



2009

PROFILES

Recognizing Community Health Excellence



RECOGNIZING COMMUNITY HEALTH EXCELLENCE

The mission of The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida is to enhance access to quality health-related services for Floridians through strategic grantmaking to Florida's nonprofits that serve the state's uninsured and underserved. The Sapphire Award is the result of our desire to recognize excellence among the programs that create a significant positive impact on health-related outcomes for the state's at-risk people and communities.

The 2009 Sapphire Award honorees represent programs that demonstrate excellence and achievements through processes that can be replicated in other communities and programs. The characteristics that these honorees possess are many. In addition to a creative and passionate approach to serving unmet needs in their communities, these programs demonstrate continuous improvement. As learning organizations, they constantly seek expert advice, updated information on their clients' needs and the latest developments in best practices. As a group, they overcome obstacles to serve their clients, and they network with other service providers to ensure a complete continuum of care. Some programs depend on volunteers, and all of them share a passion to serve their communities. Their work is improving the health of thousands of Floridians who might otherwise go without care.

Congratulations to the 2009 Sapphire Award honorees.



The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida and its Parent, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, are Independent Licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

THE SAPPHIRE AWARD HONOREES FOR 2009

WINNER

(\$100,000 EACH)

Ann Storck Center, Fort Lauderdale

The Education Fund, Plant a Thousand Gardens
Collaborative Nutrition Initiative, North Miami

AWARD OF DISTINCTION

(\$75,000)

Comprehensive AIDS Program of Palm Beach County,
Palm Springs

HONORABLE MENTION

(\$25,000 EACH)

Capital Medical Society Foundation,
We Care Dental Network, Tallahassee

Children's Volunteer Health Network, Santa Rosa Beach

Hispanic Health Initiatives, Casselberry

I.M. Sulzbacher Center for the Homeless, Beaches
Community Healthcare – A Sulzbacher Clinic, Jacksonville

The following pages present brief profiles of the organizations and illustrate how they deliver excellence in community health programming in their own ways. We hope their stories will inspire you as they do us.

2009 SAPPHIRE AWARD HONOREE WINNER \$100,000



Ann Storck Center

The mission of the Ann Storck Center, located in Fort Lauderdale, is to enrich the lives of children and adults with severe and multiple developmental disabilities. The Center's residential and adult services focus on serving individuals who present severe and multiple developmental disabilities and who also may be medically fragile. Individuals have a range of cognitive and verbal abilities; behavioral, social and emotional needs are served. The Center accomplishes this mission through comprehensive, innovative and prescriptive programs and services. It is the intent of these programs to promote each individual's ability to interact with others and to achieve identified cognitive, social, emotional, motor and daily living skills so that all persons served may realize the potential for more independent living.

Ann Storck Center excels in its holistic approach to client care aimed at the over-arching goal of supporting people with disabilities. This is evidenced by the service provided to participants, which extends beyond the basic day-to-day care and emphasizes access, actualization and artistic expression. Additionally, the Center uses advanced technological interventions to provide participants with access to various services, some of which are unique to Ann Storck Center. For example, the IMAGINE program (touch screen computer program that integrates art and music), micro enterprise program (participants sell their art and snacks) and stimulation rooms are all innovative methods of meeting participant needs. In addition to the technological advances, the Center services a broad range of participants (i.e., preschoolers and adults) with holistic and evidence-based care.

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Programs include:

- Preschool – efforts focused on developing the educational, social and physical skills of its students, infants and toddlers through age five, including typically developing children. Uses the DLM Early Childhood Express curriculum – holistic, child-centered program that nurtures each child by offering carefully selected and sequenced learning experiences.
- Developmental Training Program (DTP) – modeled after the Snoozelin concept utilizing sensory stimulation and sensory integration materials. Includes Multiple Learning Experience curriculum – a combination of multiple best practices involving fine art, music, daily living skills and a rotating curriculum. Ongoing daily learning experiences for adults who have graduated from special education programs, to continue the education and specialized therapies of the participants so they may build independence and discover their abilities. Includes social/vocational skills; Leo Goodwin Gizmo House Lab, where participants practice daily living skills through adaptive appliances and assistive technology; Arts In Motion/Music Therapy; Fine Art Program; and Expressive Arts Program
- Residential Programs – family-like homes for children and adult residents to live and learn in a nurturing yet therapeutic environment.



