CSHConnection

Spring 2010

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American and Haitian Flags At Half-Mast

Haiti Crisis, A Letter to the Community from CEO Bill Walczak

"Those wrenching scenes of devastation remind us not only of our common humanity but also of our common responsibilities. This time of suffering can and must be a time of compassion."
-President Barack Obama

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An elderly woman believed it was the end of the world.

A family of seven lost everything: their home, their things, and family & friends.

Moving to a foreign country is hard enough. Moving because an earthquake destroyed your home is harder.

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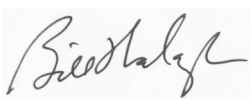
On January 12, 2010, a 7.0 earthquake struck Haiti, destroying most of Port-au-Prince and the surrounding areas. The repercussions of the tragedy were felt around the world, and very much in our Dorchester home to one of the largest Haitian communities in the world. In the hours and days following the quake, the many Haitian staff members and thousands of Haitian patients served by the Codman Square Health Center waited to hear word from family members and stuggled with the emotional aftermath.

Since the earthquake, we have seen a surge in Haitian patients, including several hundred arriving as survivors from Haiti.

The entire Codman community has responded admirably. CSHC staff in concert with our Codman Academy family raised several thousand dollars to support the efforts of Partners in Health in responding to the quake. We have held clinics for survivors on February 13th and 27th, and March 13th (with more planned on alternate Saturdays) from 10am-2pm. The special clinic includes primary care, counseling and access to social and legal services, information about entry to schools, temporary protected status, and food and clothing. We have seen great strength and resilience in our patients, our staff and our community. Thank you all for being there for our Haitian brothers and sisters.

Bill Walczak



Student-Led Junk-Food Free April

by Dawn Leaness, Codman Academy Director of Development

One of the amazing things about Codman Academy is that it is housed within the Codman Square Health Center, making it the only such school in a health center in the entire country. As a result of our close proximity, Codman Academy is better equipped to include health and wellness as an integral part of our curriculum. In general, the style of teaching at Codman Academy emphasizes social justice and empowers the students to become active participants in all aspects of learning -- and this is particularly effective for engaging students' in their own health and that of their community.

For example, our student-led Nutrition Action Club is organizing a Junk-Food Free Month this April to rid the school of all junk-food. Students and staff will not bring any junk-food into the school from outside. Activities will focus on reducing hypertension, a preventable condition greatly aggravated by high salt content in junk food. Nutrition teacher Dr. Susanna Bedell and Executive Director Meg Campbell have reached out to First Lady Michelle Obama, a champion in combating obesity, in hopes of having her join us via Skype for the kick-off of Junk-Free Food Month on April 1st. And the Health Center has also agreed to be part of this effort by changing the vending machines to offer only healthy items and having fresh fruit available for staff.

At Codman Academy, a focus on nutrition as part of our broader health curriculum is very important. For example, 11th grade chemistry teacher Carrie-Anne Sherwood designed her curriculum to involve hands-on investigations into the chemistry of cooking and the foods we eat. Her students learn concepts like the difference between fats that are okay for us to eat and fats that can lead to serious health complications as the result of double or triple bonds as opposed to only single bonds.

Stay tuned as Codman Academy leads the way toward a healthy educational system in Boston.

Black History Month Celebrations

by Maggie Casey and Olive Brown

February was Black History month, and Codman Square Health Center staff, patients and community celebrated with a youth-led speaker series and a festive event. The I AMM Film Crew of the DotWell Teen Center held a Black History Month talk with four speakers from diverse backgrounds. The 40-minute video of the event played on Boston Neighborhood Network TV thoughout the month of Febuary. CSHC staff held an celebration complete with singing, traditional dress, food, and guest speakers. Staff brought in flags, artifacts and books representing different cultures and historical events that have influenced black history. Thank you to everyone who participated in this wonderful annual event.

