

# HealthBeat

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

WINTER 2003

*Holiday Greetings!*



**MDCHD MARKS  
WORLD AIDS DAY**

**PAGE 13**

**GOVERNOR'S TASK  
FORCE ON OBESITY  
MEETS IN MIAMI**

**PAGE 11**

**VACCINES ARE NOT  
JUST FOR CHILDREN  
PAGE 5**

Miami-Dade County Health Department  
Footsteps to  
Excellence  
...the journey continues  
2003 Miami-Dade County Health Department  
Fifth Annual Conference

Radisson Mart  
Plaza Hotel

Jeb Bush  
GOVERNOR

Toni Jennings  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

John O. Agwunobi, M.D. M.B.A.  
SECRETARY, FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Bonita J. Sorensen, M.D. M.B.A.  
DEPUTY STATE HEALTH OFFICER

Annie R. Neasman, R.N., M.S.  
DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR HEALTH

## SENIOR LEADERS

Lillian Rivera, R.N., M.S.N.  
ADMINISTRATOR

Nancy Humbert, M.S.N., A.R.N.P.  
DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR

Eleni D. Sfakianaki, M.D., M.S.P.H.  
MEDICAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

JoAnne Kroesen, A.R.N.P., M.S.N., M.S.  
C.H.N. CONSULTANT, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ORGANIZATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

Denise West, R.D., L.D./N, .M.P.H.  
DIRECTOR, WIC & NUTRITION

Sandra Smith, R.N., B.S.N.  
ASSISTANT C.H.N. DIRECTOR, SPECIAL IMMUNIZATIONS PROGRAM

Morton Laitner, Esq.  
CHIEF LEGAL COUNSEL

Samir Elmir, P.E., M.S.  
ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Richard Strait, M.B.A.  
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

Olga Connor, B.A.  
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION,  
LEGISLATIVE & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Marie-Carole Desrosiers, M.D.  
DIRECTOR, TB CONTROL PROGRAM

Evelyn Ullah, B.S.N., M.S.W.  
DIRECTOR, HIV/AIDS

Thomas Burns, M.P.H.  
PROGRAM MANAGER, STD

Fermin Leguen, MD, MPH  
DIRECTOR / EPIDEMIOLOGY & DISEASE CONTROL

Alicia Reyes-Perez, R.N., B.S.N.  
REGISTERED NURSE CONSULTANT, DIRECTOR, SCHOOL HEALTH  
PROGRAM

Pablo M. Gonzalez  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, BIOTERRORISM

Maurice Darden  
MANAGER, VITAL RECORDS

Onelia Fajardo, M.P.H., DR, B.A.  
DIRECTOR, REFUGEE HEALTH ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Paula Schimpf, M.S.N., A.R.N.P.  
ASSISTANT CHN DIRECTOR, WOMEN'S HEALTH PROGRAM

Martha Hernandez, M.P.A., R.H.I.A., L.H.R.M.  
SENIOR MANAGEMENT ANALYST / RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Lee Fletcher, M.H.S.A.  
GENERAL SERVICES MANAGER

Geneva Riley  
SENIOR PERSONNEL MANAGER, HUMAN RESOURCES

# Message from our Administrator, LILLIAN RIVERA, RN, MSN

Once again we have reached the end of another excellent year and I am proud to say we truly are a world-class public health system. It is my pleasure to extend Season's Greetings to you and your families on behalf of the Senior Leadership Team. We hope you will enjoy a wonderful Holiday Season and continue in health and happiness throughout the New Year. Since taking over as Administrator for the Miami-Dade County Health Department, I have gained a new perspective and appreciation for the work we do for our residents and visitors. Nothing prides me more than knowing the great contributions we have made to this community over the past year.



During Operation Vaccinate Florida, department employees performed flawlessly and vaccinated the initial wave of first responders without delay or incident. Within a few days of the plan's acceptance, logistical planning for vaccination implementation swept across the Miami-Dade County Health Department. Your professionalism and devotion to protect your fellow doctors, nurses, and hospital staff as well as police and fire rescue units is to be commended.

More recently our Annual Employee Conference was an incredible success thanks to everyone's combined participation. Over 1,000 employees attended the conference and helped motivate and encourage each other by showcasing the incredible work done by Miami-Dade County Health Department employees every day.

And let's also remember our contribution to seniors as the Miami-Dade County staff, in partnership with the Health Foundation of South Florida, the City of Miami, and others continue to vaccinate seniors against influenza and pneumonia as part of the Senior Immunization Project.