- Gizmo House -- first of its kind in the country and a model for replication internationally; a high-tech computerized "smart home" located in a residential neighborhood. Six residents with developmental disabilities live virtually "assistance-free" in their own home.
- Specialized Group Homes – located in local neighborhoods that are specially staffed and equipped for small groups of children and adults with similar unique needs.

Ann Storck Center is an accredited organization through CARF International, the Rehabilitation Accreditation Commission, and has been since 1993. The most recent accreditation was completed in May 2008 in which 17 areas of strength were recognized in addition to four areas of exemplary conformance. The Center earned its fifth consecutive maximum award of a three-year accreditation. The Center is a three-time recipient of the Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities Jimmy Miller Award in recognition of excellence in meeting the needs of Florida's citizens with disabilities (latest in 2008).

The Center's multi-faceted evaluation program includes consumer satisfaction; achievement of communication skills, cognitive functioning, motor skills; short- and long-term objectives leading towards life skills; and staff satisfaction. The Center demonstrates success in its Preschool Program with 90% of the children showing improvement in communication skills and cognitive functioning and 94% of the children served demonstrated improved gross motor and fine motor skills. In addition, the Center's program participants achieved 7,966 short-term objectives leading towards life skills. Program participants demonstrated a 99% rating for the measurement of skills previously attained and consumer satisfaction was registered for all programs and services at 99%. Consumer driven interests, activities and matters of choice were honored at 98% (51,702 of 52,737 wishes and desires were met).

Beyond innovative programming and use of technology, the integration of a multi-faceted program evaluation strategy and use of a best practices approach has enabled the organization to connect its mission with advocacy, support networks, volunteerism and commercial ventures to innovatively meet the changing needs of its target population. The Center currently serves 300 adults and children.

Receiving primarily federal funding, the organization has maintained services despite funding reductions and changes in legislation by its courageous and relentless perseverance in an effort to overcome public policy obstacles to patient care.



"My daughter Gabrielle came to Ann Storck Center at the age of two," said Odalys Arbelaz. "She had had multiple heart surgeries, used a feeding pump and tube for her nourishment and barely spoke 20 words. Today [six years later], Gabrielle is living proof of what Ann Storck Center can do. She walks, talks, sings and skips like any other typical child. Whereas, before, I would desperately pray she would both talk and eat. We now argue about what restaurant we are going to and what foods are healthiest to eat! She's come a long way and there is no wonder why."

2009 SAPPHIRE AWARD HONOREE HONORABLE MENTION \$25,000



Capital Medical Society Foundation, We Care Dental Network

The We Care Dental Network is a component of the Capital Medical Society Foundation We Care Network*. In 2003, local physicians identified a need for dental participation in their network of donated specialty medical care. A significant number of their patients could not receive necessary specialty medical care because of underlying dental issues. Additionally, the local health department did not provide service to low-income adults, only to low-income children or children on Medicaid.



The goal of the We Care Dental Network is to increase access to dental care for low-income, uninsured adult patients in the Tallahassee area. This goal is accomplished by organizing volunteer dentists and local dental organizations to provide donated care; and by hiring staff to organize the program, screen and case manage patients, and provide for a continuum of care. Since its inception, the We Care Dental Network has grown from its original 13 volunteers to 51 volunteers, representing half of the dentists in practice in Tallahassee and the surrounding area, and includes two oral surgeons, four periodontists and two dentists who specialize in dental prosthetics.

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Volunteering dentists may provide services in their private offices or volunteer in the bi-monthly Dental Clinic Day operated in the Leon County Health Department. Students from Tallahassee Community College, University of Florida College of Dentistry and Florida State University Pre-Dental Society participate in Dental Clinic Day alongside the volunteer dentists. Since the inception of Dental Clinic Days in 2006, a total of 300 patients received donated services valued at \$212,400.

The program is advised by a Dental Committee made up of eight dentists and two medical doctors who meet quarterly with the We Care Dental Network staff to address the needs of the program and standards of care. This group also reports to a committee of the Capital Medical Society Foundation dedicated to improving access to medical and dental care.

