



ALABAMA
PUBLIC HEALTH
ASSOCIATION, Inc.

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President's Message

According to the evaluations the board received, the annual health education conference in Mobile was a great success. It is always nice to get away from the office and concentrate on learning and networking with other health professionals across the state. The Program and Local Arrangements Committees are working on plans for the next conference which promises to be an exciting and informative program for next year. They have already met with other organizations who will be joining us in our next conference. If you have any ideas about the program, please go to the web site (www.alphassoc.org) and e-mail your ideas to either of the chairpersons.

As we begin the new year, I am excited about the opportunities that lie ahead for us. We are in a great position to move our association to an even higher level than it is now. For example, the strategic plan was approved and adopted by the members of the association during the business meeting at the annual conference. This coming year we will vote to incorporate this plan into our by-laws. Some have expressed concern about the changes. It is our goal to educate all of the members on how this plan will work for our organization and how everyone will fit into the plan.

ALPHA is many things to many people, yet, the age old question still exists, "What do I get in return for being a member of ALPHA?" There are many benefits for joining this organization and we need to market ourselves better and give ourselves the credit we deserve.

The Public Relations and the Membership chairpersons will continue to meet and discuss incentives to encourage potential members as well as existing members. Again, I am excited about the possibilities that are before us. You will find a listing of all the board members in this newsletter; please feel free to contact them with any ideas that might add value to our association. I have challenged each of the board members to recruit at least three new members this year and I offer the challenge to each of you to bring at least one new member to the association. By doing this, we build a stronger voice for the public's health. Let me encourage each of you not to sit on the sidelines and watch the game, but rather join us; the field can accommodate many!

Michael Jones
2003-2004 President

News from the UAB School of Public Health

With this spring's Honors Convocation the School began to look toward celebrating its 25th anniversary beginning this fall. A small committee has started to work on a series of events to highlight the outstanding accomplishments of public health over the past 100 years or so. I would welcome your ideas on those accomplishments, such as the polio vaccine and the hazards of smoking. I hope we can develop events and activities that will easily fit into the busy work schedules of all the public health professionals who daily secure - in the broadest sense of the term - a healthier environment for us all.

Dr. Donna Petersen, Senior Associate Dean, has decided to return to her full-time academic pursuits beginning in July. As many of you know Donna was instrumental in leading the development of the very innovative Integrated Core Curriculum for the master's program. The core has been recognized nationally for its unique approach to public health education, an approach greatly enjoyed by our students. In recognition of her contributions, the School created the "Donna J. Petersen Award for Excellence in the Integrated Core Curriculum" to be awarded annually at the Honors Convocation. Dr. Derrill Stuart was this year's inaugural recipient. Dr. Melissa Galvin will serve as Acting Associate Dean pending the results of a national search.

Other news around the School: Dr. Diane Grimley accepted the position as Chair of the Department of Health Behavior. Dr. Grimley has been with the School about seven years and brings to the department a wealth of community-based research experience. The Department of Epidemiology and International Health is now officially the Department of Epidemiology. Our international health activities have been integrated into a new school wide program called International Health and Global Studies. Students this fall will be able to enroll in this new academic track.

I hope everyone has a safe summer. Thanks for your ongoing support of the School. And, please let me know of any ideas for the 25th anniversary celebrations.

Max Michael, M.D., Dean
School of Public Health
University of Alabama at Birmingham



Annual Conference covers broad spectrum of public health issues

More than 300 proponents of public health gathered at the Mobile Convention Center April 24-25 for the 47th annual Alabama Public Health Association Health Education Conference. The conference offered insights into public health concerns including emerging infectious diseases and the public health challenges of terrorism. The conference theme was "Public Health: It's Every Body's Business."

Speakers included Jay H. Glasser, Ph.D., American Public Health Association president; State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson and Southern Health Association President Liz Bumpus. Attendees were also treated to a humorous address by motivational speaker Mary Maxwell. The Thursday evening program was held at the Mobile Explorem and it included an IMAX movie.

The Alabama Public Health Association recently recognized persons from across the state who demonstrated exceptional merit during the past year in the field of public health. The following individuals were presented awards.

Linda Walker of Spanish Fort, retired health department employee, was selected as the recipient of the **Virginia Kendrick Award**. This prestigious award goes to an individual who has provided notable service to the people of Alabama while serving in a supportive position in public health.

Nominators said Ms. Walker has a long history of serving others and has provided sterling leadership and direction to the department as well as to the general community of Alabama. "This individual has a keen sense of vision who establishes lofty goals and objectives, keeps raising questions, thinking and reviewing to check and balance the innovative ideas and options to meet the new challenges constantly. This unique individual is a positive force who has contributed much to Alabama's search for health care coverage for all its citizens."

Ms. Walker represented public health on the Baldwin County Children Policy Council, helped organize the National Guard's Care Project in Area VII, and was an organizer and supporter of the Bay Minette Free Clinic and the Ozanam Charitable Pharmacy project.

She further was described as "a great believer and supporter of a person's dignity and human worth" who "has truly given her 100 percent support to every effort in which she has participated."

The **Guy M. Tate Award** was presented to **Brenda Anderson** of Montgomery, staff accountant with the Office of Financial Services of the Alabama Department of Public Health in Montgomery. This award is presented annually to a public health employee, group or agency with 10 years or less service for contributions to public health beyond the job assignment which promote and protect public health in Alabama.

