

Staying in Touch

September/October 2009

Message from the Director

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Dear DMH Employee,

The Department has reached a milestone in our efforts to meet the *Dixon* exit criteria requirements and end three decades of Court oversight.

The Attorney General recently filed a motion in U.S. District Court to remove court monitoring of DMH and return full management authority to local officials. This gigantic step is made possible by the

concentrated work of DMH staff who have focused on meeting the Exit Criteria. In our motion, we argue that the District's mental health service delivery system has been transformed and that DMH has complied or substantially complied with the conditions of the 2003 Consent Order.

Since the *Dixon* law suit in 1975, DMH has shifted primary treatment from Saint Elizabeths to community based mental health providers. The Hospital's population has been reduced from thousands to less than 400 patients—with a 77% decrease from 2003 alone. We maintain that DMH has built a mental health system that provides treatment in the least restrictive environment through a broad range of community based services and support including housing and supportive employment.

Finally, in light of the recent Supreme Court decision in *Horne v. Flores*, the motion argues that continued enforcement of the Court's consent decree is not only unnecessary but improper. I encourage you to read the motion on our website, particularly my declaration which outlines the improvements and progress we have made. Go to www.dmh.dc.gov. click on *Dixon* Case Information.

Please email me if you have any comments at steve.baron@dc.gov.

Steve

Ceremony Honors Veterans Buried at Saint Elizabeths

New headstone for Black Seminole Indian Scout Unveiled



Chief William Warrior

The Department of Mental Health in collaboration with the Ninth and Tenth (Horse) Cavalry Association (Buffalo Soldiers) and the US Army Freedom Team recently sponsored a special ceremony to honor veterans buried at Saint Elizabeths Hospital and to highlight the legacy of the Black Seminole Indian scouts. A new headstone was unveiled at the grave of Williams Shields, a Black Seminole Indian scout who served in the Army for twenty years and was buried at the Hospital in 1910. **Dr. Jogues Prandoni** and **Gil Taylor** arranged for the new headstone to be installed prior to the ceremony.

The October event marked the first time that the US Army formally recognized the contributions of the Seminole Indian scouts who played a major role in Texas and other parts of the Southwest during the Indian Wars.

William "Dub" Warrior, Chief of the John Horse Band of the Black Seminoles, travelled from Texas to participate in the ceremony. He talked about the history of the Black Seminole Indians. Though four Black Seminole Indian scouts received the Medal of Honor, their contributions are not widely known or recognized. During the ceremony, Army officials awarded a commendation to Chief Warrior.

Saint Elizabeths Hospital cared for members of the Armed Forces from its opening in 1855 to 1946 providing medical and surgical care as well as treatment for their mental disorders. More than 1,800 veterans of numerous conflicts including the War of 1812, the Civil War, Indian Wars, the Spanish American War, and World War I are buried in the 9-acre East Campus cemetery.

Congratulations to the Saint Elizabeths Team for a wonderful ceremony: **Tamil Perry**, **Gil Taylor**, **Dr. Surya Kanhouwa**, **Dr. Jogues Prandoni**, **Donna Moran**, and **John Graham** at the Authority.

See left: Chief Warrior and Zedora Campbell unveil new headstone



Consumers Moving into New Housing

October was a busy month for **Edith Makenta**, director of housing services, as a number of consumers—many coming from the streets or shelters—moved into new apartments.

Ribbon cutting ceremonies were held for two new housing projects supported with DMH funds. The Jubilee Housing Project located in northwest includes 16 apartments, while the Fairlawn Marshall Heights project in southeast has 10 apartments.

These projects are part of an initiative with DHCD to build or renovate 300 new units set aside for DMH consumers. DMH invested \$14 Million in

capital funds. Forty-six consumers already have moved into new housing. A total of 244 apartments throughout the District will become available this year, with the remainder scheduled for completion in 2010.

In addition, during the month of October, 13 long term homeless individuals were moved into apartments under a federal Shelter Plus Care grant.

These initiatives expand DMH's housing services for individuals with mental illness. DMH currently subsidizes rental housing for 1,545 consumers who pay two-thirds of their income.

Employee Spotlight: Michael Glenn

It's hard to tell when Michael Glenn is on the job and when he isn't. At work or not, he is thinking about computers—not about the latest video game—but about how computers can make our lives more efficient and more interesting.

As senior database administrator, he is responsible for mission-critical data and constantly thinks about how technology can improve service delivery. When the billing process was hampered by a slow and unstable application, Mike developed a solution that balances workload across multiple servers, making the operation more efficient.

In supporting enterprise applications and systems, including eCura, Avatar, Anasazi, and LOCUS, he works closely with other IT resources and application users. Many of his improvements to the performance and reliability of eCura required years of persistence and work with the vendor.

When Mike goes home—he's still thinking about computers. He is often on line communicating with other tekkies from enthusiasts to developers and engineers about new technologies or improving existing designs. Mike also designs and builds his own personal computers after meticulously researching each component from the motherboard to the cooling system. He's now working on a "super computer" to integrate the latest advances in operation systems and hardware.