Patients served have a household income at 100% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (changed to 150% after the nomination was submitted, which is aligned with the local hospitals' guidelines). We Care Dental serves people who do not qualify for programs like Medicaid, Medicare, or Vocational Rehabilitation. They also serve a limited number of patients who have medical insurance, but no dental insurance, who also meet poverty guidelines. We Care Dental provided services to 18 patients in 2003; by 2006, 443 patients; and as of April 2009, they have treated 802 patients. Of those 802 patients, 634 were seen in a private dentist office with a value of donated care at \$312,722. To date, the We Care Dental Network has provided \$525,122 dollars in donated dental care.



"We Care gave me back my smile," said April Grissette, We Care Dental Network patient and mother who spends every day volunteering at her three children's schools and their extracurricular activities.

The dental case manager interacts regularly with the dentist volunteers and the patients to ensure a continuum of care is in place that meets the needs of the patient and the dentist volunteer. This may include providing bus passes for transportation or funds to pay for dentures or medications as prescribed by the dentist. Patients remain active in the program until their dental needs are met and can follow up with the referring primary care physician.

We Care Network created and maintains an electronic case management program that allows staff to maintain all demographics, case notes, referrals for medical and dental care, letters issued, value of services donated, diagnostic codes, costs of medications and supplies, number of volunteers (recruited, retained), patients treated, outcomes and many other statistics.

We Care Dental Network leverages the goodwill and spirit of volunteerism of a highly specialized group (dentists) to meet the health needs of a high vulnerable one (the poor/uninsured). This is in part accomplished by their innovative approach to securing its volunteer base by organizing a way for their members to receive continuing education credit as well as sovereign immunity. Furthermore, they lower barriers and forge strong linkages with other health care providers to ensure a more holistic approach for this population. Linking volunteers with an underserved community is a simple and straightforward approach, and We Care Dental Network does this expertly and confronts all challenges accordingly, resulting in a highly effective and valuable health delivery model.

*Capital Medical Society Foundation We Care Network coordinates donated specialty medical care to uninsured residents of Leon, Gadsden, Jefferson and Wakulla counties with income below the Federal Poverty Level. Created to maintain an organized referral system between primary and specialty medical care providers, the Network has also established a Patient Assistance Fund (PAF) to help obtain prescription medications, transportation, and medical supplies for patients. In collaboration with local providers, volunteer physicians and dentists, and ancillary partners, We Care Network donated over \$3 million in free medical and dental care to approximately 850 qualified patients in 2008.

"The We Care Dental Network serves as a model for the United States of the way to develop an effective and efficient system for getting dental services for people without insurance," said Kenneth Brummel-Smith, M.D.

2009 SAPPHIRE AWARD HONOREE
HONORABLE MENTION \$25,000



Children's Volunteer Health Network

Children's Volunteer Health Network, located in Santa Rosa Beach and serving children in Walton and Okaloosa counties, a combination of rural and urban areas, seeks to enhance the lives of uninsured and underinsured school-aged children by facilitating free immediate access to medical, dental and mental health care. Goals of this grassroots community effort are established and tracked through two programs, the Healthcare Referral Program and the Mobile Dental Program, Just for Grins.



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CVHN's Referral Program, based on a similar program in Pasadena, Calif., has grown into a network of over 90 medical, dental and mental health care providers who volunteer their services to help the underserved population of children in their communities. In five years, CVHN has facilitated 2,042 appointments for 649 children through the Healthcare Referral Program. From January through April 2009 alone, CVHN has experienced a 41% increase in the number of new children receiving care through the Referral Program compared to the same time frame for 2008. In 2008, the Referral Program facilitated over \$107,000 of free appointments and treatments.

During the first four years of operation, more than 52% of the urgent cases were dental. As a result of this information, CVHN launched the Mobile Dental Clinic Program. Just for Grins works towards the same goals as the Healthcare Referral Program by providing free dental exams, x-rays, cleanings, fluoride treatments and sealants to Walton County school children pre-k through third grade, who are on the free or reduced lunch program.

