



JAN. - FEB. 2009

E-HEALTHBEAT

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MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR



Lillian Rivera
RN, MSN, PhD

I hope that you had a restful, safe and fun holiday season. We want to thank the Governor and Representative Vaselinda for the concession of two days that gave us additional time to be with our family and friends.

At the start of this New Year, we move forward with trust in the power of our spirit, confidence in our purpose, and faith that we can overcome our adversities.

A special legislative session that took place recently brought the third major round of cuts in 10 months and is the result of a prolonged nosedive in tax revenues caused by

the recession-wracked real estate and credit markets.

We will keep you informed as information comes to us on the decisions being made.

During the holidays, I was able to meet with community leaders and legislators to work on securing our safety net and MDCHD efforts.

Thanks to the hard work and innovation of all of you, our organization will survive during these hard times that we are confronting.

We look with hope to the year ahead and the opportunities it will bring.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lillian Rivera". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

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Please send your articles and comments to:

newsletter@doh.state.fl.us.

Honoring Our Volunteers

The Miami-Dade County Health Department recently honored a group of volunteers, including doctors, dentists, healthcare personnel and local organizations that provide medical and dental services to uninsured and underinsured persons in our community. The reception was celebrated at South Miami Hospital.



Volunteers from different organizations attended the reception.



Lillian Rivera, MDCHD Administrator (third from left), shares a moment with attendees.



Participants received plaques and awards.



Dr. Ana Viamonte Ros, Florida Surgeon General, with a group of volunteers.



Employees of the MDCHD Start the Year with a Bang!

Under the theme “You Make a Difference”, employees of the Miami-Dade County Health Department had their employee retreat in January which was full of fun, education, prizes and activities including a dance competition which turned out to be a big success.

The event took place at the Miami-Dade County Auditorium and went on without a glitch.

“We wanted to have a fun day dedicated to our employees to show them our appreciation for the wonderful work they do,” said Administrator Lillian Rivera.

The event also included presentations by programs showcasing their work and special guests educated the employees on discrimination, identity theft and other interesting topics.

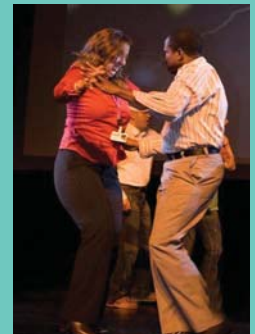
Employees expressed their satisfaction with the event and have already shared their ideas for 2010.



Our official Health Department poster was unveiled.



Employees share a moment of fun and dance.



Virginia Maneiro, from School Health and Renel Denis, from WIC, won the dance contest.



Administrator Lillian Rivera kicks off the event addressing the employees.



The retreat included useful information for employees.



Activist Praised for Role in Coping with Latino AIDS Crisis

Evelyn Ullah, HIV/AIDS Program Director of the Miami-Dade County Health Department, praised the diligent efforts of Senior Health Educator Damaris “Dee” Cruz and her mother, Milagros “Millie” Pagan in response to the Latino Aids Crisis.

Cruz was one of 12 distinguished members of the Latino community selected for the first national Spanish language media campaign profiling Latinos living with HIV and their loved ones. This tremendous accomplishment is among the vast accolades achieved by Cruz, who has worked as

Senior Health Educator for the MDCHD HIV/AIDS Bureau since February 2008. Before, Cruz worked for the Broward County Health Department as a project coordinator.

Through Cruz’s fortitude and determination she has made a significant difference in the lives of many Hispanic individuals living with HIV/AIDS. She has the knowledge to impact the community at large regarding this crisis.

Cruz is featured in *Soy la Voz del Cambio*, a documentary in which she represents the Hispanic community regarding the AIDS epidemic.

NOTED...

Staphylococcus aureus, often referred to simply as “staph,” is a type of bacteria commonly carried on the skin or in the nose of healthy people. Sometimes, staph can cause an infection. Staph bacteria are one of the most common causes of skin infections in the United States. Most of these skin infections are minor, such as pustules and boils, and can be treated without antibiotics. However, staph bacteria also can cause serious infections, such as surgical wound infections, bloodstream infections, and pneumonia.

Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) refers to types of staph that are resistant to a type of antibiotic methicillin. MRSA is often resistant to other antibiotics, as well.