Our Volunteer Provider program once again is the best in the state. This year the total contributions of the program have reached \$21 million dollars augmenting the provision of health services in Miami-Dade County.

We continue to work with our partners in the community in making Miami-Dade County healthier. In December, we commemorated World AIDS Day with the theme "AIDS Does Not Discriminate, People Do." We were able to reflect on those lives lost to AIDS and asked for a renewed call to stop this disease from claiming more lives.

Obesity has reached epidemic proportions. We hosted the "Governor's Task Force on Obesity Epidemic" meeting at Miami Jackson High School. The community brought forth strategies and needs to address this problem. We have forged a "Consortium for Healthier Miami-Dade" to address this and other issues impacting the health of our community. Our partnerships continue to be strong.

The Miami-Dade County Health Department is a model for excellence. In mid-August the Florida Department of Health Core Team came to our offices to evaluate the quality of our department. After their visit, the Core Team was extremely impressed with our department's accomplishments and listed numerous commendations.

As a team we have overcome many obstacles and have clearly demonstrated we are "the best". Now, at the beginning of a new year, we set higher goals while maintaining our focus and direction to continue delivering quality services through Miami-Dade County. Even though many of our goals have been accomplished, the job of the Miami-Dade County Health Department is far from over. Quality is a high standard and maintaining that standard requires dedication and commitment. I speak for all of us when I say we are up to the challenge. Now is a time to set new goals and prepare for the coming year. If we aim higher than ever before, and put in 100% we can make the Miami-Dade County Health Department even better.

# Table of Contents

**ADMINISTRATOR'S MESSAGE**  
**PAGE 2**

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION HONORS MDCHD'S ADMINISTRATOR**  
**PAGE 3**

**SECRETARY AGWUNOBI RECEIVES AWARD FROM BOARD OF MEDICINE**  
**PAGE 4**

**VACCINES ARE NOT JUST FOR CHILDREN**  
**PAGE 5**

**A CONFERENCE TO REMEMBER**  
**PAGE 6, 7**

**MDCHD HAS A NEW PARTNER IN TOWN**  
**PAGE 8**

**MDCHD TESTS HOW TO RESPOND TO A POSSIBLE OUTBREAK**  
**PAGE 9, 10**

**GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON OBESITY MEETS IN MIAMI**  
**PAGE 11, 12**

**MDCHD MARKS THE WORLD AIDS DAY**  
**PAGE 13, 14**

**IN THE SPOTLIGHT**  
**PAGE 15**

*COVER: A GROUP OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S EMPLOYEES DURING THE FIFTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE.*



**Miami-Dade County Health Department**  
**Recipient of the 2002 Governor's**  
**Sterling Award for Excellence**

## National Association Of Puerto Rican Women Recognizes MDCHD's Administrator

Miami-Dade County Health Department's Administrator Lillian Rivera was honored as "Outstanding Woman of The Year" by the National Association of Puerto Rican Women, Inc., Miami Chapter at a ceremony that took place on October 25th. During the celebration of the 25th anniversary of that organization, Rivera was also presented with an award from the Miami-Dade County Office of the

Mayor and Board of County Commissioners. Both awards cited Rivera's stellar career and exemplary achievements in leadership. Miami-Dade County government also praised Rivera's knowledge of health care systems and that she has "proved to be highly capable" and "a professional committed to rendering the best of service to our community."



*Courtesy of La Opinion Puertorriqueña*

*Lillian Rivera was honored as "Outstanding Woman of The Year."*

# Secretary Agwunobi Receives Award from the Florida Board of Medicine

The Florida Board of Medicine recognized Secretary of Health John O. Agwunobi, M.D., M.B.A., by presenting him with the Chairman's Recognition Award. Past Chairman Gaston Acosta-Rua, M.D., established the award to recognize and commend physicians who exemplify outstanding contributions to the protection of Florida's citizens, the medical profession and public service.

The recognition took place last October at the monthly meeting of the organization.

Florida Board of Medicine Chairman Raghavendra Vijayangar, M.D., said: "By presenting this award, we honor a wonderful leader and physician who not only serves as a fine example to all physicians, but also as someone who has gone beyond the call of duty for all of Florida."

"As a physician, I am both honored and humbled by the Florida Board of Medicine's recognition," said Agwunobi. "Their public service, commitment and dedication to protecting the people of Florida inspire me deeply."

