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Heroes Award finalists

Saint Joseph's Mercy Care Services' Community Homeless Outreach Program (CHOP) was a finalist in the Atlanta Business Chronicle's 14th annual Health-Care Heroes Awards celebration held on May 19 at the Cobb Energy Centre. CHOP placed among the top three finalists in the community homeless outreach category.

These awards honor individuals and organizations which have demonstrated excellence and deserve recognition in the health-care community. The Community Outreach Award in particular, honors an individual or an organization in a health-care occupation who has developed a program that improves access and quality of medical service in low-income or indigent areas.

Referral specialist Mary Watson said of the program, "It gives people hope to move on in their lives to become better than what they are living in. It gives them that opportunity to move forward." CHOP team members include referral specialists Mary Watson and Torrance Wynn, mental health specialist Stan Sullivan and screening nurse Roxanne Wilhelm.



*L to R back row: Watson, Wilhelm and Wynn
 Front: Sullivan*

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Coach deployed to Tuscaloosa

Invited by Whatley Health Services, on May 10 three Saint Joseph's Mercy Care Services team members drove one of Mercy Care's two mobile health coaches to Tuscaloosa, Alabama to offer assistance to area tornado victims.

Whatley Health Services, Inc. is a Health Care for the Homeless grantee working with the Red Cross during the recovery period. The Mercy Care coach will be parked at the Red Cross Center and Whatley medical providers will offer care from the coach to individuals sheltered or seeking services at the Center.

Operations and Grants Manager Ken Prince has family members in Tuscaloosa who were caught in the path of the storm. The following is a personal account of the amazing destruction he witnessed.

"We first called family members there to be sure everyone was safe. Family here in Atlanta decided to load a truck with relief items to take to Tuscaloosa to help our stricken relatives. When we arrived we found that everyone had been taken in by brothers, sisters or cousins not directly affected, or at least not devastated, by the tornados. So we donated the items to shelters and to other folks we found in need. The destruction there is appalling. It's truly beyond imagination. But there's a spirit of healing and rebuilding going on—people are pulling together to overcome this tragedy."

And this note from Whatley Director Linda Olivet:

"I am so grateful that the Saint Joseph's Mercy Care mobile coach was able to come to Tuscaloosa! It is so needed. Having the clinic in our parking lot has been a significant help to our residents and to the nursing staff in health services. My deepest appreciation and best wishes."



New collaboration

Mercy Care Services and Ben Massell Dental Clinic (BMDC) have finalized an agreement whereby homeless and HIV-positive Mercy Care patients who meet certain criteria will receive vouchers for denture and partial denture services at the Massell Clinic. These patients will receive dental preparations at Mercy Care and BMDC will deliver the dentures and partials to them at their midtown Atlanta clinic. Patients then return to Mercy Care for their follow-up and routine dental needs. Said Dental Coordinator Dr. Steven Lyzenga, "This arrangement is intended to free-up Mercy Care dental staff to help meet the increasing demand for routine dental services, such as fillings and extractions and redirect the demand for prosthetics that strain our staff and resources."

Additionally, BMDC on 14th Street will soon become a new mobile site for Mercy Care's health coach. Clinic patients with poor dental health are very likely experiencing primary health issues as well, and positioning of the mobile health coach on site provides easy access for their service needs.

Seeing more than 6,000 patients each year, Ben Massell Dental Clinic is a long-time provider of comprehensive, quality dental care to indigent individuals in the metropolitan Atlanta area.

New strategic plan

Mercy Care Services has begun the process of creating a new strategic plan to meet its future needs. The process began with the selection of a Board Strategic Planning Committee and outside consultants to facilitate plan development. Members of the committee include, Mercy Care President Tom Andrews and Vice President Sister Angela Ebberwein; Mercy Foundation Board Chair Tim Cambias; Mercy Foundation President Bill Garrett; and Mercy Care board members Salvador Arias, Tom Davis, Jane Haverty, Stephen Johnson, Peter Kehoe Dr. Susan Kelley, Nancy Paris and Kim Marchner, who heads the Committee. Two consultants hired for the plan are John Snow, Inc. and Kurt Salmon.

Development of the strategic plan will occur in two phases. The first phase will provide an internal, external and financial needs assessment. The second phase includes actual planning and implementation goals. Said President Tom Andrews, "This will be a comprehensive plan and we intend for everyone in the organization to be updated on our progress and be given opportunities for input."