Staph infections, including MRSA, occur most frequently among persons in hospitals and healthcare facilities, such as nursing homes and dialysis centers who have weakened immune systems. These healthcare-associated staph infections include surgical wound infections, urinary tract infections, bloodstream infections, and pneumonia.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

A TALK ON HEALTH

Mayor Carlos Alvarez, Dr. Ana M. Viamonte Ros, Lillian Rivera, and Olga Connor during a recent meeting to discuss public health topics in Miami-Dade.





TOY DRIVE 2009

Another year of smiles for dozens of children who benefited from the MDCHD's Toy Drive 2009, organized by the Legal / Contracts office. Donations were received from all programs.

Consortium Marks 5th Anniversary

The Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade marks five years of progress by pursuing its goal of promoting well-being, and preventing illness, disability, and premature death in our community.

The consortium is a vital partnership of 50 organizations and 150 individuals which follow a common set of goals and guidelines that are modeled after those of Healthy People 2010, a national blueprint for wellness and longevity.

"We looked at our community, and decided that if we could instill the importance of four fundamentals, good nutrition, regular exercise, abstinence from tobacco, and the need to reduce stress, we could take a giant step forward in preventing 'preventable' chronic disease," said Ann-Karen Weller, RN, BSN, ICCE, director of the Office of Community Health and Planning.



Consortium members during their First Annual Conference, that took place at the West Perrine Health Center.

Since its start, the consortium has focused on three key objectives: educating the public on the cost-effective benefits of healthy lifestyles, supporting state and local policy that encourages healthy lifestyles, and collaborating with others to improve community health. To carry out these objectives, the consortium has established eight committees: Children's Issues, Elder Issues, Executive, Health and the Built environment, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, Marketing/Membership, Oral Health, and Worksite Wellness.

Contributing writer: Louise Petraitis

IN the Spotlight

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE OUTSTANDING EMPLOYEES WHO WERE RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE AND PROFESSIONALISM. YOUR HARD WORK MAKES OUR COMMUNITY HEALTHIER AND SAFER.

NOVEMBER



Antonio Hernandez
Financial Management

DECEMBER



Jacqueline Del Rey
WIC

JANUARY



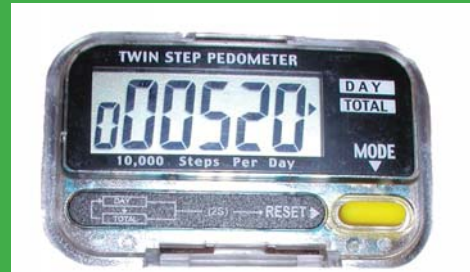
Jorge Rivas
Facilities

FEBRUARY



Nora Bueno
WIC

PEDOMETER CHALLENGE 2009



The Pedometer Challenge 2009 is here! For more information about it call 305-234-5400 ext. 2510.

FROM OUR CLIENTS

Kudos to the WIC staff at West Dade. This letter, sent by a client after receiving services there, is a testimony of their excellent work:
“Through this letter, on behalf of myself and my family, I want to tell you of my immense gratitude for the services of the WIC Program. The services we have received have been of first quality from all the staff of the West Dade office. Also, I want to bring to your attention that the information and education offered is very important to me. Thank you so much for the work that you do.”

REFUGEE HEALTH PROGRAM RECEIVES STATE AWARD

The Miami-Dade County Health Department Refugee Health Assessment Program (RHAP) received the “2008 Refugee Health Program of the Year” Award during the Statewide Tuberculosis and Refugee Health Conference held in Orlando. They were also awarded second place in the poster board presentation.

The RHAP in Miami-Dade County is the largest of its kind in the nation. During 2006-2007,



this program provided screenings to 17,651 new refugees. The RHAP offers an initial health assessment and immunization for children and adults and its ultimate goal is to identify and control communicable diseases among new arrivals.

“We want to congratulate the Refugee Health Assessment Program for being chosen as the Recipient of the “2008 Refugee Health Program of the Year” Award, said Administrator Lillian Rivera. The effort

and dedication put forth by the Refugee Health Program staff has allowed them to make a difference in our community. By offering new arrivals their initial screening we are diminishing the spread of diseases in our county.”