Nominators described Ms. Anderson as a person who always puts others first, does her best to accommodate people, and does her utmost

for the programs she serves without seeking praise for herself. Her supporters described her as "patient, dedicated, has a strong work ethic."

Anita D. Lewis of Eutaw was presented the prestigious **Frederick S. Wolf Award**, which is given to an individual active in public health at the local level for more than 10 years. Ms. Lewis has been employed for more than 25 years with public health. She is described as "a good listener, problem-solver and a truly caring person." Ms. Lewis serves on the Advisory Board of the Greene County Boys and Girls Club, teaches Sunday School to children ages 3-6 years and works on several community projects. She is area clerical director for Public Health Area 3.

Jeanne Sewell of Monroeville, nursing director for Public Health Area 9, was presented the **D.G. Gill Award**. This award is given to an individual who has made an exceptional contribution to public health in Alabama which is statewide in scope.

Supporters described her as "a visionary, enthusiastic and tireless." She "never gives up" and is constantly seeking support to

improve her community for women, children and others. She has also accepted leadership roles with the Alabama Board of Nursing and served as the 2002 ALPHA president. Ms. Sewell has been a public health nurse since 1983 at the county and area levels.

Debbie Thomasson of Montgomery, director of the Nursing Unit in the Office of Professional and Support Services, of Montgomery, was honored with the **Ira L. Myers Award for Excellence**. The Myers Award was established in 1986 to recognize an individual, group or organization that, through excellence in their work, has made a significant impact



Receiving ALPHA awards are Jeanne Sewell, Brenda Anderson, Debbie Thomasson, Linda Walker and Anita Lewis.

upon some aspect of public health in Alabama.

Ms. Thomasson was described as "diligent and courageous" and one who has performed an excellent job in planning and implementing the clinical aspects of the smallpox vaccination program. Her nominators said she "did an outstanding job of educating the ADPH nurses about the disease and the contraindications to the vaccination, developing clinic logistics and flow plans."

She takes on challenges with enthusiasm and commitment to ensure nurses "could get the job done safely and correctly." Letters further stated, "This individual's heart is dedicated to strengthening the public health nursing role for the constituents of Alabama and she sets the highest caliber of nursing practice for herself and for others to follow."

It was also announced that **Ricky Lee Elliott** of Bradley is the recipient of the **Ira L. Myers Scholarship** to the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He is a community health developer and part-time public health environmentalist with the Escambia County Health Department who has more than 10 years' public health experience. A graduate of the University of South Alabama in biology and earth science, he is pursuing a master's degree in public health.

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Embark on a recruiting expedition!

While attending a national meeting recently, I heard a speaker use six words to describe what some of our forefathers needed as they set out on famous expeditions. These six words were Passion, Focus, Planning, Leadership, Teamwork and Resilience. As co-chairperson of this year's ALPHA Membership Committee, I invite you to "embark on a recruiting expedition" for ALPHA this next year and to encourage all of your fellow workers to join our association.

Passion - We all are passionate about public health and our individual jobs. This past year has shown what an important role public health plays in the universal health care system. Come join ALPHA and share this passion with your peers.

Focus - Our association's focus (or mission) is to: 1) Link individuals and organizations in addressing public health issues; 2) Advocate public health policy; 3) Support the education of its members and the public on public health issues; and 4) Enhance the ability of its members to promote and protect personal, environmental and community health.

Planning - ALPHA's new strategic plan demonstrates the forethought and vision of growth for the association. Familiarize yourself with the plan and you will find as public health professionals we all share the same vision for the future.

Leadership - Michael Jones, as our enthusiastic dedicated president, has all of the attributes of the leader we need to meet the

challenges of the upcoming year. Join ALPHA and give him and the ALPHA board members your full support.

Teamwork - The power of teamwork cannot be underestimated. We need and want YOU to become a part of the ALPHA team!

Resilience - We are a resilient association - one which has been strong and effective for 46 years. But, in order to continue to grow as an association, we always need "new blood." Seek out those in your work base who do not belong to ALPHA and encourage them to join.

So, again I invite you to be adventurous and embark on a recruiting expedition. Re-affirm your commitment to public health by joining ALPHA, the association that works for you, the people who work in, or have interests in, public health in Alabama. A membership application is included on our web site at www.alphassoc.org/join.htr. Give it, and the newsletter, to a non-ALPHA member. Be sure and write your name at the bottom of the form as the "Recruiter." The next newsletter will include details about the 2003-2004 Membership Recruitment Contest which will award prizes, during the ALPHA Educational Conference next April in Tuscaloosa, to the best recruiters.

For further information regarding ALPHA membership, contact Anita Lewis (205-554-4500) or Charlotte Denton (334-206-2984).

Charlotte Denton
Co-Membership Chairperson

new members

The following persons have joined the Alabama Public Health Association recently, and we welcome them.

- Harold R. (Brownie) Brown, Communicable Disease, Montgomery
- Christa G. Burrige, Madison County Health Department, Huntsville
- Pamela Churchwell, General Counsel, Montgomery
- Mary J. Greene, HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control, Montgomery
- John E. Hooper, Jr., MPH, Public Health Area 5, Pelham
- Rebel Jackson, Family Health Services, Montgomery
- Coretta Kirkland, Greene County Health Department, Eutaw
- Genevieve D. Moore, Operation Resources, Montgomery
- Donna Mulcahy, Bureau of Clinical Laboratories, Montgomery
- Bradley Philips, Mobile County Health Department
- Patrice Pushcar, Mobile County Health Department
- Denise Strickland, Disease Control/Communicable Disease, Montgomery



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