

# Western Maryland Area Health Education Center Fiscal Year 2005 Annual Report



*The mission of the Western Maryland Area Health Education Center (WMAHEC), a community-based organization, is to improve access to and promote quality in health care through educational partnerships with centers for higher education, community health professionals, and other vital supporters.*

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FY - 2005

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## *Boldly Facing the Survival Challenge*

The Western Maryland AHEC finishes Fiscal Year 2005 with strength and perseverance. Despite budget challenges on the national level, all of our core programs have continued and met much success. Our exceptional staff has worked diligently and creatively to keep the WMAHEC and its goals alive and well. This year marked the launch of a new summer camp for high school students interested in health careers called ECHO (Exploring Careers and Health Occupations). We have welcomed new employees Carolyn Myers, Joy Taylor, and Cindy Hartman and have bid farewell to Ed Bridges, Jonathan Martin, and Jo Ann Fletcher, who left the agency to follow new directions in their careers. Susan Stewart was promoted to Associate Director, and is leading the programs and their coordinators with a determined vision.

We want to acknowledge the solid support of the University of Maryland School of Medicine with Dr. Claudia Baquet and Ms. Meseret Bezuneh as Program Director and Deputy Director respectively. This great partnership creates the foundation that allows WMAHEC to serve the Western Maryland community.

We continue to expand our horizons with new grants; we received notification of grant award for the Quentin N. Burdick Program for Rural Interdisciplinary Training and a National Network of Libraries of Medicine training program. We have also been notified that the Maryland AHEC Program has received approval for the Model AHEC grant that includes Federal funding for WMAHEC.

On the national level, the President's budget recommended no funding for Title VII, which is all Health Professions funding including AHECs. Affected programs began a campaign with Congress to restore funds. Although AHEC did not achieve this restoration single handedly, and at this time, we are still unsure of the budget outcome, the NAO created a highly organized grassroots advocacy unit that was envied by other health professions groups. Program and Center Directors from across the country traveled to the doorsteps of Congress to speak with their respective representatives. The Senate has restored funds but this action still needs to be approved in the final Congressional Budget. This advocacy fight has galvanized the NAO as never before and really put AHECs before our Congressional leaders.

We look forward to FY06 opportunities and stand ready to meet new challenges in collaborating to meet the needs within the communities we serve.

*Henrietta Lease*  
Chair, Board of Directors

*Kery C. Hummel*  
Executive Director

# Information

## Learning Resource Center

In December, the Learning Resource Center completed *Western Maryland InfoHealth II*, a subcontract awarded from the National Network of Libraries of

Medicine/Southeastern Atlantic region. The goals of the project were to ensure that health information seekers in our region are connected to the resources they need

to make informed health care decisions. The staff provided hands-on training sessions on accessing reliable online health information for 184 participants in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties. In addition, the staff enhanced the ease of searching the online *Western Maryland InfoHealth* database by adding indexing terms.

A highlight for project staff was presenting the coalition-building and planning process involved in *Western Maryland InfoHealth* at the National AHEC Organization Conference in Baltimore in August 2004. In addition, Learning Resource Center staff continued to provide contractual services to Garrett County Memorial Hospital, Somerset Hospital Center for Health, and the Western Maryland Health System. Staff also supported other WMAHEC projects and area health professionals—providing training, medical literature searches, document delivery, and maintaining the journal and monograph collection in the Learning Resource Center.



# Development & Advocacy

## Maryland Special Populations Cancer Network

Through grant funding from the University of Maryland Office of Research and Development, WMAHEC is Western Maryland's partner in the Maryland Special Populations Cancer Network. The Network's goal is to create an awareness of cancer prevention and treatment; to encourage cancer screening; and to boost participation in cancer clinical trials. In partnership with health departments and hospitals in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties; National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Services; University of Maryland's Statewide Health Network; and other organizations, WMAHEC provides educational outreach to health professionals and community members. The target populations are the medically underserved, elderly, and minorities. During FY05, the program conducted continuing education courses on cancer clinical trials for 91 health professionals; offered Internet search technique trainings to 23 community members; provided community cancer

awareness presentations to 508 children and 50 leaders at summer camps and organized the Mini Med School program for 175 registrants.

## Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)

The Allegany County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), as a program of the WMAHEC, is midway through its third year of funding through the Office of the Surgeon General. It has achieved several major goals this year: liability coverage for MRC volunteers via the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH); partnering with the Allegany County Health Department to assess how to best serve Special Needs Populations (SNPs) during an event; providing support for a 20 member Community Crisis Response Team (CCRT); participating on the Citizen Corps Council; and working with local partners on local issues and sustainability. As part of MRC

sustainability, WMAHEC submitted for and received a Special Volunteer Program grant through the Corporation for National and Community Service with the goal of growing the ranks of Homeland Security volunteers aged 55 and older. The Maryland MRC units met quarterly in FY05 with WMAHEC hosting the April meeting. This group is addressing issues of local and state protocol and deployment for MRC units and strives to weave local input into state planning and state input into local planning. The Allegany County MRC Coordinator continues to sit on the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) Health Care Professional Volunteer Committee established to organize and implement a statewide volunteer system. While the Allegany County MRC focus is on local recruitment and training, DHMH focuses on statewide volunteer network development.

## Allegany County Family Violence Council

The WMAHEC continues to house and fully support the Allegany County Family Violence Council with funding from the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention's S\*T\*O\*P\* Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program. This year was a year of introspection and infrastructure strengthening for the Council. An internal survey gave the Council a clear picture of its strengths and created a roadmap for future efforts. The Council's monthly meetings continue to provide members with a unique and critical opportunity to exchange information and solve problems regarding domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking in Allegany County. The Council enjoyed tremendous success with the second year of its' Enhancing Rural Resources project which has provided training, equipment, and support for the Forensic Nurse Examiners who perform evidence collection at Western Maryland Health System. This project also provided training for the Council members and has supported two Assistant State's Attorneys to attend conferences on pertinent issues.

## Covering Kids & Families

Keeping Maryland children and families healthy is the ultimate goal of the Covering Kids & Families program (CKF), a state-wide initiative to simplify enrollment for health insurance and coordinate services for uninsured populations. Funded by the University of Maryland, Baltimore, WMAHEC collaborates with representatives from the Governor's Wellmobile, health departments, social services and hospitals, to provide outreach and education about Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP) and MCHP Premium. Promotional efforts included distributing informational brochures to 24,000 students at public schools and 300 flyers via the Western Maryland Food Bank, numerous radio announcements, as well as billboard displays

in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties. Additionally, a poster contest using the theme *Healthy Kids Create Healthy Futures* was open to selected schools throughout the state with the fourth grade winner being selected from Garrett County's Friendsville Elementary School. The artwork will be used during future CKF events and campaigns.

## MidAtlantic Public Health Training Center (MAPHTC)

WMAHEC, with leadership from the Washington County Health Department, Hagerstown Community College, and local partners in Western Maryland, was a sponsor of two regional continuing education programs, which reached 206 area health professionals, to address obesity in children. Nationally known dietician Ellyn Satter conducted both programs: *Preventing Child Overweight in School & Community* and *Feeding with Love and Good Sense* (a three day intensive workshop). WMAHEC support was made possible through a Public Health Training Contract from the MidAtlantic Public Health Training Center of the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University and a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration grant.

## Project Aware

Project Aware is helping senior volunteers strengthen homeland security in the Upper Potomac/Cumberland Valley. The program facilitates regional volunteer response in public health, public safety, and emergency response and disaster preparedness. It addresses identified needs that will strengthen the disaster response communications infrastructure to ensure activation and utilization of these volunteers. Funded through a two-year Corporation for National and Community Service Special Volunteer



Program grant, this 19 county WMAHEC program serves the predominantly rural and Appalachian area of Western Maryland and parts of nearby Pennsylvania and West Virginia. In FY05, six program field sites were established with project field coordinators. Field sites are located at Garrett County Area Agency on Aging, a program of Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc., Volunteer Center of Allegany County, Washington County Department of Emergency Services, Volunteer Frederick, Grant Memorial Hospital (Grant County, WV), and the Western Maryland Health System Parish Nurse Program. Project Aware field coordinators work directly with local partnerships including volunteer emergency services, non-profits, volunteer service and social organizations, businesses, local law enforcement, senior centers, and faith-based organizations to enlist and place volunteers.



# Recruitment and Retention

## Clinical Education

Ninety-seven health professions students representing nine disciplines from 14 universities, colleges, and programs completed 627 weeks of clinical experience in 101 rotations with preceptors in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties and nearby areas of Pennsylvania.

Thirteen new preceptors shared their time and expertise with students: Jerry Adams, MD; Maureen Conroy, DO; Allen Ditto, MD; Tom Hartsuch, MD; Virginia Heard, MSPT; Mashukur Khan, MD; Jason McElroy, MPT; Mark Nelson, MD; Heather Peirce, MD; Leslie Purdy, CNM; Wendy Rice, PharmD; Preeti Saxena, MD; and Frank Slabinski, PA-C. Area health professionals also mentored clinical education students during elective site visits.

A number of local health practitioners originally came to the area for a WMAHEC clinical rotation.

Recently, Gretchen Seibert, DDS, completed a clinical rotation with Diane Romaine, DMD and has returned to join the practice.

Jack Gladstein, MD, the course director for the AHEC rotation at the University of Maryland visited medical preceptors in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties to discuss the primary care rotation and how the School of Medicine can support preceptors in their teaching.



## Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP)

West Virginia University (WVU) and WMAHEC collaborate to provide the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) summer preliminary education, facilitating education and retention programs to prepare students for health professions schools. The primary goal of this project is to provide students with the knowledge, skills, support, and abilities to enter and graduate from post-secondary schools offering careers in allied health, medicine, dentistry and pharmacy then return to practice in the central Appalachian region. The preliminary education portion of the project is conducted simultaneously on the WVU and Frostburg State University campuses. Students spend six weeks in a residential academic program where basic

foundations in biology, writing, chemistry, and math are enhanced. Students gain knowledge and skills needed to transition from high school to college. Throughout the program students visit regional hospital and medical institutions, speak with practicing professionals, and participate in community events. Funding is provided through a grant received from the Bureau of Health Professions. Academic partners include Frostburg State University, Ruby Memorial Hospital, West Virginia University, University of Maryland, Baltimore, and University of Maryland Medical System. Allegany College of Maryland, Allied Health Department is a community partner for the project.

## 2005 Preceptors

Jerry Adams, MD  
Jacquelyn Bauer, CRNP  
Gerald Beachy, RPh  
Anthony Bollino, MD  
Brian Bonham, MD  
J. Nelson Brouillette, MD  
Vincent Cantone, MD  
K. Jill Ciccarelli, MD  
Maureen Conroy, DO  
James Crable, RPh  
Malinda Darber, PharmD  
Robert Dawson, MD, FAAP  
Amy DeMay, CTRS  
Allen Ditto, MD  
Charles Downs, PharmD  
Allison Evans-Wood, DO  
V. Raul Felipa, MD  
Kandy Fink, CRNP  
Gene Gall, DDiv  
Thomas Gilbert, DO  
Rosario Gonzaga, MD

Tom Hartsuch, MD  
R. Allen Haworth, MD  
Virginia Heard, MSPT  
George Hennawi, MD  
Debra Hurtt, MD  
Joseph Jurand, MD  
Margaret Kaiser, MD  
Audrey Kennedy, PT  
Kristin L. Koontz, PA-C  
Mashukur Khan, MD  
Shiv Khanna, MD  
Michael Levitas, MD  
Jason McElroy, MPT  
Earle McFerren, RPh  
Celestino Manchavez, MD  
Anita Meyers-Vagnoni, MD  
Mary E. Money, MD  
Doug Moore, PT  
Mark G. Nelson, MD  
Susan M. Nuber, MD  
Heather Peirce, MD

Leslie Purdy, CNM  
John Reed, MD  
Wendy Rice, PharmD  
Diane Romaine, DMD  
Preeti Saxena, MD  
Sanjay Saxena, MD  
Huma Shakil, MD  
Frank Slabinski, PA-C  
John Staggers, MPT  
Jerry Stewart, PD  
Randal A. Stroup, PA-C  
John Stuckey, MS, OTR/L  
Leon D. Weaver, MD  
Rodney A. Williams, MD  
Bryan Wodaski, MS,  
OTR/L, CHT  
Norman Wood, DO



## Geriatrics and Gerontology Education and Research

Fourteen Western Maryland organizations collaborated with WMAHEC on six projects supported by Geriatrics and Gerontology Education and Research (GGEAR) mini-grants. Three hundred ninety-two health care professionals and caregivers attended continuing education programs in Allegany and Washington Counties. Topics included *Ministering to Caregivers and Persons with Dementia*, *Emergency Evaluations Process*, *Clinical Management of Older Individuals with Mental Illness*, and *Pain Management and End of Life Care*. In addition, a train-the-trainer program, *You Don't Have to Be Wealthy to Eat Healthy*, provided training and resource materials to 15 participants, who have since completed outreach to 1,650 persons using the nutrition resource materials. In Garrett County, health information on *Fall Prevention*, *Senior Oral Health*, *Eating Well as We Age*, *Managing Stress at 50 Plus*, *Dangerous Driving and Seniors*, and *Tips for Taking Medications*, was included in newsletters distributed monthly, January to June, to over 100 senior center participants and to 95 providers of services to older adults.

GGEAR funding also supported information outreach at senior events in Allegany

and Washington counties, facilitating access to web-based training and resources, and maintenance and enhancement of WMAHEC on-line gerontology and geriatrics resources for consumers, health professionals, and students exploring careers. Aging awareness activities, team skills, and career opportunities in gerontology and geriatrics were shared with students in the ECHO and HCOP program.

The GGEAR program at the University of Maryland Baltimore facilitates training and research on aging and the clinical care of older adults. GGEAR funding supports WMAHEC geriatrics and gerontology activities in Western Maryland.

### Geriatric Assessment Interdisciplinary Team (GAIT)

GAIT projects are two-day trainings designed to enhance health professions students' knowledge of geriatric interdisciplinary care, to promote opportunities for practice in rural settings, and to increase awareness of elder issues and careers in gerontology and geriatrics. Students learn interdisciplinary health care team skills and the care planning process at the host site. The students meet and assess clients at the site and discuss their team assessment

with host site staff. Geriatric care sites in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties hosted projects on *Dementia Care in Adult Medical Day Care*, *Geriatric Rehabilitation*, *Caring for People with Alzheimer's*, *Promoting Health and Wellness in Independent and Assisted Living*, and *Sub Acute Care in Rural Communities*.

Fifty-two health professions students in Counseling Psychology, Dentistry, Gerontology, Medicine, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Pharmacy, and Social Work participated in one of five GAIT projects. The students represented Frostburg State University, Salisbury University, Towson University, and the University of Maryland Baltimore Dental School, School of Medicine, School of Nursing and School of Pharmacy.

A University System of Maryland Redeployment Grant directed by the Geriatrics and Gerontology Education and Research (GGEAR) Program at the University of Maryland Baltimore provided the tenth year of funding for the projects that provide a unique educational opportunity for health professions students in Maryland, facilitate university contact with rural communities, and support the recruitment of health professionals to rural geriatric sites.

## University of Maryland School of Nursing Western Maryland Outreach

The University of Maryland School of Nursing continues its commitment to nurses in western Maryland by operating two off-campus sites in Cumberland and Hagerstown. Classes are offered at the Columbia Street center in Cumberland and at the new University System of Maryland center in Hagerstown. The WMAHEC serves as the "home" of the program, providing faculty office and classroom space including interactive video and computer access. Staff in the Learning Resource Center provide essential library services and the staff in the front office provide administrative support.

In the 2004-2005 program year, two students in Cumberland graduated from the RN to BSN program; eight additional students are on track for graduation in May 2006. Regularly scheduled recruitment activities are conducted in Cumberland and Hagerstown to ensure continued program growth and development. The feasibility of offering graduate study in Hagerstown is currently under study.

## Core Funding

**Maryland Statewide Medical Education  
& Training System**

### University of Maryland

**Donald E. Wilson, MD**  
Dean, University of Maryland  
School of Medicine

**Claudia R. Baquet, MD, MPH**  
Associate Dean for Policy and  
Planning, University of Maryland  
School of Medicine;  
Project Director, Maryland  
AHEC Program

**Malinda B. Orlin, Ph.D.**  
Vice President for Academic Affairs,  
University of Maryland & Dean,  
Graduate School

### Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

**S. Anthony McCann**  
Secretary, Maryland Department of  
Health and Mental Hygiene

## FYI

During Fiscal Year 2005, WMAHEC sponsored or co-sponsored **61** continuing education courses and trainings reaching **1,737** health professionals and **72** non health professionals.

Many thanks go to WMAHEC's preceptors, ten health professions caucuses, and partner organizations for a great year of dedication and service to the community. Preceptors and caucuses contributed more than **28,770** volunteer hours.



WMAHEC thanks its many partner organizations for a great year of service to the community. United in working toward quality healthcare in the rural region, WMAHEC looks forward to continued collaborations with these partners in future endeavors.