Agwunobi has a wealth of experience in health care delivery, managed care, health policy and public health. Prior to becoming Secretary and State Health Officer, he diligently served the people of Florida as Deputy Secretary and Deputy State Health Officer for Children's Medical Services.

The Florida Board of Medicine, which meets seven times annually, protects the health and safety of Florida's residents and visitors by establishing minimum requirements for licensure and diligent discipline of practitioners who violate practice acts defined by Chapter 456, and 458, Florida Statutes and 64B-8 Florida Administrative Code.



*Secretary John O. Agwunobi in a recent visit to Miami Children's Hospital.*



*Thomas Rozek, Miami Children's Hospital CEO, and Secretary John O. Agwunobi.*

# Vaccines Are Not Just For Children



**ELENI D. SFIKIANAKI, M.D., M.S.P.H.**  
MDCHD Medical Executive Director

Routine childhood vaccination has had such a tremendous impact on childhood diseases that immunizations are considered one of the ten great public health achievements of the 20th century in the United States. At the beginning of the 20th century,

infectious diseases were widely prevalent and had an enormous toll on the population not only in terms of mortality, but also in terms of chronic morbidity and disability. The successful development and deployment of vaccines has resulted in the global eradication of smallpox, elimination of poliomyelitis in the Americas and control of measles, rubella, tetanus, diphtheria, Hemophilus influenza type b, and other infectious diseases in this country and other parts of the world.

Although the childhood immunization program in the United States has reduced dramatically the burden of vaccine-preventable diseases among children, substantial vaccine-preventable infections continue to occur among adults, causing up to 60,000 deaths each year.

Some facts about vaccine-preventable diseases in the adult population in the United States:

◆Pneumonia and influenza together are the seventh leading cause of death, and the fifth leading cause of death among older adults.

◆An estimated 80,000 people are infected with hepatitis B each year, the majority of them adolescents and young adults. Hepatitis B is a serious disease that can cause chronic complications and death.

◆About 5 deaths annually are the result of tetanus, and people still get infected with diphtheria. Nearly one out of every 10 people who get diphtheria will die from it.

All of these are diseases that can be prevented by routine vaccination of individuals across their life span.

However, many people, including some

health providers, tend to think that "vaccines are just for children." Also, some adults incorrectly assume that the vaccines they received as children will protect them for the rest of their lives. Generally this is true, except that:

- ◆Some adults were never vaccinated as children
- ◆Newer vaccines were not available when some adults were children
- ◆Immunity can begin to fade over time
- ◆As we age, we become more susceptible to serious diseases caused by common infections such as influenza (flu) and pneumococcal disease (pneumonia).

The National Immunization Program (NIP), a part of the Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention (CDC), provides leadership in the field of immunizations nationwide.

The program's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) consists of 15 experts in fields associated with immunization who have been selected by the U.S. Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. The Committee develops written recommendations for the routine schedules and administration of vaccines to children and adults, and provides advice to CDC and the Nation regarding the reduction of the incidence of vaccine-preventable diseases. The most recent ACIP recommendations are as follows:

## LIST OF VACCINES FOR ADULTS

◆**Tetanus-Diphtheria vaccine (Td).** Adults, including pregnant women, with uncertain history of a complete primary vaccination series should receive a primary series of Td. For those who have completed the primary series, a booster is recommended every 10 years.

◆**Varicella (chicken pox) vaccine.** It is recommended for all persons who do not have a reliable clinical history of varicella infection or varicella zoster virus (VZV) infection who may be at high risk for exposure. (Greater than 95% of U.S. born adults are immune to VZV.) Pregnant women or those who plan to become pregnant in the next 4 weeks must not be given the vaccine.

◆**Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR) vaccine.** Measles component: Adults born before 1957 may be considered immune to measles. Adults born after 1957 should be immunized unless they have a medical contraindication or acceptable evidence of immunity. Mumps component: Vaccine should be given to those with no history of the disease. Rubella component: This vaccine is critical for women of childbearing age because if they contract rubella while pregnant, the child may be born with serious birth defects. When receiving the vaccine, women must be advised to avoid becoming pregnant for 4 weeks after vaccination.

◆**Hepatitis B vaccine (for adults at risk).** This vaccine should be given to adults at risk for hepatitis B. Individuals at risk include injecting drug users, persons with more than one sex partner, men who have sex with men and household contacts and sexual partners of these individuals.

