



## CPHA eNewsletter

1/31/2011

### Table of Contents **A Message from the President**

- [A Message from the President](#) Happy 2011!!! I hope you all had an enjoyable, healthy, (and warm) holiday season.
- [Annual Meeting](#)
- [Health Education Committee](#) If change is good, then CPHA is off to a great start! The Board of Directors held its first meeting of 2011 on Monday, January 24th and there were a lot of new faces around the table.
- [Leadership in Hartford](#)
- [Thank you!](#) I would like to take this opportunity to welcome new Board members Patrick McCormack (Ex-Officio Representative of CADH), [Patricia Wrice](#) (Advocacy Committee Co-Chair) and [Meliessa Hennessey](#) (Membership Co-Chair). We
- [New Staff and Board Member](#) also have some familiar faces that were re-elected to the Board as Directors-at-Large (Elaine O'Keefe, Marty Mancuso and Ashika Brinkley) and Kathi Traugh is not only our Communications Chair but is also an elected officer, sitting on the Executive Committee as Secretary. [Noele Kidney](#) has also joined the CPHA staff as a part-time Project Coordinator representing CPHA on the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut. Sadly, we said goodbye to Annamarie Beaulieu, the former CPHA Campaign Coordinator, back in December as she embarked on her new adventure at Connecticut's Children Medical Center. We also paid farewell to Baker Salsbury, a long-standing member of the Board. Alyssa Norwood also stepped down as Advocacy Co-Chair to attend to her new job responsibilities at CADH. I wish everyone well in their new roles and hope that our public health paths continue to cross.
- [Notes of Interest](#)

Remember to visit our [Facebook page](#) and follow our [Twitter account](#).

[CPHA Home Page](#)

As CPHA continues to evolve, there is one thing that remains constant --- our members make us who we are. As a former boss of mine used to say, "This company's biggest asset walks out the door every night at 5pm and returns to the office the next day at 9am." The same thing holds true for the almost 400 individuals that make up CPHA's membership. Because our members are our biggest asset, CPHA has decided to focus on membership in 2011. The three primary components of this goal are (1) completing a strategic plan and business plan, including a membership survey; (2) establishing Sections of CPHA - the first Section being the CT Association of Local Boards of Health; and (3) a renewed focus on membership value, events, and membership renewals to retain and gain membership. If you have any ideas, suggestions or feedback, please do not hesitate to contact me or someone on the Board.

I want to thank you all for your continued dedication to public health.

I look forward to hearing and working with you all during the new year.

Tracey Scraba, JD, MPH  
President

[Top](#)

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## CPHA Annual Meeting Round Up

The 2010 CPHA Annual Meeting and Conference, *Equal Opportunities for Health: Overcoming Racial, Ethnic and Socioeconomic Disparities in Connecticut*, held on October 22, 2010 at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington, was a tremendous success on every level. From the record attendance to the outstanding caliber of the presentations, this was an annual meeting to remember.

"It seems the meetings just get better and better each year," said CPHA President Tracey Scraba. "The Program Committee, led by Elaine O'Keefe, did an outstanding job designing a cutting-edge educational program with top

notch speakers. This year's conference was also more profitable than in past years, which will help us toward funding some of our initiatives."

Attendance at the meeting also exceeded goals. There were over 328 participants, almost 100 more than the 2009 meeting. Sponsorship was also up, with 13 sponsors and 16 exhibitors participating this year. And for the first time, CPHA was able to obtain grant funding and in-kind donations to help defray the cost of speakers and staff time.

"Thanks to the [Connecticut Health Foundation](#) and the [Connecticut Association of Directors of Health](#), CPHA was able to bring national experts on the topic of health inequities to Connecticut last October," said Elaine O'Keefe, Program Chair. "Grant funding will also enable CPHA to hold a follow-up roundtable discussion on the CT health equity agenda sometime this spring."

Overall, there were 26 presenters at this year's meeting, including Brian Smedley of the Health Policy Institute of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies in Washington DC and Carmen Nevarez, President of the American Public Health Association. Presentations are posted on the [CPHA Annual Meeting Webpage](#) if you would like to review a presentation you liked or look over a presentation you missed. The student poster session included sixteen presentations, highlighting some of the outstanding research being done by Connecticut's next generation of public health professionals. Student presenters represented the following schools and programs: UConn Schools of Medicine, Dentistry and Pharmacy and the Graduate Program in Public Health; Yale Schools of Medicine and Public Health; Southern Connecticut State University, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Quinnipiac University Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy.

Attendees completing evaluations gave the program high marks for organization and planning, application to their daily work and relevance to their professional growth. Over 93% said based on their experience, they

would be likely to attend future events offered by CPHA.

