



Louisiana Center for Health Equity

NEWSLETTER

FALL ISSUE—December 2012

LCHE President Urges Governor and Legislature to Expand Medicaid

On November 12, 2012, LCHE released the following statement from Alma C. Stewart, LCHE President, in response to the November 6 election results:

“The U. S. Supreme Court upheld the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) of 2010 earlier this year. Now, with the presidential election behind us, the Louisiana Center for Health Equity (LCHE) urges Governor Jindal and the Legislature to move forward with implementing the expansion of Medicaid coverage to hundreds of thousands of uninsured Louisianans.

While Louisiana residents have already started benefitting from the ACA, we could see more benefits as the law’s major provisions take effect in 2014. Louisiana could reap a significant incentive from this law with the Medicaid expansion as the federal government will pick up the vast majority of the cost. **Expand Medicaid continued on page 4.**

Stewart Honored as Humanitarian and Role Model



Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus presented LCHE President Alma C. Stewart (3rd from right with fellow Baton Rougeans, state and local officials) the 2012 Pinkie C. Wilkerson Humanitarian Award in New Orleans during their

Bayou Classic Jazz Brunch November 24. Representative Wilkerson is remembered as a champion for health care and social issues. “This award means so very much to me. I remember Representative Wilkerson and her passion for issues important to her and her community,” said Stewart.

Baton Rouge Chapter of The Links, Incorporated honored Stewart as a Louisiana Role Model during their annual Jazz Brunch on December 8. Stewart was recognized for exemplifying their service area of Health and Human Services. As she accepted her award, Stewart acknowledged her appreciation of the many friends, family and colleagues that have played a part in her life along the way.

Our Mission

LCHE works to address the increasing disparities in health and health care across Louisiana. LCHE represents the interest of health equity by promoting the elimination of health disparities caused by poverty, lack of access to quality health care and unhealthy environmental conditions with a focus on wellness and community health.

What We Do

- Reach out to local communities by providing information and education
- Serve as a means for collaboration with others about health disparities
- Identify and distribute information about effective and proven practices

What You Can Do

- Learn more about LCHE
- Donate online now www.lahealthequity.org
- Volunteer with LCHE
- Become a friend of LCHE on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/lche)

Coming Soon

**2nd Annual
Women’s Retreat 2013:
Celebrating Wellness and
Culture**

**New Orleans
Saturday, March 16, 2012**

**Shreveport
Saturday, April 13, 2013**

**Baton Rouge
Tuesday, May 14, 2013
and
Wednesday, May 15, 2013**

New LCHE Board Members Announced

“LCHE is pleased that four new members were elected to serve on the Board of Directors,” said President Alma C. Stewart.

Judy LeBrum Daniels is a life-long resident in the Town of Campti. Judy is the founder and Executive Director of Campti Community Development Center with a mission to provide activities and programs that will improve the educational and health status of individuals through access to information, education, and health services. She has been an advocate for the Town of Campti for many years hosting various programs, initiatives and/or activities to improve the overall health and well-being of the citizens. She had the opportunity to experience the life of a Bus Driver and Educator for the Natchitoches Parish School Board. She has served as a Domestic Violence Advocate and liaison of battered women. She has also worked extensively in tobacco control and asthma management programs. She has also served as an elected official (Mayor) from 2006-2010.

James A. Gilmore, Jr., MPA, PHR, PhD, a native of Baton Rouge, is the President of The Bayard Research Group, a government relations, public policy, and strategic planning firm headquartered in Louisiana. James is member of the East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority, East Baton Rouge Planning and Zoning Commission, Baton Rouge Metro Airport Commission, and Louisiana State University College of Human Sciences Peabody Society Board of Directors. He is also a founding member of the Mentorship Digital Media Academy and the Mentorship Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Academy. James served in Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco’s administration as a Policy Advisor on Social Services, Housing, and Community Development. His job activities included researching, analyzing, and advising in the areas of temporary assistance to needy families, childcare, foster care, affordable housing, and strategies for reducing poverty.

Judge Sheva M. Sims, a life-long resident of Shreveport, was elected Judge on November 19, 2011, for Shreveport City

Court, Division D. Prior to her election to the bench, Judge Sims was a practicing attorney for over 17 years, handling civil and criminal litigation, small claims, and domestic cases. Judge Sims is a past president of the board of directors for the YWCA of Northwest Louisiana. She is a member of the American Judges Association, the National Association of Women Judges, the Louisiana Judicial Council, National Bar Association, Shreveport Bar Association, League of Women Voters, North Shreveport Business Association, Louisiana AIDS Advocacy Network, and the Louisiana State Bar Association, in which she served on the House of Delegates, Community Action and Lawyers in Transition Committees. Judge Sims is also a mathematics tutor and a recording artist.