### Vaccines needed for those age 50 and older

◆**Influenza vaccine (for the flu).** This vaccine is recommended for all people over the age of 50. In addition, people with certain medical conditions should receive the vaccine at any age. These conditions include: chronic diseases such as heart, lung, kidney or liver disease, diabetes, hemoglobinopathies, HIV/AIDS, and immunosuppression due to medications. Also, residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities, and pregnant women who will be in their second or third trimester during the influenza season need this vaccine. And anyone who wishes to be vaccinated should receive the vaccine. The influenza vaccine needs to be given annually.

### Vaccines needed for those age 65 and older

◆**Pneumococcal vaccine.** All individuals 65 years and older need this vaccine. Also, people with chronic conditions as mentioned in the influenza vaccine section should be immunized. One time revaccination after 5 years of the initial vaccination is recommended.

### Vaccines needed for all health care workers

◆**Influenza vaccine.** Health care workers and persons likely to transmit influenza to people at high-risk should receive this vaccine at any age. This vaccine needs to be given annually.

◆**Hepatitis B vaccine.** Health care workers and public safety workers who have exposure to blood in the workplace as well as persons in training in the health professions must receive the complete series of the vaccine.

There are also vaccines against diseases that exist in certain areas of the world and these vaccines are recommended for travelers to those areas. We all need to remember: "Vaccines are not just for children!"

For information on immunization clinics at the Miami-Dade County Health Department contact the Immunization Program at 305-845-0550.

# A CONFERENCE



## MDCHD Hosts The 2003 Fifth Annual Conference

*Footsteps to Excellence ...the journey continues* was the theme of the Fifth Annual Conference held on October 23 and 24, 2003 at the Radisson Mart Plaza Hotel.

The conference highlighted many of the accomplishments and contributions Miami-Dade County Health Department (MDCHD) employees made towards improving public health outcomes within our communities.

This year's conference attendance of over 800 employees and guests was also open to our external partners, as well as Broward County and Palm Beach County Health Departments staff.

The MDCHD Image Committee members opened up the conference with an outstanding wellness activity that set the stage for a day filled with informative educational and leadership activities. Unique to the conference was the keynote address presented by internationally recognized quality expert and advi-

tor, Dr. John Jay Bonstingl. Dr. Bonstingl's lecture, *Quality as a Way of Life: Five Personal Practices to Enrich Your Mind, Body, and Spirit* was well received and overwhelmingly rated by the majority of conference attendees as being both motivational and inspirational. In addition, Dr. Bonstingl also conducted a two-hour Leadership Development Seminar afternoon session for MDCHD Leadership.

The agenda was also filled with topics such as the Message From the Administrator, MDCHD Business Results, and Hypertension: An Overview, and Health and Safety Topics. MDCHD employees and guests also had the opportunity to attend afternoon breakout sessions with topics such as: Stress Management, Financial Planning and Wellness in the Workplace. The award winning "We're All EARs" (Employee Activity Records) Team also presented their rendition of the Wizard of EARs.

The EARs team worked on

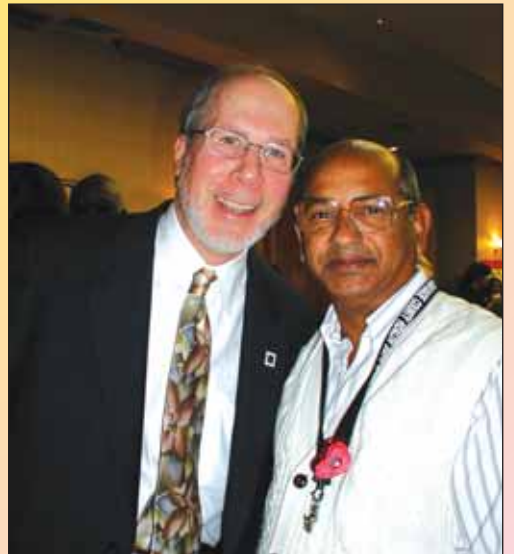
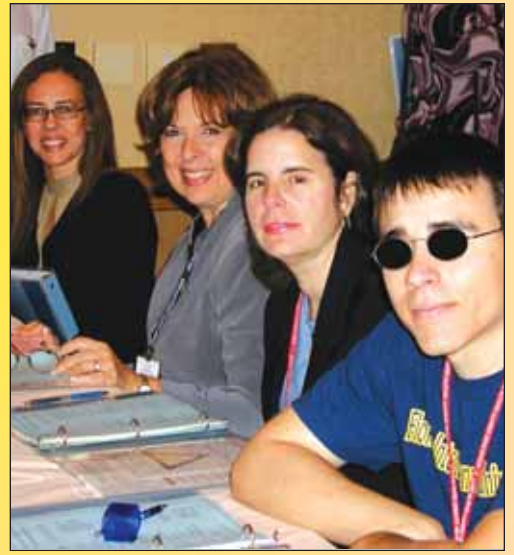
improving compliance with the Employee Activity Records (EARs), which tracks employee service time in all programs, ultimately impacting on state funding allocations. Compliance improved from 48% to 97%. This team won the Regional Team Showcase Award and was recognized at the recent Annual Sterling Conference in Orlando, Florida.

