



Fresno Metro Ministry

News and Views

Health Care “Navigators” Begin Teaching

Reflection by Carmen Arambula, Acting Director, Health Care Policy

Navigators have now completed a four-month training in topics that range from services available at University Medical Center, how to make an appointment, different financial programs available, how to deal with difficult people in the system, finding common ground, and cultural and language barriers and solutions. They are currently finishing a one-month training on public speaking skills. Every Navigator must present at least three times to their peers in the community to share the knowledge they've gained in the four-month curriculum.

Have you ever had the experience of rubbing your eyes, waiting for the picture in front of you to clear? I found myself staring in a dream like blur at this vision we had of Navigators. We knew the

broad strokes but could not decipher the details, the small movements of color. It has been a journey. We have finished teaching the curriculum for the course, and now are moving on to the unknown of deployment. Up until this point we have had complete control. We are now watching as our “children” are taking steps without us in the unknown, uncontrolled world. What will they do? Will they use all the information and knowledge that we taught? Was it enough? It is hard to learn to let your “children” go; you are protective, scared, proud.

Navigators have now completed their four-month curriculum, and have branched into their deployment period. They are now training on different presentation skills and styles. They will use this infor-

mation along with what they gathered from April, May, June, and July to put together a presentation. This has been the unknown factor — Navigators will move beyond the classroom learning, they will become the teachers, and we will watch from the sidelines.

Navigators will be presenting to three different locations, the emergency room at University Medical Center (UMC), a classroom at Fresno Adult School- Cesar Chavez, and a community location of their choice. They will present in pairs for about twenty minutes for each presentation. The presentation covers services available at UMC, how to access those services, the importance of a

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Peddling to Kids: Is Food Marketing going too far?

Summary of the Community Hunger & Nutrition Forum held on Wednesday, August 10, 2005

By Jeremy Hofer, Hunger and Nutrition Program

Walking through the halls and cafeteria of public schools these days, one gets the impression that the junk food industry is better at influencing children's eating habits than our schools are. The fact is that industry is so intertwined with food service and fundraisers that unhealthy eating has been normalized and dietary habits are developed at a very young age, according to Amanda Purcell, Policy Director for the California Center for Public Health Advocacy and presenter at Metro's Hunger and Nutrition forum in August.

"Kids are just inundated with this stuff at school, we have this expectation that we're going to teach them about healthy eating and they need to weave their way through all of this stuff to the one apple that's sold in school and our expectation is that kids will make the right choice and they're going to pick that apple," said Purcell.

In Fresno schools, Coca-Cola and Pepsi are currently battling over so-called exclusive 'pouring rights' as they seek the brand loyalty of our youth. 2002 soda contract statements revealed that \$1.7 million is being paid to

Fresno's high schools by Pepsi and Coke (these contracts run for five years). While this money is paying for crucial programs like music and athletics, it also gives these powerful corporate marketing agents access to teaching our youth to eat poorly.

Some examples of direct advertising to children:

McSpellit Club - receive free hamburgers, cheeseburgers, and Chicken McNuggets if they receive a perfect score on their spelling test.

Baby bottles with Coke, Pepsi, 7-Up logos on them.

Clothes, mobiles, crib toys, and even diapers feature branded logos or licensed media characters such as Elmo or Spiderman.

Sheli Glasrud, parent and former teacher and also spoke

at the Forum. She had some great ideas of ways that teachers can bring good food into the classroom, and also had some insights into the difficulty of confronting the problem of unhealthy food in our schools:

"When melons, berries, or more unusual foods were introduced most students were willing to try them and they were always surprised at how much they liked them. Many students hadn't tried those, and in our San Joaquin Valley where things are so abundant and we grow all of those things it was, again, shocking to me."

"We had healthy events like jog-a-thons. We had community events like our fall festival in which we featured homemade tamales and egg rolls made by parents and other food games, entertainment, and auction. These events took weeks and months to plan and there was a lot of work, but these events combined did not match the money we found that we could make by selling cookie dough."