Ebru Waters, a resident of Bossier City, is a native of Turkey. She is the Community Awareness Representative for Ocean Dental. Ebru sits on the Board of Directors of the Multicultural Center of the South, where she is also a liaison for Teen Council. She is a board member of the Cinco De Mayo Inc. where she planned and coordinated the Cinco De Mayo Health Fair for the last two years. Ebru is also the Health Chair for the League of United Latin American Citizens and is involved with the Volunteers for Youth Justice GEMS mentoring program as one of the mentors. She has also served on the Literacy Volunteers Board at Centenary College.

Re-elected to serve a second term are Tiffany Mcgee, Diane Hargrove-Roberson, and Gina Eubanks, Ph.D. Paul Race, JD, MD, former Cullen Mayor Bobby Washington, and Arthur Lathan recently rotated off the Board. “LCHE is very appreciative of the service these leaders give voluntarily to raise awareness and to address disparities in health and health care across Louisiana,” said Stewart.

LCHE Officers and Board

The Board of Directors of the Louisiana Center for Health Equity is composed of up to 13 members, including the following officers: Chair, President, Vice-President, and Secretary. Each member serves a two-year term which is renewable. As a public charity non-profit organization, the members of the Board of Directors serve voluntarily and receive no remuneration for serving on the Board.

Alma C. Stewart, R.N., M.S., CCHC
LCHE President
A. Charles Stewart Consultants
Baton Rouge, LA

Frances R. Wiggins, DDS, FAGD
LCHE Vice President
Private Practice
Plaquemine, LA

Diane Hargrove-Roberson, MSW
LCHE Secretary
Total Community Action, Inc.
New Orleans, LA

Judy L. Daniels
Campti Community Dev. Center
Campti, LA

Gina E. Eubanks, Ph.D.
SU Agricultural Research Center
Baton Rouge, LA

James A. Gilmore, Jr., MPA, PHR, PhD
Bayard Research Group
Baton Rouge, LA

Ebru Waters
Ocean Dental
Bossier City, LA

Tiffany D. Magee
Our Lady of the Lake College
Miss Black Louisiana USA
Baton Rouge, LA

Judge Sheva M. Sims
Shreveport City Court
Shreveport, LA

Christopher D. Williams
eQHealth Solutions, Inc.
Baton Rouge, LA

LCHE Promotes Women's Wellness and Culture

LCHE will host its second annual *Women's Retreat 2013: Celebrating Wellness and Culture* in New Orleans, Shreveport and Baton Rouge during the Spring 2013. These women's conferences' primary focus will be access to health care and HIV/AIDS awareness.

When it comes to disparities, Louisiana women fare poorly compared to the rest of the nation. According to a recent report published by the Kaiser Family Foundation, Louisiana ranked worse than average and 50th among the states for social determinants, including ranking 50th for women in poverty. Furthermore, also among these social determinants are high rates of women as head of households with children and high rates of women with no high school diploma. These rates among Black women are significantly higher.

Nationally, Louisiana ranked 4th highest in estimated AIDS case rates and 11th in the number of estimated AIDS cases diagnosed in 2011 for both sexes, according to the CDC 2011 HIV Surveillance Report (Vol. 22). In Louisiana, 29 percent of new HIV cases and 28 percent of new AIDS cases are among women. The leading cause of death of women of all ages and races is heart disease. Women of color fare worse than White women, as it relates to cancer, obesity, and new AIDS cases. Preventative measures such as overall wellness check-ups, pap smears, and mammograms could prevent chronic illnesses and poorer health outcomes, but many low-income, underprivileged women have little or no insurance coverage at all.

These women's retreats are designed to provide education, and empowerment activities allowing women to make informed decisions for themselves and their families that lead to healthier living.



LCHE Gala Lights up the Night for a Brighter Future

LCHE hosted its second annual fundraising gala in Baton Rouge on September 8 at the Baton Rouge Gallery for Contemporary Art, *Light up the Night for a Brighter Future*.

During the Gala, LCHE honored BREC, Diane Hargrove-Roberson, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan, Senator Sharon Weston-Broome, Annie D. Durant, and Reginald Burrell, Jr., for their contributions, support, and furtherance of LCHE's mission (See article on LCHE's website). Guests danced on the Gallery balcony and enjoyed delectable cuisine and a silent auction.

Gala sponsors were Peoples Health, Collective World Art Community, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan, A. Charles Stewart Consultants, and EmediaGC. "Proceeds from the Gala will support the LCHE's activities to advance opportunities for better health outcomes across Louisiana," said LCHE President, Alma C. Stewart.