Many thanks to all our presenters for their support, time and effort and congratulations to the 2003 MDCHD Conference Planning Committee Members and Volunteers who collectively worked very hard as an employee-driven team to make this event a great success.

We are looking forward to 2004 and a year filled with great accomplishments and service to the Miami-Dade County community.

*Contributing Writer: Carol Wright-Tanner, Conference Committee, Chair, Office of Organizational Development.*

# TO REMEMBER



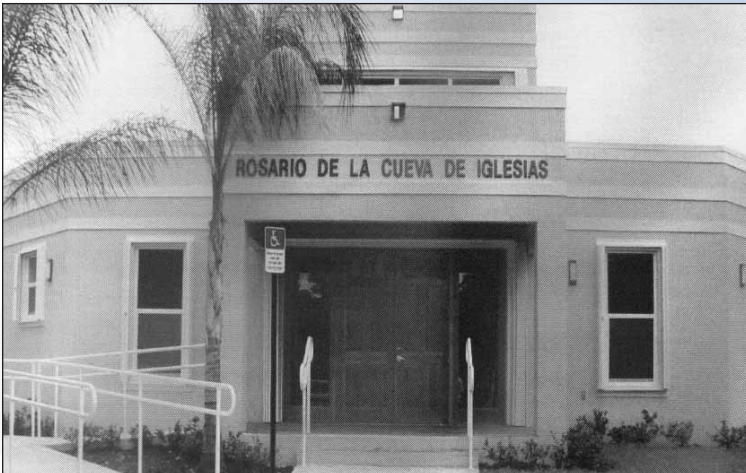
# MDCHD has a new partner in town

**M**iami-Dade County Health Department (M-DCHD) has a new partner in town: a community center that will provide free social and health care services on the Corpus Christi Parish grounds, located at 730 NW 34 St., in Miami.

The center "Rosario de la Cueva de Iglesias" was inaugurated on November 4<sup>th</sup> and is named after the mother of Dr. Carlos Iglesias, who donated with his wife Mamen Iglesias, all the funds to build it.

MDCHD is in partnership with the center to provide State Sovereign Immunity Protection to the volunteer physicians and other health care professionals that will help low-income patients and persons who do not have medical insurance. The clinic will provide services to residents who live within the areas of Biscayne Boulevard to 37 Avenue and from 17 to 54 NW Streets. The center will also offer legal and social counseling.

Dozens of parishioners gathered for the inauguration ceremony that was presided by John Clement Favalora, Archbishop of Miami. Agustin Roman, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Miami and Father José Luis Menéndez also attended the event.



*The center "Rosario de la Cueva de Iglesias" will provide free social and health care services on the Corpus Christi Parish grounds.*



*From left to right: The Honorable Javier Villaure, Consul of Spain, Mamen Iglesias, Father José L. Menéndez, Dr. Carlos Iglesias and Rev. Federico Capdepón.*



*Maria Ortega, Maria Teresa Valdez and Dr. Ana Pando.*



*A member of Friends of Corpus Christi and Bishop Agustin Román.*

SARS  
SMALLPOX  
BIOLOGICAL AGENTS

CONTAINED

## MDCHD TESTS ABILITY TO RESPOND TO A POSSIBLE OUTBREAK OF BIOLOGICAL AGENTS

The possibility that passengers aboard a flight bound for Miami International Airport (MIA) could be infected with a communicable disease such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) or Smallpox was the scenario for a field exercise conducted by the Miami-Dade County Health Department (MDCHD) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The event took place on October 15<sup>th</sup> at the Orange Bowl Stadium.

"This live-action training with our partners is a valuable tool to strengthen our ability to respond to an actual event," said Miami-Dade County Health Department Administrator Lillian Rivera. "We want to be ready to take the action necessary to preserve the health and well being of our residents and visitors."