Eligible children receive free preventative oral health care and education provided by volunteer dentists, assistants and others, and a staff of two licensed dental hygienists. Since the mobile dental program began in September 2008, 925 children have received this free service, including the identification of over 1,600 cavities. During the current school year, the Mobile Dental Clinic Program provided more than \$90,000 worth of free

oral hygiene treatments. The goals are to break the cycle of dental health disparities in the community and reduce the need for urgent dental care. The next phase for the Mobile Dental Clinic Program will include restorative treatments.

The Client-Care Coordinator and staff work directly with school nurses to determine a need, then with the child's family to establish permission for care. Once the need has been assessed, CVHN works directly with the provider list to find a medical professional willing to take the case. The staff coordinates appointments, transportation and any subsequent treatments. Volunteers often provide the transportation for the children and their families to appointments.

CVHN emerged out of the desire to help fulfill one child's dental needs to an organization that has served more than 1,500 children since 2004. The composition of over 90 volunteer dental, medical and mental health care providers is a strong example of how this organization has lobbied community interest and support in order to achieve their goal of keeping kids happy, healthy and in school.



Four years ago, Tyler needed major dental and orthodontic treatment his family did not have the means to provide. Often called "monster mouth," the child's dental problems were causing him both physical and emotional hardships – bullying by the other kids, missed days of school and no self-esteem.

"All I saw was one little boy who needed help and that is how it all began," said Tricia Carlisle-Northcutt, Founder, CVHN. "If there was one child, there were many. For us, Tyler became the inspiration that put a very personal face on a global problem."

Tyler received the dental and medical help he needed from caring volunteer providers. His younger brother, an asthmatic, also received care and missed fewer days of school. No longer "monster mouth," Tyler's Ds and Fs became Bs and Cs. He became the youngest manager of the school's wrestling team and wanted to join school clubs.

With Tyler, Children's Volunteer Health Network became a reality. From runny noses and hearing aids, to dental infections and open heart surgeries, CVHN is all about a community coming together to solve a health care crisis.

2009 SAPPHIRE AWARD HONOREE
AWARD OF DISTINCTION \$75,000



**Comprehensive AIDS Program of
Palm Beach County**

Founded in 1985 by a group of concerned friends and family members of people living with AIDS, The Comprehensive AIDS Program of Palm Beach County (CAP) has grown to serve all of Palm Beach County through four service centers and more than 90 professionals and volunteers.

CAP provides outreach in high-risk communities and links people living with HIV/AIDS to medical care and essential social services. The agency's services operate under the "Learn. Know. Connect." framework, and are accomplished on a daily basis through several programs and messages:

Learn. Learn about HIV

- Educational sessions and outreach in high-risk communities using a number of strategies and interventions approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as part of their diffusion of effective behavioral interventions (DEBI) program.
- Community-based Real AIDS Prevention Program (RAPP) targets African American women and their male sex partners; uses trained community volunteers to conduct safer sex presentations, facilitate home-based discussion groups, and provide outreach at community health fairs, events and festivals.
- Small group interventions, called Video Opportunities for Innovative Condom Education (VOICES), utilize a culturally specific video presentation to generate discussion and provide education about condom use.
- Community PROMISE (Peer Reaching Out and Modeling Intervention Strategies for HIV Risk Reduction)—research-based HIV prevention intervention that relies on role model stories and peer advocates from the community.

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Know. Know your status

- Encourages HIV antibody tests.
- Free rapid HIV antibody testing offered at their four service centers and more than 50 partner locations throughout Palm Beach County that are registered with the Florida Department of Health (drug treatment centers, churches, medical facilities and social services agencies).
- All staff are state trained and certified to conduct testing.



Connect. Connect to care

- Emphasizes the importance of people living with HIV to receive medical care and essential social services to maintain their health. Can include medications, housing, food, transportation to medical appointments, home health care, legal aid and referrals to substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling.
- Linkage program enrolls more than 150 people living with HIV into medical care each year and a medical case management program that served 1,808 individuals in 2008.
- Focus on helping people living with HIV/AIDS remain in medical care.
- Uses the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Anti-retroviral Treatment Adherence Study Model (ARTAS).

CAP offers services throughout Palm Beach County and does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, age, economic level, sexual orientation, medical status or disability. The agency's services are targeted to reach people at high risk for HIV-infection in order to prevent further transmission of the disease and to identify individuals living with HIV who do not know their status so that they can be linked to medical care that will improve their overall health.



"This exceptional organization has been an important partner in Florida's efforts to prevent the spread of HIV and to provide quality and compassionate care to those already infected," said Thomas Liberti, Chief, Florida Department of Health, Bureau of HIV/AIDS. "This organization has made an enormous difference in the lives of the men, women and children in Palm Beach County who are infected and affected by HIV/AIDS."

CAP has demonstrated success in the sheer number of people it has reached through its comprehensive program planning in 2008:

- The RAPP team reached more than 11,700 people through outreach, more than 1,600 individuals with safer sex presentations and more than 525 through discussion groups.
- CAP conducted 233 VOICES sessions in 2008, reaching 1,188 individuals. Sessions are conducted in Spanish, Haitian Creole and English.
- CAP enrolls more than 50 people living with HIV into medical care each year.
- Medical case management program served 1,808 people in 2008.
- 96% of the 5,057 people reached through outreach activities completed an HIV assessment.
- 97% of the 2,280 people who tested negative for HIV antibodies created a personal plan for reducing their risk.
- 100% of the 30 people who tested positive for HIV antibodies saw a doctor within 30 days.
- 99% of the 1,937 medical case management clients are enrolled in medical care.
- ARTAS team actively connected to medical care 137 people who were newly diagnosed or who knew their HIV status and were not in care.
- Palm Beach County Health Care District study showed that the average number of inpatient hospital stays and number of days during those stays was lower for individuals who received CAP's medical case management services, and had fewer emergency room visits.
- 87% of medical case management clients participate in HAART (Highly Active Anti-retroviral Therapy).

CAP follows linkage and intervention guidelines and case management standards of care set by the Florida Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Both agencies directly monitor programs, processes and outcomes, requiring monthly, semi-annual and annual reporting. Funders also require reporting against standards, goals and outcomes. The agency also tracks client access to medications, as well as basic health outcomes such as viral load and CD4 counts, to assure that its programs are helping clients maintain health.

2009 SAPPHIRE AWARD HONOREE HONORABLE MENTION \$25,000



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Hispanic Health Initiatives

Hispanic Health Initiatives' (HHI) mission is to educate medically underserved families, in a linguistically correct and culturally sensitive manner, about chronic diseases, disease management and prevention; and refer them to their community health care providers. Founded in 2000, it is a grassroots, volunteer-driven, Hispanic agency targeting all medically disadvantaged residents of Orange, Osceola, Seminole and Volusia counties in Central Florida facing linguistic, cultural and socio-economic barriers to health information and care. While the focus is on the Hispanic population, others are not excluded.



Located in Casselberry and serving an area made up of rural, urban and suburban environments, HHI in nine years of services to the community has touched the lives of over 100,000 Central Florida residents through their outreach programs.

HHI has sponsored several campaigns and programs such as diabetes, cancer and obesity education; nutrition and exercise; self-management of diabetes classes; and, among others, formed the first Hispanic Cancer Support Group in Central Florida.

Included in the innovative programs created and offered by HHI are "Hoy en Adelante" (Today Forward), a theatre program to promote diabetes education; Breast Health Bingo; Breast Self Exam Demonstration; Controlling Diabetes – Is a Family Matter; and more. Numbers related to those programs follow:

- 1,300 people have participated in diabetes classes.
- Over 600 uninsured women were referred for free to low-cost mammograms.
- 400 men have been educated or referred for free prostate cancer screens.
- Over 23,000 women have been educated on breast and cervical cancer.
- Over 3,000 uninsured women have been referred for free/low cost mammography.
- 600 people attended theatrical skits on controlling diabetes as a family matter.



“Los Amigos,” the diabetes, healthy nutrition and exercise education program has provided classes, screening and referral services to over 4,800 persons, both diabetic or at high risk of diabetes.