The Louisiana PROHealth Consortium Membership Drive Opens

LCHE launched *The Louisiana PROHealth Consortium* membership drive during a November 13 reception and informational session hosted at the Louisiana State Achieves Building.

The Louisiana PROHealth Consortium is a collaborative comprised of organizations, including not-for-profit health-related, faith-based and community organizations, health professionals' and advocacy organizations, academic institutions, governmental entities, and other organizations and corporations whose mission is to affect health and health care, and those that are interested in working towards the elimination of disparities in health and health care. This includes social determinants, such as poverty and access to health care, being under-educated, under or unemployed, etc. **PRO-Health** is an independent membership body under the leadership of a Steering Committee to be selected from its membership. LCHE will house the administrative function of the Consortium, called the Secretariat.

Become a Charter member now! The **PROHealth** membership drive is now underway with a goal of raising \$100,000 by July 2013 for its operating expenses, including staff for the Consortium. This will allow the initial convening of the Consortium slated for Fall 2013. For additional information, visit www.lahealthequity.org or email info@lahealthequity.org.

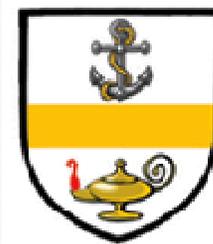
2012 Your Community Health is Wealth Fair Draws Crowd

On September 22, the third annual *Your Community Health is Wealth Fair* at BREC's Howell Community Park in Baton Rouge offered something for everyone. It was a wonderful "day in the park" for all ages. The event was open to the public and free to over two hundred fifty participants. There were health screenings, including Blood Pressure, Glucose, and Cholesterol, dental, Body Mass Index and that's not all. HIV and pregnancy test and ultrasound were available too. There were over thirty educational and informational booths on financial literacy, home ownership, small business development, and numerous health and safety topics. Then, again, this year, the Youth Talent Showcase was a winner. What awesome talent we enjoyed! Youth and adults alike got physical in "boot camp," martial arts, and Zumba. All of this was possible because of the great "community spirit" everyone showed to make the community fair a success.

Numerous state, local and community organizations and businesses participated to make this community event possible. LCHE extends a big "thank you" to our sponsors, partners, vendors, volunteers, and the youth and their parents, the entire community for making this event possible. This event was sponsored by Amerigroup RealSolutions in Healthcare, Peoples Health, and Whole Foods Market. Community partners included BREC, Our Lady of the Lake College, Pennington Biomedical Center, and ULM School of Pharmacy. Additional community patrons include Coca Cola, Capitol City Produce, Flowers Bakery, EMmediaGC, and Hi Nabor Supermarket – Winbourne.



ULM School of Pharmacy serving the Baton Rouge community with service learning.



**Louisiana
Center for
Health
Equity**

Together We Are More Adolescent Health Collaborative Sets Priorities

Together We Are More: A Holistic Approach to Adolescent Health aims to help youth have a better chance to live healthy and productive lives by improving health outcomes for Baton Rouge adolescents. Using a national public health model, Healthy People 2020, ***Together We Are More*** is a collaborative partnership with the faith-based community and other community agencies and organizations. This multi-pronged approach seeks to engage youth in extracurricular, out-of-school and health literacy activities through a holistic approach to foster needed social supports thus reducing risky behaviors among youth. It also seeks to engage churches and community organizations, businesses, parents and other

adults.

The *Together We Are More Adolescent Health Collaborative* was formed following the inaugural assembly convened earlier this year held. During a second assembly on November 27, the collaborative set four adolescent health priorities important to gaining better health outcomes for adolescents as follows: 1) reduce violence and homicide, 2) increase the proportion of adolescents connected to a parent or positive adult caregiver, 3) increase the proportion of adolescents who participate in extracurricular and/or out of school activities, and 4) increase rates for high school graduation after four years.

To learn more, email us at info@lahealthequity.org.

Expand Medicaid Continued from page 1—Thousands of uninsured working parents and other adults and low to moderate incomes could get the quality healthcare they need if Governor Jindal and the Legislature move forward with Medicaid expansion. This new coverage opportunity is especially critical when the state is making cuts to its public hospitals that serve as a safety-net for people without health insurance who need care. With twenty percent of Louisiana's population uninsured, a failure to expand Medicaid will leave a projected 400,000 Louisianans without health coverage and waste an opportunity to infuse hundreds of millions of dollars into our state's economy.

LCHE urges the Governor and the Legislature to begin immediate measures to take advantage of this noteworthy opportunity on behalf of the people of Louisiana. Failure to do so would be immensely irresponsible."