Before joining DMH in 2002, Mike worked at Saint Elizabeths as a technical consultant with McKesson



Mike Glenn

Corporation. He has more than 20 years experience in information technology.

Born in Philadelphia, Mike has spent most of his adult life in the area. Though computers are his work and his hobby, he has many, varied interests. He is an avid reader of everything from philosophy to the latest advances in theoretical physics and consciousness. He experiments with Tai Chi, Qi-Gong, and Yoga. Mike also loves nature and occasionally goes hiking and camping in the Shenandoah.

News from Human Resources

Beneficiary Information: When was the last time you reviewed your beneficiary information? Was it before you got married (or divorced) or had a new baby? And, it's important to make sure that your death benefits will be paid to the people of your choice.

Please take time to review your designated beneficiaries on your Federal and District Life Insurances, Defined Contribution, Deferred Compensation and Unpaid Compensation.

New Hire: Roslyn Williams, former DC CSA employee has joined the Office of Programs and Policy as the liaison at the DC Jail.

ePerformance Evaluation due November 3: The deadline for completing FY 2009 performance evaluations is November 3. It is important to note that this includes **approvals by reviewers** as well as the evaluations conducted by supervisors. In addition, the deadline for finalizing FY 10 performance plans in for each employee in ePerformance is December 1, 2009.

To review the elements of an evaluation, go to: http://dcop.dc.gov/dcop/lib/dcop/services/perf/mgmt/eperformance_evaluation_phase.swf

If you have questions, contact Mariam Brown (Authority) at Mariam.brown@dc.gov or Jim Gallo (Hospital) at jim.gallo@dc.gov.

DMH Tests Disaster Readiness in Citywide Planning Exercise

DMH participated in a recent citywide full scale command and control exercise organized by the DC Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency to evaluate and bolster the District's preparedness to deal with a mass casualty.

The objectives for DMH were to:

- Evaluate communication protocols between lead agencies, first responders and the DMH to ensure an effective and efficient response.
- Assess the mental health's system capacity to respond to each phase of a disaster event, and
- Coordinate the provision of disaster mental health services with Red Cross and Serve DC to ensure appropriate support for first responders, visitors and families.

Julia Maxwell, Disaster Planning Director, organized planning meetings between human care agencies before the exercise and also planned DMH's participation. DMH staff participating in the exercise were: **Mary Campbell, John Graham, Theresa Donaldson, JoAnn Davis, Tony Crews, Rosetta Dabney, Teresa Gibbs, Linda Miller, Gary Yingling, Isha Edwards, Christine Litwa, Nick Rutledge, Carrie Grundmayer, Taiwan Lovelace** and **Robert Winfrey**. Through their work, DMH has established itself as an essential element in the District's disaster planning and response mechanism.

Look for...



the next mandatory class on the rights and protections under the DC Human Rights Act held by the DMH Training Institute. Entitled "Equal Employment Opportunity / Employee Rights and Responsibilities under the District of Columbia Human Rights Act of 1977", the class explains the rights and responsibilities of participants in the EEO complaint process and informal and formal procedures available to address alleged discrimination, including the resolution of complaints at the earliest possible stage. The class presenter is **David Z. Prince**, J.D., CPM, Equal Employment Manager.

H1N1 Vaccine Available Now *clinics planned for all DMH employees*

DMH staff who fall within the targeted populations according to CDC guidelines are receiving the H1N1 vaccine at clinics arranged by the DMH disaster planning and risk management team. The clinics are open to Saint Elizabeths, CPEP, school based mental health program, and any staff who come into direct contact with consumers.

The next clinic will be on Thursday, November 5, from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., at CPEP, located at 1905 E Street, SE, Building #14. Once additional vaccine becomes available, clinics will be scheduled for all DMH staff. For more information, please contact **Julia Maxwell** on (202) 671-0347 or **Mary Campbell** on (202) 673-7690. If you have questions about the H1N1, please visit flu.dc.gov.

Cafritz Awards Return to Celebrate Distinguished Employees

The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation Awards for Distinguished DC Government Employees will once again recognize individuals who exemplify the best in public service. These are individuals who, despite external pressures and demands, tirelessly work towards solving problems in innovative ways that inspire others and positively impact the community.

Any full-time employee of the District of Columbia government with at least five years of continuous employment who is not serving as a Cabinet-level appointee or department deputy is eligible for an award. Five winners will be selected and will receive a \$7,500 cash award. In addition to the selected winners, fifteen finalists will also be recognized. The winners and finalists, along with colleagues and families, will be honored at a gala event next summer.

Nominations for the Cafritz Awards are welcomed from citizens, community and business stakeholders, civic organizations, and government employees. Self-nominations are also encouraged. The deadline for nominations is **December 11, 2009**. To nominate someone who makes life better for the people of DC, visit www.cafritzawards.org.

All photographs by Paul Davis unless otherwise noted. eNewsletter produced by Phyllis Jones, PIO, John Graham, Community Outreach Officer, and JoAnn Davis, Executive Assistant to the Director.