In addition to their programmatic aims, HHI, in collaboration with more than 50 community partners, organizes two annual health fairs providing on-site chronic disease screening and educational literature. The health fairs allow them to provide participants with a variety of health information. At HHI’s June 2008 “Festival de La Familia” health fair, over 15,000 persons attended. There were 38 HIV Tests, 28 Rapid Tests, 147 complete Kidney Screens, 150 vision exams, 125 cholesterol screens, 220 glucose screens, 40 PAP screens and 137 mammogram referrals performed—all at no cost to the participants.

All HHI programs and activities incorporate a “whole family” approach to health education, prevention, screening and other services.

HHI through its team of volunteers and partnering organizations has, as its theme suggests, laid the groundwork to effectively and economically address health disparities by opening pathways for the medically disadvantaged community to access good health and promoting the individual’s personal involvement in their own health decisions and care options.

HHI has been recognized both locally and nationally, including, among others:

- 2004/2005 Intercultural Cancer Council HOPE Award, presented biennially to only five organizations nationwide.
- 2004 Florida Health Care Coalition Community Service Award.

- 2002 Walt Disney World Community Service Award for Special Health Care Services.
- 2005 Juan Ponce de Leon Community Service Award.
- 2006 and 2007 finalists in the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Don Quixote Professional of the Year Award.
- 2009 Families USA Consumer Health Advocate Award.
- 2005 Congressional grant in recognition of excellence in performing outreach and chronic disease education and prevention.
- Recognized by Orlando Sentinel/El Sentinel as one of the best managed nonprofit Hispanic organizations.

HHI’s work is unprecedented, as there is no other multi-county, multi-culture or multi-lingual organization focusing on the Hispanic community in the Central Florida area. It was designed and is managed and operated in a grassroots fashion. A major strength of this organization stems from the leadership of the founder, Josephine Mercado. With limited resources, the organization has grown to offer many services to a community that often finds health care inaccessible due to financial, legal or language barriers. The group also is strong at developing linkages with other health care providers and nonprofits in the field and coordinates services to best meet the community need. HHI includes the participation of approximately 70 “active” volunteers. Through health fairs and health educator trainings, volunteers demonstrate significant outreach and connections to the target communities. A key success of this organization is its capacity to bring health care issues into the community spotlight and teach people how to navigate the health care system.

2009 SAPPHIRE AWARD HONOREE HONORABLE MENTION \$25,000



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Beaches Community Healthcare – A Sulzbacher Clinic

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I.M.Sulzbacher Center for the Homeless Beaches Community Healthcare – A Sulzbacher Clinic

Beaches Community Healthcare, which opened in Dec. 2008, is part of a comprehensive homeless center, The Sulzbacher Center for the Homeless, located in downtown Jacksonville. Beaches Community Healthcare is located in Jacksonville Beach, some 20 miles east of the downtown corridor, and supports the homeless population in three seaside communities: Jacksonville Beach, Neptune Beach and Atlantic Beach. The primary goal of Beaches Community Healthcare is to provide access to basic health care for homeless and indigent persons in the three beach communities. Its services are designed as part of a community-wide safety net of health care.

The downtown clinic of Sulzbacher is one of only two Federally Qualified Health Centers in northeast Florida and the only Health Care for the Homeless Program in the City of Jacksonville. In August 2008, Sulzbacher received a three-year New Access Point grant from Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), which allowed Beaches Community Health – A Sulzbacher Center to become reality.

The opening of Beaches Community Healthcare can also be attributed to collaboration between Sulzbacher, local governments, public safety and the Beaches Healthcare Initiative, whose members include citizens, other nonprofits, religious institutions, a hospital, businesses and community leaders. The Beaches Healthcare Initiative had been working for several years to bring an indigent care clinic to their community. All continue to be active in Beaches Community Healthcare.



This area is designated by HRSA as a Medically Underserved Area (MUA) and a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) for primary health care. The target population of the Beaches clinic is persons who are homeless and at risk of homelessness. At this time, there are 4,946 homeless and uninsured working poor persons within the service area.