In addition to the MDCHD, CDC, and Miami International Airport, the exercise included collaboration and participation from Brevard, Broward, Monroe, West Palm, and Leon County Health Departments, the Florida

Department of Health, the FBI Miami Regional Office, the City of Miami, Office of Emergency Management, Metro-Dade Police Department, Homeland Security, Miami-Dade Aviation Department and the U.S. State Department. Falcon Airlines donated the use of a 727 jet for the exercise and the Orange Bowl was secured as a quarantine location.

"The exercise was an historical event that included the involvement of organizations from federal, state, county and local levels of government, as well as partners in the private sector," said Mort Laitner, MDCHD Chief Legal Counsel and organizer of the event.

The simulation used volunteers/actors aboard a fictitious flight bound for MIA. Two of the passengers fall ill during the flight and have symptoms of Smallpox and SARS respectively. Once the plane has landed (simulated), doctors from the MDCHD and officials from the CDC enter the plane and begin evaluating the ill passengers. After being evaluated the ill passengers are taken to

the hospital via ambulance.

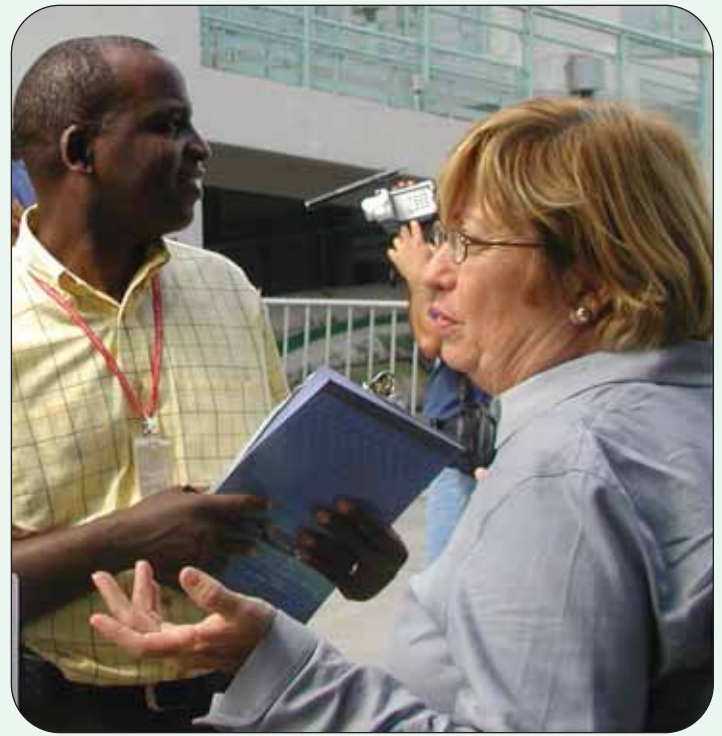
The rest of the passengers aboard the flight are informed that they must go through quarantine because of suspected exposure to a communicable disease. The passengers are transported on buses, with an escort from the Metro-Dade Police Department, to the Orange Bowl where they are put through quarantine/vaccination procedures.

Laitner described the three main themes for the exercise was the three P's: Preparedness, Partnership and Patriotism. "A field exercise simulating a real event is the only format which tests members of the Health Department, CDC, and its partner organizations in handling an outbreak of SARS and/or Smallpox. Without several government agencies working together as a team, this exercise would not be possible.

Fermin Leguen, MD, MPH, Director of the Office of Epidemiology and Disease Control said: "This is an important step in our purpose to achieve high standards of pre-



*Dr. Kiren Mitruka, Mort Laitner and Nancy Humbert.*



*Dr. Fermin Leguen and Olga Connor.*

paredness and response to bioterrorism events, SARS, or other biological agents that might be considered a threat to the public's health.

This simulation allowed health officers, airline authorities, local police and fire departments, and other agencies identify areas of strength, but most importantly, areas of potential weakness where remedial action is needed."

The event was video taped and there are plans to have an edited version of the footage distributed for educational purposes. An educational book based on

the exercise is also being planned.

A new exercise that would involve using a cruise ship instead of an airplane is already on schedule for next year.

"The entire exercise was awe inspiring, it went very smoothly," said Laitner. He beams with pride as he relays the experience he had at the Orange Bowl. "An elderly woman approached me outside the stadium and asked what was happening. I told her what we were doing, and she immediately thanked me and said it was

good to see the government working on these kinds of problems."