A volunteer's thank you

One of a number of young, student volunteers at Mercy Care Services during 2010, Roxanna performed many, diverse activities for the organization, adding an extra pair of hands wherever needed. The following is an excerpt from a letter Roxanna wrote to her primary supervisor at Mercy Care, Medical Referral Specialist Roberto Diaz, explaining how much the experience meant to her.

"I can't really describe in words how this summer changed me, but it affected my whole idea of how I hope to someday serve my community. Especially with the terrible politics of health care right now, I hope to make a positive impact in the health of my community. This summer [2011], I wanted to find somewhere in my own hometown of Huntsville to volunteer at a place like Mercy Care. Although I've lived my entire life in Huntsville, I had never heard of the Community Clinic until now. I plan on volunteering there this summer. By extension, working at Mercy Care opened my eyes to the needs of my own community. I really appreciate everything I was taught at Mercy Care by you and everyone else, including the patients. I always wanted to be a doctor, but after my experience with Mercy Care, I know I want to have an impact as a physician in my own community. Oh, and I was accepted at medical school in Alabama!"

Health tip:

The mighty pistachio

from Consumer Reports onHealth Magazine

Surprisingly, the little pistachio nut can be one of the secrets of a healthy heart! This mighty little nut contains phytosterols – a substance that blocks your body from absorbing cholesterol.

A small handful of pistachios daily may help prevent your arteries from clogging, keep your blood vessels clean, your heart healthy and strong.

Four other delicious nuts and seeds that may also help protect the heart are sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, pine nuts and whole flaxseeds.



Other news at Mercy Care

- On May 25, Mercy Care received HOPE Atlanta's Centurion Outstanding Agency Award in recognition of exceptional outreach services to the Atlanta community. HOPE Atlanta, programs of Traveler's Aid of Metropolitan Atlanta, is dedicated to the prevention of homelessness in Atlanta.
- Creation of a Meditation Garden completed the 2010 expansion project at Mercy Care. A small strip of land behind the upper parking lot was beautifully landscaped and benches, tables chairs, a wind-sail covering and tinkling chimes were all added to create a quiet space for employees to enjoy a bite of lunch or a momentary break from their busy work schedules. The garden is "blooming" with staff members now that Spring is here at last.



- On April 26, The Atlanta Press Club presented its monthly Newsmaker Luncheon with U.S. Congressman John Lewis as keynote speaker. Representative Lewis discussed his journey from Freedom Rider to the Medal of Freedom. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Freedom Rides, which were undertaken by a group of young activists who, at great peril to their own safety, rode interstate buses to focus attention on segregation in bus stations and to demand federal government enforcement of a ruling by the Supreme Court prohibiting such segregation. In February, Lewis was awarded the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, recognizing his enormous contributions to the civil rights movement. Mercy Care Services' staff attending the April luncheon included Tom Andrews, Robert Mason, Walena Bryant, Carol Courtland, Deborah Crockett, Raquel Iwelomen, Hazel Mitchell, Anitra Peten, Macedonia Vickerson and Tammy Wilkes.

Upcoming Events

*Mammography screenings at Mercy Clinic
Downtown (call for appt. 678-843-8600)
June 30, July 12 and August 16*

*Mammography screenings at Mercy Clinic
North (call for appt. 678-843-8700)
June 16, July 21, August 4 and 25*

*SJMCS Board of Directors Meeting
July 26*

*New Employee Orientation
July 11 2:00 p.m., update 2:45 p.m.*

*Employee Inforum
August 19*

*Clinics closed for Independence Day
July 4*

Funding news

Mercy Care Services received the following funding awards during April and May 2011.

\$3,000	Grantor: March of Dimes Recipient: Family Health Promotion
\$2,500	Grantor: Office on Women's Health Recipient: Family Health Promotion

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Send ideas, suggestions and information to Toni Graney, editor, at (678) 843-8509 or fax (678) 843-8501.
Saint Joseph's Mercy Care Services is a nonprofit organization that relies upon contributions
to continue delivering its services. Donations may be sent to:
Saint Joseph's Mercy Foundation, 5665 Peachtree Dunwoody Rd, Atlanta, GA 30342
or call (678) 843-5710 for credit card donations.



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Saint Joseph's Mercy Care Services - a member of Catholic Health East, sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy