individuals in great need as they wait to be authorized by the State and Federal government programs. Another option is our Private Pay meals; the cost is \$ 6.50 a meal and there is no waiting lists or requirements.

Volunteerism is alive and well in Bryan/College Station. We currently average around 119 wonderful volunteers a month that help make our program work by using their own car, gas and time to take a meal to a local person in need. The Meals on Wheels program could not work without them. They include business men, students, retirees and church groups. We have one volunteer that has been here more than 33 years.

Besides our wonderful volunteers that help make deliveries, we have many groups that contribute in different ways. Dynacon brings our clients frozen ground beef straight from the 4-H stock show. Project Serve made our clients beautiful placemats to set on their tables, and the local Girl Scout troops make great tray favors to send out with the meals. Our clients absolutely love them and are so appreciative of every little thing being done for them.

It is a pleasure working here and serving the needy elderly of the Brazos Valley. Our Meals on Wheels "family" works hard together each day to see that each one of customers is okay and receives a meal. Through rain, through cold, through heat the Meals on Wheels goes on.

"Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile"
Albert Einstein

Ms. Karen Garber, Executive Director of BVCAA, awards The Star Award for outstanding performance to Meals on Wheels. The award is being received by Bill Ray, Associate Administrator Food Services.



BRAZOS VALLEY COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

Health Services

Judy Greer, Practice Manager at HealthPOiNT Bryan/College Station, was honored in early April by the Texas A&M Health Service Center College of Nursing. She was recognized in the leadership category of the Legacy Award. This award seeks to recognize nurses in the Brazos Valley who show leadership, compassion and innovation, and carry on the legacy of the college of nursing. Forty-nine nominees were recognized with a certificate and a lapel pin, and the top four were awarded a trophy.

Congratulations to Judy for her outstanding leadership and service to BVCAA, her colleagues, patients and community!



BRAZOS VALLEY COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

Welcome to New Directors

Head Start

Welcome Linda Patton as the new Head Start Director!

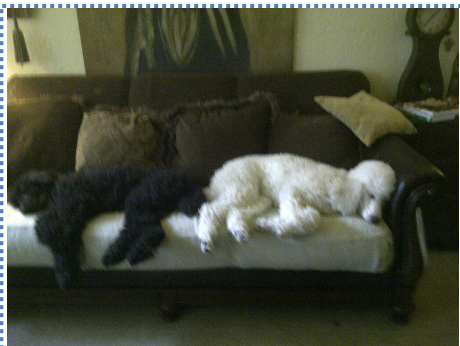
Linda Patton joined BVCAA as our new Head Start Director late last year. With only a few months under her belt, she has jumped in to prepare for our upcoming grant recompetition.

Linda has a rich child-focused background. She has served in Sheltering Arms (Center for Child and Youth Services) and MHMR. She also has experience in the classroom as a teacher and leadership in various roles. Prior to joining BVCAA, Linda spent 12 years as the Executive Director of Scotty's House, a nonprofit child advocacy center in Bryan. There, she worked with a 31-member Board of Directors, ensured the efficient and effective operations of Scotty's House, maintained compliance with national standards, oversaw relationships within the community, completed and submitted all grants, and supervised all staff.

Linda has a BA in Psychology and Child Development from Texas Tech and post-baccalaureate work in cognitive and language development.

When not serving the children and families of the Brazos Valley through our Head Start program, Linda enjoys giving advice to her two grown sons Ben and Kris, and spending time with her other beloved four-legged "children," her dogs - Isabelle, Tessa, and Polly, her cats - Tom and Allie, and her Chinchillas - Nate and Benji!!!

Welcome, Linda!!!



WIC

Please join me in welcoming Leslie Hibbs as the new WIC Director! In May 2000, Leslie earned a BS in Child/Human Development and Family Studies with a minor in Health Promotion, from the University of North Texas. During that time, she worked for Denton County MHMR and then became a Child Development Coordinator for a non-profit organization in Dallas that assists low-income families with the educational needs of their children. Four years later, she dedicated her time to parents of children with special needs to help them learn to advocate for their loved ones. In 2008, Leslie went to work for a Special Needs Law Firm in Houston as a Care Coordinator for individuals with special needs.

In 2011, Leslie relocated to the Brazos Valley to provide social services to children and families. She found BVCAA to be a natural fit. She has served as Site Director for Early Head Start, right next door to our WIC Bryan clinic. Early Head Start serves 34 children and families, both center based and pregnant moms, home based. During this time she has complied with federal grant requirements, hired and managed staff, achieved high standards in performance, and responded to previous audit findings, resolving program deficiencies.

In her spare time, Leslie enjoys volunteering for the Houston Rodeo. But, her most favorite pass time is planning trips and spending time with her love, Ken, who works for A&M and her youngest brother, Nathan, who is an amazing young man with Down Syndrome.

Welcome, Leslie!!!



BRAZOS VALLEY COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

Spring into Healthier Habits

Spring has finally sprung. It's the season of fresh starts and renewal—which is why it's also such a popular time for people to re-evaluate their immediate surroundings and take on traditional spring-cleaning tasks around the house.

But while you're getting your closets, cupboards, finances and paperwork in order, remember that spring is also a great time of year to get serious about starting anew by establishing healthy habits—ones that can help protect you and your loved ones from brain disease.

Not only can annual home spring-cleaning tasks and organization of important paperwork and life documents give your home a physical sense of renewal, but living an organized life can also help reduce stress, which in turn can have myriad positive impacts on your overall health and well-being, and on a number of brain diseases, such as Parkinson's disease.

The longer days and warmer weather brings on the planting season, which means more ready access to local healthy, fresh foods that are good for you and your brain. Better yet, it is an opportunity to get planting in your garden to grow your own fresh fruit and veggie "brain foods!" Spring also presents new opportunities to get outdoors and re-establish healthy exercising habits that may have vanished during the winter months.

Indeed, spring is a great time to pick up on—or discover new—healthy outdoor activities like biking or roller blading. But these activities are only healthy for your body when they're also healthy for your brain, which is why when cleaning out those closets you should dig out your helmets—and be sure to wear them! Protecting your head by wearing a helmet when riding a bike, roller blading, skateboarding, playing contact sports such as lacrosse and football, or even getting out for a drive on your motorcycle or scooter is your best way to protect your brain from concussion.

The warm weather and longer days mean more opportunities to get out on the bike trails and game fields for fun in the sun. But there's nothing fun about a concussion, which is why it's important to get smart and use your head to know how to appropriately protect your head.

Wearing proper head gear is a simple—yet critical—precaution when partaking in activities such as contact sports, biking, and skating. Should an injury occur, it is especially important to know the common signs of concussion—and to seek immediate medical help from a neurologist.

What is a concussion? A concussion is a type of brain injury and a serious health issue. It can happen when the head hits an object or a moving object strikes the head. It also can happen when the head experiences a sudden force without being hit directly. Each year, 1.6 to 3.8 million concussions result from sports/recreation injuries in the United States. Almost nine percent of all US high school sports injuries involve concussions. Most concussions result in full recovery. However, some can lead to more severe injuries if not identified early and treated properly.

What are the signs of concussion? A new sports concussion guideline from the American Academy of Neurology, published in the **March 18, 2013**, online issue of *Neurology*[®], describes the risks associated with concussion, signs and symptoms to watch out for, and what to do if a head injury occurs during a game of contact sports. Among the most important recommendations the guideline addresses is that any athlete suspected of concussion be removed immediately from the game and not be returned until assessed by a licensed health care professional trained in concussion—and then returned to play slowly and only after all acute symptoms are gone.

Some signs and symptoms of concussion include:

- Behavior or personality changes
- Blank stare or dazed look
- Changes in balance, coordination, or reaction time
- Delayed or slowed spoken or physical responses
- Disorientation (confusion about time, date, location, game)
- Loss of consciousness/blackout
- Memory loss of event before, during, or after injury occurred
- Slurred/unclear speech
- Trouble controlling emotions
- Vomiting

Share these valuable concussion resources with coaches, athletes, friends, and family.



Get Smarter As You Get More Active—Use Your Head to Protect Your Head

Springtime in the State Legislative Session

Greetings. Spring is upon us. Bluebonnets are in bloom, the grass is green across the Brazos Valley. The cold winds of winter are pretty much behind us. And the 2013 State Legislature is closing its biennium session in Austin.

Health care actually came out on top this legislative term. The additional tax revenues from oil in the state helped a lot...and allowed our elected officials to have some money in the state coffers to remedy some of the Spartan cuts from the last session in 2011.

Mental Health is receiving quite a bit of attention—both through the 1115 waiver projects and through general revenues.

Family Planning/Women's Health that was all but gutted during 2011 is being restored with a Texas flair under a significantly increased Primary Care funding...where FQHCs should receive a lion's share of the funds to re-establish a vibrant comprehensive women's health and contraceptive program.

We will begin strategizing internally in preparation for a very aggressive application due in mid summer for a November funding date. Expect the addition of several new women's health providers to be added to our medical staff...as well as the coinciding medical staff.

There is even good news whispered in the corners regarding some Texas model for expanded care for the uninsured under the Affordable Care Act—something many had written off as "NOT HAPPENING." But more and more legislators are realizing leaving \$86-100 billion federal dollars on the table when one in four Texans are uninsured, as well as Texas ranking near the bottom in health care indicators of all 50 states, just doesn't make good political or public policy sense. So, expect some

Health POINT

movement during the summer months in compromise between the State and the Feds on a Texas model for expansion.

Locally, the construction of 1301 Memorial Clinic is still on target to open in November 2013. Exciting. Our relations with St. Josephs and The Med remain strong. We are avidly pursuing an expansion into Waller County—Hempstead, more specifically—by year's end. We are currently recruiting for an additional 8 medical and behavioral health providers to put us in better condition to handle the influx of folk who will soon be added to those having insurance, either through the Exchange Programs or some fashion of expanded coverage for those at or below 100% of the poverty guideline.

And finally, HealthPOiNT!!! Signs are going up at all of our clinics. New business cards, stationary, changes on the website, etc. have begun. With 1301 Memorial opening, we will also begin a broader PR campaign to let the community know more about our change in branding that meets with the change in operational paradigm toward Patient-Centered Medical Home philosophy. Our recent and continual meetings with staff have encouraged us all that we are changing the face of how health care will be delivered in the Brazos Valley. You play such an important role in this transformation. HealthPONT is currently the third largest out-patient primary care entity in our region. That's significant. We are continually raising the bar on ourselves to

become the BEST!!! Thank you for being a part of this exciting development.

More to come...

Keep up the magnificent work of making the lives of people healthier.

Respectfully,

*Submitted by Eric V. Todd
Clinical CEO of HealthPOINT
A division of BVCAA, Inc.*

Things to Ponder

The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.

Marcel Proust

Peace cannot be kept by force. It can only be achieved by understanding.

Albert Einstein

The more tranquil a man becomes, the greater is his success.

James Allen

The man who has no inner life is a slave to his surroundings.

Henri Frederic Amiel



2013 BVCAA Employee of the Year Nomination Form

Do you know someone who deserves **recognition**? You can nominate them for the 2013 BVCAA Employee of the Year award!

All nominations will be presented to a pre-determined selection committee and the winner of the 2013 BVCAA Employee of the Year Award will be recognized at the July Board of Directors meeting.

All nominees must have been employed by BVCAA for a minimum of one year as of April 1, 2013.

Nomination forms are due by June 15th. Forms can be e-mailed, faxed or mailed to Debra Makowsky at BVCAA Administration. E-mail: dmakowsky@bvcaa.org Fax: 979-260-9390

On a separate sheet of paper, please type, or print clearly, a narrative describing why your nominee is deserving of this award. Please limit your narrative to 100-500 words. Use the following questions as a guideline of necessary information. How has the nominee positively impacted BVCAA and those we serve? How has the nominee positively impacted the BVCAA team? What makes this person deserving of the 2013 BVCAA Employee of the Year Award?

Name of Nominee: _____

Title of Nominee: _____

BVCAA Program/Location of Nominee: _____

Phone Number of Nominee: _____

Email Address of Nominee: _____

Name of Nominator: _____

Title of Nominator: _____

BVCAA Program/Location of Nominator: _____

Phone Number of Nominator: _____

Email Address of Nominator: _____

Questions? Contact Debra Makowsky at 979-846-1100 or via e-mail at dmakowsky@bvcaa.org