CPHA would like to thank Program Committee members: Elaine O'Keefe (Chair); Elaine Abrams; Vani Anand,; Lisa Bemben; Lucinda Hogarty; Marty Mancuso; Sharon Mierzwa; Renee Coleman-Mitchell; Alyssa Norwood; Joan Segal; Tracey Van Oss and Stanton Wolfe. we would also like to express appreciation to our dedicated CPHA staff members: Annamarie Beaulieu, Eileen Kehl and Jonathan Noel.

Would you like to be a part of next year's meeting? The Program Committee is looking for volunteers to help plan the educational portion of the meeting. For more information, contact Elaine O'Keefe at [elaine.okeefe@yale.edu](mailto:elaine.okeefe@yale.edu).

[Top](#)

## **CPHA Health Education Committee Announces their 2011 Schedule**

Health Education Committee (HEC) Co-Chairs Kimberly Pelletier and Tracey Van Oss announced the 2011 schedule of meetings for the committee, which can be found on the [CPHA website](#). The committee meets the second Wednesday of January, April, June, September, and November at the [American Heart Association](#) in Wallingford from 8:45 am until noon. The purpose of the committee is to provide:

- A forum for the exchange of information.
- An opportunity to educate the public health workforce and other health professionals by increasing the competency, skills and performance as they relate to the core public health essential services.
- A networking opportunity for public health professionals that are employed in a variety of settings including: local/state health departments, non-profit and not-for-profit organizations, community based organizations, clinical practice, academia and other healthcare settings.

Each meeting includes two presenters on a wide variety of public health topics, specific to Connecticut. Two hours of CHES credits are available for certified health educators that attend the HEC meeting. The cost is \$3 per

credit, for a total of \$6 per meeting. Checks can be made out directly to SCSU Department of Public Health. Cash is not accepted.

A special note: Due to inclement weather, the January meeting has been rescheduled to February 25, 2011.

[Top](#)

## **Public Health Advocacy and New Leadership in Hartford**

The political scene in Connecticut underwent a major change last November when Connecticut voters elected Dannel Malloy as Governor, the first Democratic governor in Connecticut since 1986. While the full impact of a new administration and the fiscal challenges faced by our state have yet to be fully felt, CPHA Board of Directors and Advocacy Committee has been hard at work reaching out to the new leadership in Hartford as the legislative session begins.

At their January 24 meeting, the CPHA Board of Directors voted to support the appointment of Dr. Jewel Mullen to lead the Connecticut Department of Public Health. Dr Mullen was one of the first Commissioners selected by Governor Malloy after his election, and her appointment by the legislature is expected shortly. Dr. Mullen has lived in Connecticut since 1992 and holds a medical degree from Mount Sinai School of Medicine, a Masters in Public Health from Yale University and a Masters in Public Administration from Harvard University. She will be leaving the Massachusetts Department of Health Bureau of Community Health and Prevention where she directs the Department's divisions of Prevention and Wellness, Violence and Injury Prevention, and Primary Care and Health Access, in addition to an Office of Statistics and Evaluation. Her bureau's programs encompass a range of core public health initiatives, including school based health centers, oral health services, domestic violence and sexual assault services, youth violence prevention, family planning, chronic disease prevention and control, wellness and the primary care workforce center.

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“CPHA is so pleased that Governor Malloy selected an individual with excellent public health credentials, including solid public health practice experience, to lead the Department of Public Health,” said Kathy Lewis, CPHA Advocacy Co-Chair. “The times ahead will be extraordinarily challenging for public health. CPHA looks forward to working with Dr. Mullen on protecting the health of Connecticut residents, particularly those most vulnerable.

Once again, the CPHA Advocacy Committee will have student interns working throughout the legislative session. Ali Gilcreast, a 2011 MPH candidate from Southern Connecticut University will work with Advocacy Co-Chair Kathy Lewis on public health infrastructure issues. Roxann Robinson from the University of Hartford will work with CPHA staffer Noele Kidney on environmental health issues. Last month, Noele met our interns at the LOB and Capitol Building and provided them with an orientation to the advocacy process and the physical layout of the Capitol. Students received syllabi for the semester during which they will follow relevant legislation and the advocacy toolkit that was developed by Charles Huntington and updated by past Advocacy Committee Co-Chair Alyssa Norwood. Both student interns will follow legislation relevant to health equity.

Also, [the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut](#) was the focus of a segment last Sunday, January 30, on FOX61's *The Real Story*. You can catch the program online at [www.ctnow.com/news/therealstory/](http://www.ctnow.com/news/therealstory/). *The Real Story* is a half-hour, current issues program that discusses statewide and nationwide events with in-studio experts and guests.