Action: Metro Ad-Watch –
Send us examples of marketing to kids:
Copies of print media or Details of broadcast media (where/when shown & details)



Cartoon from powerpoint presentation by Amanda Purcell at Forum. Original source unknown.

Metro Congratulates Fresno Food Stamp Office for Expanded Enrollment with the Best Accuracy Rate in the State

By Edie Jessup, Hunger and Nutrition Coordinator

USDA recognized Fresno County Employment and Temporary Assistance Food Stamp Office for the lowest error rate in the state for 2004-05 and for a 62% increase in caseload since 2000-01 at the Board of Supervisor's Meeting on August 16, 2005. Dennis Stewart, USDA Western Regional Director for the Food and Nutrition Services presented the award in Fresno.

Fresno County Food Stamp E&TA Office participates monthly in the Fresno Metro Ministry Community Hunger & Nutrition Project Food Stamp Advocates Task Group. Metro and the Food Stamp Advocates Task Group supports the Fresno County E&TA office's excellent expansion of Food Stamp enrollment and innovation given previous year's budget cuts to Food Stamp programs by the State of California. **Metro hopes that the Board of Supervisors will advocate with the State of California** to fund administrative costs for the Food Stamp Program and not cut food stamp administrative budgets to assure Fresno County E&TA can continue to enroll eligible food stamp program customers and maintain their excellent accountability.

The Board of Supervisors declared 'Fresno County is a Food Stamp Friendly County' in a proclamation last December, understanding that the Food Stamp Nutrition Program is a way to address health issues caused by poor diet due to poverty and seasonable work in Fresno County. They also recognized that the federal Food Stamp Nutrition Program brought important federal funding to the County that supported more people buying local farm products, and that it acted as an economic development tool for Fresno County. (Food Stamps bring \$11 Million dollars MONTHLY into the Fresno economy). The Fresno County Board of Supervisor's Proclamation has been a model used in other counties in California, and is being included in a national USDA Toolkit for good Food Stamp practices.

The Food Stamp Nutrition Program is a smart program that is complex because of the role of Federal, State, and Local rules and regulations. **Food Stamp Advocates support the work of the local County Food Stamp E&TA Office, and support legislation that would end barriers to enrollment in food stamps by eligible neighbors.**

Join the Food Stamp Advocates Task Group the 4th Thursday of every month, 1:30pm at Fresno Metro Ministry. Call Edie or Jeremy at 485-1416 for more information.

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Air Quality Update

Pesticide Monitoring In Parlier

By Daniela Simunovic

As part of its Environmental Justice Action Plan, the California Environmental Protection Agency (CAL-EPA) is developing and conducting pilot projects that incorporate themes in the Governor's Environmental Action Plan and focus on environmental risk factors that impact children's health.

As part of these pilot projects, the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) is leading an air monitoring pilot project in Parlier, in Fresno County. The project will evaluate ambient air exposure to pesticides in order to better understand and identify opportunities to reduce environmental health risk, particularly to children.

The project objectives are to find out: Are residents of the community exposed to pesticides in the air? Which pesticides are people exposed to and in what amounts? Do measured pesticide air levels exceed levels of concern to human health, particularly children?

In order to incorporate the ideals of the environmental justice movement DPR has opened the plan-

ning phase of the project to the public through the formation of a local advisory group, comprised of local residents and community based groups. The Parlier Local Advisory Group (LAG) was formed to advise DPR on the air-monitoring project it is conducting in Parlier, in Fresno County. The project is one of several environmental justice pilot projects being sponsored by the California Environmental Protection Agency. Although the LAG is not a decision-making group, its views will influence how we do our project.

Fresno Metro Ministry has participated as an active member of the LAG. So far the LAG has met on three occasions at the UC Kearny Center in Parlier. The LAG has made recommendations in regards to the kinds of pesticides that will be monitored, in addition to the location of the monitoring instruments. In addition to the LAG, there is also an estab-

lished Technical Advisory Group (TAG), which is comprised of scientists and researchers.