Kiren Mitruka, MD, Assistant Director of the Office of Epidemiology and Disease Control said: "This exercise helped us identify our strengths and weaknesses in a controlled setting. We were able to develop and test a coordinated response with the CDC Quarantine Station at the Miami International Airport. We answered some important and lingering questions related to the logistics, staffing and person-

al protective equipment, necessary to effectively eval-



# Experts, physicians, educators and health officials hold meeting in Miami-Dade



*Dr. Zachariah P. Zachariah spoke at the meeting.*

The Task Force, chaired by Dr. Zachariah P. Zachariah, will meet over three months to gather information and then develop recommendations to Governor Bush, the House Speaker Johnnie Byrd and Senate President Jim King.

Talking about this initiative, Dr. John O. Agwunobi, Secretary of the Florida Department of Health recently said he hopes task force members will consider all types of ideas, from community-based education programs to proposals.

Lillian Rivera, Miami-Dade County Health Department Administrator, and Nancy Humbert, Deputy Administrator, attended the meeting. Talking about the importance of this campaign, Rivera said: "It's important to find solutions and confront this issue in our community so that all our residents live a healthier life. MDCHD will be a key part of this effort."

Experts, physicians, educators and health officials from different regions of Florida expressed their



*Lillian Rivera and Nancy Humbert attended the meeting.*



*The meeting took place at Miami Jackson Senior High*

# Governor's Task Force on the Obesity Epidemic

views and showed studies about physical activity, nutrition and obesity as an epidemic. Schools are likely to be a key focus since experts say obesity needs to be prevented at an early age.

Dr. Zachariah talked about adding more health education, slimming down lunch menus and increasing physical education classes. According to recent figures, fewer than half of Florida high school students attend physical education classes during an average week.

The meeting took place at Miami Jackson Senior High School, 1751 N.W. 36th Street. Physical activity experts addressed the Task Force on the epidemic of overweight and obesity among Florida's youth and adult populations. The event also allowed public comment time to give citizens the opportunity to address the Task Force and express ideas on how to cope with this issue.



*Olga Connor, Diana Gonzalez, from NBC 6 and Lindsay Hodges.*



*h School.*



*Alicia Reyes-Perez.*

# MDCHD Marks the World AIDS Day with Community Activities

Dr. Nils Daulaire, President and CEO of the Global Health Council and Candlelight spokesperson Amelia Vega, Miss Universe 2003 joined the Miami-Dade County Health Department to launch the 2004 International AIDS Candlelight Memorial "Turning Remembrance Into Action," to promote AIDS awareness and educate individuals about various HIV testing.

The candlelight memorial took place at the community breakfast held on December 1st at the Wyndham Hotel in Miami Beach, as part of the different events that were held throughout the State of Florida to mark the day, including candlelight vigils, community education sessions in the parks and seminars in other community settings.

Evelyn Ullah, Director of the HIV/AIDS Program and her staff coordinated and participated in the events to mark the World AIDS Day.

"Today we reflect on those whose lives have been lost to AIDS. We join their families and friends in remembering and ask for a renewed call to action to stop this disease from claiming more lives. We need to continue to work together in this

effort, making our current partnerships stronger and forging new ones, empowering individuals and communities to work towards this goal," said Miami-Dade County Health Department Administrator, Lillian Rivera, R.N., M.S.N.

Paul Kawata, Executive Director of the Minority AIDS Council, and Christopher Bates, Deputy Director, Department of Health and Human Services, Office of AIDS Policy, also joined Miami-Dade County Health Department and community partners for World AIDS Day activities.

MDCHD Deputy Administrator Nancy Humbert also attended the Candlelight Memorial.

Since 1988, December 1st has marked the global world calendar as "World AIDS Day." Each year, a theme is selected by UNAIDS (the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS). The theme UNAIDS selected this year was "AIDS does not discriminate, People Do."

Miami-Dade County Health Department and its community partners and advocates sent a message of prevention and joined others around the world in affirming that the HIV/AIDS crisis is not over.



*Nancy Humbert, Amelia Vega (Miss Universe 2003), Dr. Nils Daulaire and Lillian Rivera.*



*The staff of the HIV/AIDS Program participated in the activities to mark the World AIDS Day.*



The candlelight memorial took place at a community breakfast held on December 1st at the Wyndham Hotel in Miami Beach.

# IN the Spotlight

## CONGRATULATIONS, EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH!

Congratulations to the outstanding employees who were recognized for their exemplary performance and professionalism for the months of September, October and November 2003. Our sincere thanks and gratitude for all the hard work you have put forth to make Miami-Dade County a healthy and safe community.