Interested in working on the Advocacy Committee? Please e-mail Co-Chairs Katharine Lewis ([kalewis@hartford.edu](mailto:kalewis@hartford.edu)) or Pat Wrice ([pat@operationfuel.org](mailto:pat@operationfuel.org)).

[Top](#)

**Thank you Annamarie!**

In December 2010 and after 4 years of working with CPHA, Annamarie

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Beaulieu has left her position with CPHA for work elsewhere. Annamarie's contribution to CPHA in her time here is incalculable.

Starting as an intern for the Advocacy Committee, she worked tirelessly to increase CPHA's voice at the state capital and beyond, and her involvement with the Coalition for a Safe & Healthy Connecticut as the representative of CPHA has led to multiple legislative successes.

Annamarie's work at CPHA went beyond advocacy and her efforts were integral at securing funding for CPHA. The current CPHA website, online database, and the record attendance at the 2010 CPHA Annual Conference could not have been achieved without the resources she helped to attain. She was also a constant promoter for the new State Association of Local Boards of Health Section, the new section within CPHA that was announced at the past annual conference.

In her own words, "It was an absolute pleasure working with CPHA over the last four years. I am so proud of all that CPHA accomplished during that time through the teamwork and dedication of our wonderful Board and staff members. I feel very fortunate to have shared in the growing pains necessary to grow CPHA to the organization it is today. I was especially blessed to have worked with, and learned from, Charles Huntington. Charles exemplified the very best of public health leadership and inspired me to approach every project with pride and care. I will always look back fondly on my time with CPHA and all the special relationships I was fortunate to have had. I wish CPHA, its Board, staff and members the very best of success in the years to come. I look forward to working with CPHA again in the future. Best wishes for a happy, healthy 2011!"

*The benefits of Annamarie's dedication to CPHA will be seen for years to come. Thank you for all of your work, all of the late nights and all of the early mornings. We wish you the best of luck in your new position.*

[Top](#)

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## **CPHA Welcomes New Staff and Committee Co-Chairs**

### **CPHA is pleased to announce a new staff member.**

Noele Kidney will be coming on board as the Connecticut Public Health Association's new Project Coordinator. Noele very recently joined CPHA to fill one of the many voids left by Annamarie Beaulieu, who has left CPHA to work for Connecticut Children's Medical Center.

Her responsibilities with this part-time position include representing CPHA on the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut by advocating at the Legislature to eliminate chemical toxins from the products that we use everyday. Among the Coalition's legislative initiatives this session will be banning bisphenol-A from cash register and ATM receipts.

Noele lives in Ellington with her husband, Brad, and her two children, Caroline (10) and Jack (6). Her professional background includes working as a Press Aide for 8 ½ years in the Senate Majority Office. She left in 2000 to stay home with her newborn daughter. In her "free" time, Noele enjoys reading, working on her golf game, and volunteering at her children's school. "I'm very excited to be back at the Legislative Office Building seeing familiar faces and meeting many new ones," said Noele. "I look forward to working with you all to ensure that all of Connecticut's citizens are safe and healthy."

You can contact Noele at [noele.kidney@cpha.info](mailto:noele.kidney@cpha.info) or 860-305-7927 (cell) or 860-293-1183 (office).

### **CPHA will also be adding two new committee co-chairs: Patricia Wright and Meliessa Hennessy.**

Pat Wright is executive director of [Operation Fuel](#), an organization that partners with communities, businesses, government and individuals to ensure people in need have access to year-round energy assistance. Pat has over 30 years experience in the human services and community organizing field, including serving as an organizer for the [New England Health Care](#)

Employees Union District 1199, as executive director of the CHILD Council, executive director of the Human Resources Agency of New Britain and Program Director for the Connecticut Housing Coalition.

"I have been advocating for underserved populations at the State Capitol for many years," said Pat. "I am so please to take on this new role for CPHA."

Pat earned a master's degree in Social Work in community organization from the University of Connecticut School of Social Work and an undergraduate degree in political science and economics from Central Connecticut State University. She has been an adjunct professor at the University of Connecticut and Capital State Technical College since 1990. She also has a Certificate in Non-Profit Management from the Non-Profit Support Program of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. She completed a year-long fellowship with the Connecticut Health Foundation in addressing racial and ethnic disparities.

Pat serves on a number of Connecticut and national non-profit boards and has extensive experience working on local, national, and statewide advocacy campaigns.

Meliessa Hennessy was appointed by the CPHA Board at their January 2011 meeting to serve as Co-Chair of the CPHA Membership Committee. Meliessa will be joining Monika Haugstetter of UConn, the current chair of the Membership Committee. Expanding the membership base and providing more benefits to members is one of the top priorities for CPHA in 2011.

"I am interested in being an active committee member of CPHA to both support the activities of the association and to promote the networking opportunities for interested people in the state working in public health," Meliessa said in her application letter.

Meliessa is employed at the Center on Aging at the UConn Health Center as a member of the evaluation team for the CT Medicaid Infrastructure grant. The grant focuses on creating infrastructure changes and new collaborative

networks across state agencies and private providers to improve the opportunities for people with disabilities to gain competitive employment. Meliessa has over 20 years of work experience including 12 years in the biopharmaceutical and medical device industry managing clinical trials as director of operations for large, multi-national, phase 3 studies and post-market studies. Prior to working in clinical trials industry, Meliessa was employed as a Registered Nurse in Canada, including positions as operating room nurse and clinical study nurse for a gastroenterology group.

Currently, Meliessa is a member of the UConn Health Center Institutional Review Board, and a member of the CT Public Health Association. She earned a Master of Public Health from Yale University School of Public Health in the Health Management Program in 2009. Earlier, she completed a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Biomedical Ethics from University of Toronto in 1995, and also has completed a Diploma of Nursing and Registered Nurse certification in 1987 in Winnipeg Canada.

Interested in being on the Membership Committee? You can contact Monika at [mhaugstetter@uchc.edu](mailto:mhaugstetter@uchc.edu).

[Top](#)

## **Notes of interest**

### **CADH PBRN to Awarded Grant**

A second round of Research Implementation Award (RIA) grants have been given to establish Public Health PBRNs ([Public Health Practice-Based Research Networks](#)) for large-scale studies developed collaboratively with network participants. RIAs are designed to generate evidence to guide improvements in public health practice while providing an opportunity to learn the most effective approaches for conducting and applying research within public health practice settings. The research theme for this group of awards is "measuring and improving quality in public health practice." The Connecticut PH PBRN will develop and test quality measures related to local

health department (LHD) emergency response using the H1N1 experience in 2009-2010 as case study. The study aims are to develop quality measures specific to the H1N1 context; to validate and test measures; to apply measures to compare quality of response across LHDs at various stages of response; and to identify factors that contribute to differential quality of response across LHDs. An especially important aspect of the study will help to address gaps in scientific knowledge by exploring the role of financing and workforce characteristics in influencing quality of LHD performance.

### **Public Health Ambassador Camp**

Central AHEC will once again be offering a number of summer camps this year, including a Public Health Ambassador Camp for high school students. Webpage with general info & application is at:

<http://www.centraltahec.org/careers-future-summer-medical-camps.aspx>. We request that you distribute it to organizations who work with high school students. We also wanted to make a request for assistance in the development of activities for our students. We are currently seeking any of the following:

- Speakers who can talk about public health issues and/or careers in public health
- Classroom space for the weeks of July 11-22 and August 1-12
- Places to take field trips (e.g. testing labs)
- Funding to help subsidize the camp and/or provide scholarships to students who can't afford to go (camp cost is \$100). Any amount of funding would be helpful. Please let me know if you know an organization that would be willing to sponsor a student or two.

If you can help with any of the above items, please let me know or contact Lilibeth Carrasquillo at [lcarrasquillo@centraltahec.org](mailto:lcarrasquillo@centraltahec.org).

### **MATCH Coalition Special Summit on Medicaid Coverage**

The rescheduled [MATCH Coalition](#) special summit on Medicaid coverage for smoking cessation will be on February 2, 2011 in the Old Judiciary Room at the State Capitol from 9:00 to noon.

Senator Toni Harp and Rep. Joe Aresimowitz will be participating, along with Kevin Lembo, our new Comptroller and Jeannette DeJesus, the Governor's special advisor on health reform. Steve Shestakofsky, our keynote speaker, will talk about the outcomes and success of the Mass Health Program in Massachusetts. That initiative led to a 26% drop in the smoking rate among Medicaid clients and a 46% drop in hospitalization for heart attacks and other coronary complication in just 2 ½ years.

Once again, the Coalition intends to present to the legislature a sign-on letter from organizations supporting the creation of this important benefit for those at highest risk. They would like to have as many organizations signed on as possible for the date of the summit. If your organization has not signed on yet, please consider doing so. You can contact Pat Checko at

[PJChecko@comcast.net](mailto:PJChecko@comcast.net) or 860-828-8445.

[Top](#)

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