At Metro we are excited to see such projects occurring here in the Valley. The Parlier project is one of the first of its kind, and it's happening here in our Valley. The data gathered from the monitoring will help researchers have a clearer understanding of the affects of pesticides in the health of the communities where pesticides are used frequently.

The next LAG meeting will be held September 15th at 7pm in the UC Kearny Center in Parlier. Meetings are open to the public so if you are interested you are more than welcome to join us. For more information on the Parlier Monitoring Project visit the website at:

www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/envjust/index.htm

**" Working together
to build a
better community "**

Welcoming Neighbors

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ties League and Roeding Elementary School, we were able to have twenty adults actively involved in a kindergarten classroom for at least one hour each week. This program gives the church an active role in the school and gives the children there a set of adults who take an active interest in them and their lives.

We also partner with a number of organizations within the community to work toward a world where all people have

opportunity to have their basic human needs met. This is one of the reasons that the Disciples in Fresno have been a part of Metro Ministry beginning with the planning for its inception. We also partner with organizations such as FIRM, Angel Tree, Hope Now for Youth, Evangel Homes, Community Food Bank, ESA Love, Inc, and others. As a small congregation of 75 persons, we find partnerships that give us the opportunity to work

toward our goals without consuming us and all our resources. Partnerships also contribute to the goal of cooperative living in community.

Our goal is to be faithful stewards of the resources we have been give to do the work we are called to do. Our prayer is that we will have the opportunity, for many years to come, to partner with our friends at Metro Ministry.

Health Care Navigators

(Continued from p. 1)

primary care physician, what to bring to an appointment, how to make an appointment, some brief information regarding financial services available, language requirements and access.

We have watched as the Navigators have practiced their presentation in front of the classroom. It has honestly brought tears to my eyes. I hold them back, as a parent would, to try and focus on the task ahead. But I am so proud. This is the

visualization of what we have not been able to put words to. These Navigators will go out into communities and impact change that we have no numbers to calculate. They have stepped up to the plate to become the leaders. They are community leaders, opinion leaders, and leaders in the healthcare field. They are our first graduating class, and we couldn't be happier. I can't wait to see what comes out of their deploy-

ment, it will be like someone lifting the fog, and revealing the clear beautiful picture. My heart is filled with joy and sadness. I will miss our weekly classes. I will miss their laughter and friendship. But this is not about me; it is our Navigators' time to shine. This is their moment. They have worked towards this for more than five months. They are prepared, ready to conquer any challenge. I just hope that the rest of the world is ready for the Navigators. They will be coming soon to a community near you!!

For a secure and convenient way to contribute to Metro's work in our community, go to www.fresnometroministry.org and click on **“Donate Now.”**

Metro Ministry Updates

Rev. Walt Parry, Executive Director



UMC Trauma Center Stretched to, or Beyond, Capacity

Regardless of income, education, health insurance, or fame, the difference between a severely injured person living or dying may well depend upon the Level One Trauma Center at University Medical Center (UMC). Bruce Kinder, RN, Chief Operating Officer at UMC, informed the Fresno County Board of Supervisors on August 16 of two recent events where the trauma

center reached or exceeded its capacity. Kinder indicated that increased demand for service, reimbursement lower than cost, too few resources to meet the daily needs as well as a major disaster all were immediate threats to keeping our Level 1 Trauma Center functioning.

At Metro's Community Health Care Roundtable on

August 18, Dan Lynch, Director of Fresno County's Emergency Medical Services Division, spoke of "the perfect storm" as so many facets of our healthcare system are failing. It is essential that our federal, state, and local leaders face the reality of national and local crumbling health care infrastructure. Our very lives depend upon it.

Forward or Backward In Cleaning Our Air

By the time you read this it is likely that Senate Bill 999 that would add a medical expert and a scientist with environmental expertise to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution District will have either been approved or defeated in the State Assembly. The bill would also add a representative from the Valley's three largest cities. Many of us think that adding these new

perspectives to the air board will result in decisions that will improve our health, not hurt it. In our next newsletter we will provide an overview of the life, and possibly death, of this bill, and of the role our Valley's state elected officials played in either its defeat or its victory.