### SEPTEMBER



**Alicia Rodriguez**  
*School Health*

### OCTOBER



**Patricia Onley**  
*Special Immunization*

### NOVEMBER



**Hermi Molina**  
*HIV/AIDS*

➤ The Miami-Dade County Health Department Asthma Program offered a free educational seminar at Dadeland Marriot Hotel on November 22, 2003. The seminar included adult and child sessions in English and Spanish. The adult sessions included an overview of the asthma study, general information, medications, allergies and asthma, use of medication and devices, prevention of trigger factors, emotional aspects and raffles. The child sessions included general information about the disease, exercises, coloring activities and videotapes. Spirometry tests were performed free of charge and educational material and peak flow meters were distributed to the participants. If you need more information about the Asthma Program, please contact: Diana Rodriguez at 305-325-3573 or 305-325-3675. E-mail: [Diana\\_Rodriguez@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:Diana_Rodriguez@doh.state.fl.us)

## EMPLOYEE NEWS

### For a healthier lifestyle walk 10,000 steps every day

Haven't got your pedometer yet? What are you waiting for? This is your chance to participate in one of the many walking clubs forming in almost every MDCHD office and lose those unwanted extra pounds you have been trying to get rid of since the last Holiday season.

If a slew of ineffective pills, powders and equipment are adding needless expense to your permanent weight loss, the answer is: 10,000 steps a day.

At least that is what Karen Weller, RN, BSN and a Registered Nurse Specialist is recommending for those who want to live a healthier lifestyle.

Karen held two sessions in November to give away pedometers and invited employees to win this 10,000-steps-every-day quest.

If you are one of those who attended and got your piece, keep it up!

If you did not, it's never too late to start the Battle of the Bulge.

For more information, please call 786-845-0341 or 786-845-0335.

### DR. PILLAI IS HONORED WITH PITTSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY'S OUTSTANDING ALUMNI AWARD

Dr. Segaran P. Pillai, Ph.D, SM (NRM), Director of the Bureau of Laboratory Services in Miami was one of six alumni to be honored with the Pittsburg State University's Outstanding Alumni Award during homecoming activities on October 18. The PSU Alumni Association and Pittsburg State University present the award each year in recognition of exceptional professional and civic achievements by alumni.

Dr. Pillai was a guest of honor at the Crimson and Gold Dinner on October 17. He rode in the annual Homecoming Parade the following morning and was recognized on the football field during the pre-game show in Carnie Smith Stadium.

Dr. Pillai is a microbiologist/molecular geneticist and voluntary assistant professor of medicine at the University of Miami School of Medicine. He also is a member of the program advisory council of the Nova Southeastern University, College of Osteopathic Medicine, Master of Public Health program. He serves as editor of the "Archives of Dermatology."

Dr. Pillai earned with honors his bachelor of science degree in biology and master's of science degree in biology (medical physiology) from PSU. He earned his Ph.D. in biochemistry/molecular genetics from the University of Kansas in 1995.



*Dr. Pillai.*

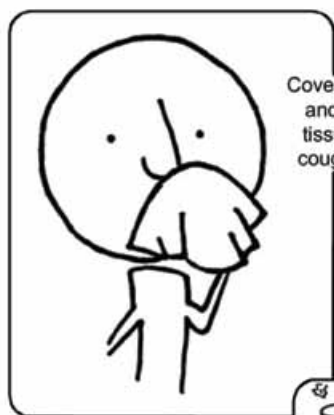
*Produced by the MDCHD Office of Public Health  
Information, Legislative and Community Affairs*

Miami-Dade County Health Department  
8175 N.W. 12 Street, Suite 437  
Miami, FL 33126



Mission: A Healthy Community is the Heart of Public Health. Vision: To Be a World-Class Public Health System.

# Cover your Cough



Cover your mouth  
and nose with a  
tissue when you  
cough or sneeze



Put your used tissue in  
the waste basket.



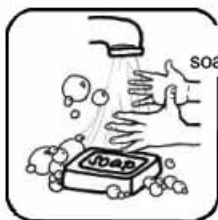
You may be asked to  
put on a surgical mask  
to protect others.



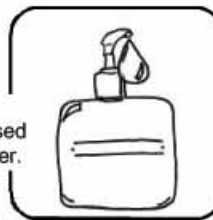
cough or sneeze into  
your upper sleeve,  
not your hands.

# Clean your Hands

after coughing or sneezing.



Wash with  
soap and water  
or  
clean with  
alcohol-based  
hand cleaner.



**Stop the spread of germs that make you and others sick**