With a small staff, Beaches relies on 41 volunteers, including nine student volunteers, and the outreach of trained medical outreach specialists that provide direct client contact including health, psychiatric and basic necessities to provide primary care for uninsured homeless. Partnerships with We Care Jacksonville (a private nonprofit organization of health care professionals that provides volunteer doctors, nurses and other medical professionals) and local higher education institutions for training and internship opportunities for medical students greatly increases Beaches' capacity to deliver quality health care to this vulnerable group. In the first quarter of 2009, Beaches has already provided 636 primary health care visits for 395 persons. They have connected eligible clients to patient

assistance medication valued at \$7,552. And the 41 volunteer providers donated 241 hours of time valued at \$6,717; the nine students volunteered 326 hours.

Another critical factor in the success of the Beaches clinic is the Sulzbacher HOPE medical outreach program. Begun in 2000 in downtown Jacksonville and expanded in 2008 to the Beaches, this program uses trained medical outreach specialists in an easily recognizable van to provide direct client contact to individuals who are living on the street (unsheltered homeless in the woods, at the beach, in cars). Clinic staff travel with the van to provide health and psychiatric services. The HOPE team also distributes clothing, blankets, food, water and basic hygiene items to the homeless. Transportation to the Beaches clinic is provided for those unable to come to the clinic on their own. And, if they are willing, the HOPE team can transport the unsheltered to the downtown Sulzbacher facility for shelter and other services. The Team delivers prescriptions, provides mental health counseling, and follows up with clients. The current leader of the HOPE Team is formerly homeless. The Hope Team has made 802 contacts with 80 homeless persons and provided 76 mental health sessions for the Beaches population.

This program's ability to leverage community support is one of its distinguishing characteristics. The partnership between local nonprofit, religious, government, educational and healthcare institutions has transformed the vision of accessible healthcare for the homeless and underserved in the Beaches community into a reality.

One in 10 people who live in Atlantic, Neptune and Jacksonville beaches are either homeless or uninsured. One of these people is Julie – a woman who endured years of abuse as a child and adult, lived on the streets for five years, and used to be ruled by substance addiction. Although bipolar, she frequently went without the three medications she needed to manage her condition because she couldn't afford to pay for them.

"I couldn't kill myself but I wasn't staying alive very well," is how the woman tearfully described herself prior to seeking help at Beaches Community Healthcare – A Sulzbacher Clinic.

Julie came to Beaches Community Healthcare after seeing the HOPE van parked outside a church where she was having dinner. Four months later, she attends mental health counseling sessions and has access to the medicines she needs at no cost. In addition to being closely monitored by medical professionals, a social worker helped her receive food stamps and get a driver's license.

"This place is awesome," said Julie. "It's great to be able to talk to someone who listens, is not judgmental and asks me about my emotions. I've grown emotionally and feel better about being out. It's very empowering."

2009 SAPPHIRE AWARD HONOREE
WINNER \$100,000



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The Education Fund: Plant A Thousand Gardens Collaborative Nutrition Initiative

The Education Fund is a Miami-Dade County nonprofit that supports innovations in public schools. Its groundbreaking program, called Plant A Thousand Gardens Collaborative Nutrition Initiative (CNI), addresses the alarming rate of childhood obesity, diabetes and other harmful medical conditions due to poor nutritional choices. This student-centered, seed-to-table curriculum program was piloted in five Miami-Dade County elementary schools in 2007-08, expanded to 10 schools in 2008-09, and will expand to 25 schools in the 2009-10 school year. Gardens reached more than 9,000 children in the 2008-2009 school year.

The primary goals of this program are two-fold:

- 1) to change the eating patterns in elementary school children and their families through a collaborative initiative grounded in hands-on nutrition legacy, and
- 2) to identify and engage teachers and school leadership in a collaborative action research activity that empowers them to become advocates for nutritional literacy.

CNI takes an innovative approach to combating the deepening public health crisis of childhood obesity, diabetes and nutritional deficiency. Offering hands-on learning opportunities for a wide variety of students to work on community gardens to explore issues of health, nutrition and core academic disciplines is educationally rich



and supported by rigorous testing data. Program evaluation data is reported at all levels, including transfer and impact data that verifies an 80% increase in children who report eating vegetables with lunch and a 50% increase in students who report eating vegetables with dinner. Other positive indicators include a reduction of unhealthy foods eaten -- after one year in the program, 50% fewer children ate candy or ice cream at lunch and 45% fewer children ate dinner at a well-known fast food chain. Additionally, during the first year, three cafeterias of the five pilot CNI schools changed their menus in response to requests from students for more healthy foods. Data shows 88% of parents are preparing healthier food this year than last, while 90% said their children request healthier food.



“Seeing the way my kids are now making smarter choices about nutrition makes me very thankful that my son has been able to be a part of this incredible life changing experience,” said one mother. “Not only have his eating habits changed, but the eating habits for the people around him have changed as well. The vegetable garden that the kids made at school has inspired my son to grow his own.”

Additionally, accountability, institutional capacity and public outreach are all apparent as evidenced by CNI’s use of an evidence-based curriculum that is aligned with Florida Sunshine Standards and Miami-Dade County Public Schools’ Pacing Guides, and helps meet a state mandate that requires teachers to devote 150 minutes per week for nutrition and physical education. This, in combination with CNI’s use of internal and external program evaluation, which include both qualitative and quantitative strategies, help contribute to its success.

Beyond CNI’s strengths in terms of accountability and exemplary standards of practice, this program is a model of community collaboration, involving key stakeholders (e.g., educators, parents, students, chefs, gardeners, community wellness advocates, etc.) in an effort to teach students, and subsequently families, the importance of a nutritious lifestyle. The Education Fund’s preventative and community oriented approach allows the target population to take ownership of the program. Additionally, this approach is a sustainable method of ensuring the ongoing health of Floridians by changing students’ attitudes towards food and nutritional awareness. In essence, the program is designed to transform students into educated consumers of change, an accomplishment which can have a long lasting impact of the health of this community.

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2008 Sapphire Award Honorees

Winner (\$100,000 each)

All 'Bout Children, Inc., Building Wellness, Resilience and School Readiness: A Preschool Preventative Intervention, West Palm Beach Memorial Foundation, Inc., Health Intervention with Targeted Services Program (HITS), Hollywood

Award of Distinction (\$75,000 each)

Bay Cares, Inc., Panama City
Capital Medical Society Foundation,
We Care Network, Tallahassee

Honorable Mention (\$25,000)

Charlotte Behavioral Health Care, Healthy Families of Charlotte County, Punta Gorda

2007 Sapphire Award Honorees

Winner (\$100,000)

Shands Vista PALS (Partners in Adolescent Lifestyle Support) Program, Alachua County

Award of Distinction (\$75,000 each)

Epilepsy Foundation of Florida, Inc., Miami
HUG-Me, (Help Understand and Guide Me), a program at the Howard Phillips Center for Children & Families, Orlando
Lakeland Volunteers In Medicine, Lakeland

Honorable Mention (\$25,000)

Big Bend Cares, Inc., Tallahassee

2006 Sapphire Award Honorees

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Kristi House, Miami
The Bridge of Northeast Florida, Jacksonville

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Neighborhood Health Clinic, Naples

Finalist (\$5,000)

Henderson Mental Health Center – Cottages in the Pines COURT Project, Fort Lauderdale

2005 Sapphire Award Honorees

Winner (\$100,000 each)

Camillus Health Concern, Miami
Crisis Center of Tampa Bay, Tampa
The Rubin Center for Healthy Aging at Senior Friendship Centers, Sarasota

Honorable Mention (\$15,000 each)

Bay Cares, Panama City
Broward Children's Center, Pompano Beach
The Lawton and Rhea Chiles Center for Healthy Mothers and Babies at the College of Public Health, University of South Florida, Tampa
Wayside House, Delray Beach

Finalist (\$5,000 each)

Epilepsy Foundation of South Florida, Miami
Neighborhood Health Clinic, Naples
WE CARE, Jacksonville

2010 Sapphire Award Nomination

The 2010 Sapphire Award nomination process will be online beginning in February 2010. Please check our Web site, www.bluefoundationfl.com, for announcements on when the nomination process begins.



The Sapphire Award was created exclusively for The Blue Foundation for a Healthy Florida by Nate Nardi, glassblowing artist and instructor at the Glassblowing Institute of Jacksonville University.

The Blue Foundation 
FOR A HEALTHY FLORIDA

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