2005-06 Making Connections Coming Soon!

Thanks to "Friends of Making Connections", advertisers and sponsors! The new edition of Making Connections will be available at the Metro Office this month. To pre-order copies of the new directory, e-mail Carmen@fresnometmin.org.

www.fresnometroministry.org

Laurie Primavera to Become Associate Director of Central Valley Health Policy Institute

Laurie Primavera, Metro's Health Policy Director since November of 2001, will become Associate Director of Fresno State's Health Policy Institute October 1. Metro Ministry health projects in which Laurie has been engaged with other Metro staff include "New Leaders For Better Health", "Navigators", and the Children's Health Initiative. Laurie has also been instrumental in Metro's work on child and adolescent psychiatric inpatient mental health services, the Task Force for a Full-time Public Health Officer, and with the monthly Community Health Care Roundtables.

Laurie has been a significant asset to Metro and to

our community. Her background as a Public Health Nurse, as Chief Executive Officer for Sequoia Health Foundation, and as an advocate for low-income populations has created a combination of skills that were used well at Metro and will be used well at the Institute. We thank Laurie for her work at Metro, and look forward to working with her in her new position as the Institute's Associate Director.

Metro staff member Carmen Arambula will continue to staff the Navigators project, and will replace Laurie as Metro's representative on the Child Health Initiative's Policy Committee. Metro will engage Katherine Pomaville to fulfill Metro's responsibility for

developing a fund development plan for the Child Health Initiative.

Laurie's new employer, The Central Valley Health Policy Institute, will research the topics of uninsured adults, health professional shortages, and environmental health. I serve on the Institute's Advisory Committee and know that Laurie will bring a much-needed "community focus" to blend with the University's "research focus". We anticipate that Laurie will continue to be a member of The Local Health Care Coalition and be a participant in the Community Health Care Roundtables.

Coming this fall ...

Metro's Annual Thanksgiving Concert

Sunday, November 20, 3 pm at Hope Lutheran Church.

If your choir is interested in participating or for more information on becoming a "Friend of the Concert," please e-mail Carmen@fresnometmin.org or call 485-1416.

Welcoming Neighbors, Community Partnerships, and Inter-faith Dialogue

*By Rev. Natalie Chamberlain, United Christian Church /
Disciples of Christ*

The United Christian Church is a member of the Disciples of Christ. The United congregation in Fresno is the result of the merger of the Shields Avenue Christian Church, which was established in 1953, and the First Christian Church. The church has fluctuated in size over the years and is currently growing. We are becoming a congregation whose

face matches the face of the community in which we reside. Like most Christians, Disciples affirm:

- Jesus Christ is the son of the Living God, and offers saving grace to all.
- All persons are God's children.

There are several key beliefs and practices usually associated with Disciples. These include: open communion, baptism by immersion, and the

"We are becoming a congregation whose face matches the face of the community in which we reside. ... With this understanding, we find it fairly easy to enter into dialogue with other Christians and peoples of other faith perspectives."

There are two of these beliefs that especially characterize United Christian in our ministry within the community of Fresno.

• **Belief in the oneness of the church.** All Christians are called to be one in Christ and to seek opportunities for common witness and service.

• **Freedom of belief.** Disciples are called together around one essential of faith: belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Persons are free to follow their consciences guided by the Bible, the Holy Spirit, study and prayer, and are expected to extend

that freedom to others.

With this understanding, we find it fairly easy to enter into dialogue with other Christians and peoples of other faith perspectives. We actively participate in ecumenical activities and worship events that are in keeping with our goal of being God's hands and heart in the part of the community in which we find ourselves.

The community we call home is the Shields-West neighborhood, one of the many transitional neighborhoods in Fresno. We practice a fairly rare form of hospitality; we welcome whoever walks in our doors as the gifts from God that we believe they are. We focus our energies and resources on those ministries that make a difference in our world.

We currently have a mentoring program in our local elementary school; in partnership with the Police Activi-

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better community.



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