Teen Center Black History Talk

Black History Celebration

HealthWorks at Codman One of Boston's 'Best of the New'

by Lauren Broadhurst, Executive Director of the Healthworks Foundation

Healthworks at Codman, a partnership of HealthWorks for Women and the Codman Square Health Center, is still beaming since the Boston Globe declared it one of "Boston's Best" new hangouts! In addition to offering a quality, full-service fitness facility for the community, Healthworks at Codman prides itself on providing a fun, family-like, and safe environment for its members -- and apparently Boston is noticing. One member recently shared, "I like the fact that Healthworks at Codman is all women; it makes you feel comfortable. You can meet new people here and everybody smiles and it makes you feel good. Once I get here, I don't want to leave; it's addictive!"

Healthworks at Codman is looking forward to welcoming many new members in the coming months. Reliable childcare for infants and toddlers, in addition to fitness classes and karate for children, and a robust group exercise schedule for women and teens makes Healthworks at Codman one of Dorchester's most valuable (and fun!) health resources.

Social Capital Inc at DotWell: Community Builders and Volunteer Connectors

by Lauren Ames and Scot Huber, SCI Americorps members

Cornelia, DotWell volunteer, teaching her computer class

Connecting capable volunteers to community needs is the specialty of the DotWell volunteer program run through Social Capital Inc. (SCI) Dorchester. The program increases civic engagement and builds social capital throughout Codman Square and greater Dorchester community. One of our volunteers, Cornelia, is now instructing her second Computer Class at our adult education center, teaching skills ranging from a basic introduction to the computer, to using Microsoft Word and Excel. Her classes are offered at a minimal cost and have been well-attended during their 12- week duration.

Within the last 6 months, the DotWell volunteer program has succeeded in recruiting over 160 volunteers who collectively leveraged over 1400 hours of service at Codman Square Health Center, Dorchester House Multi-Service Center, and other community organizations. We anticipate recruiting over 250 volunteers by the end of August.

The SCI group completed work in November on an interactive, color-coded map of Dorchester's neighborhood associations on the SCI community website Mydorchester.org, making it easier for Dorchester residents to locate and become involved with their own local group. We updated the Mydorchester.org Neighborhood Guide with current information on schools, health resources, afterschool programs, youth groups, and other services in the Dorchester community. The SCI Dorchester @ DotWell team is also proud to announce the success of the Dorchester Business of the Month Program, recognizing Only One Restaurant, Blarney Stone Restaurant, and Stitch House for positive community-oriented practices.

(DotWell is a partnership of the Codman Square Health Center and the Dorchester House Multi-Service Center.)

DFSI Marathon Fundraiser

by Tom Powers

Dorchester FAMILY School Initiative (DFSI) at DotWell will be raising funds again this year with a marathon fundraiser. Kathy Gorman, DotWell's Diabetes Initiative Program Manager, David Mark, Codman Square Health Center's doctor in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics, and David Jesser, teacher at the Lee School are all running in the 114th Boston Marathon on April 19th. To help support our team, please click the "Donate Now" link on the DotWell website and select the runner you'd like to support under the "Program Designation" tab.
http://www.dotwell.org

Codman Square Health Center
H1N1 and Seasonal Flu Clinics

by Jan Smith

CSHC gave out more flu vaccines than ever before, totalling 4,668 seasonal and 3,182 H1N1 vaccines. We offered 3 Saturday Flu Clinics, then began offering vaccines as a walk-in service as an extension of urgent care. We also offered a Monday-Friday clinic from 4-8PM for the months of December, January, and February. As Chief Medical Officer Chip Severin explaines, "With the advent of H1N1 in addition to seasonal flu obtaining flu vaccines is more important than ever. We are proud of our community members who received vaccines this year and our staff who coordinated and provided the service."

15-Year Anniversary: School-Based Health Center

By Jane Tuitt

Codman Square Health Center's School-Based Health Clinic at the Dorchester Education Complex is celebrating its 15th anniversary this year! And we do have a lot to celebrate. In October, we held a very sucessful health fair for students. The fair included screenings for blood pressure, height, weight, dental, vision, and BMI/Nutrition, as well as free flu shots, hand sanitizer, healthy food, and a resource table. Over 200 students participated, 70 were vaccinated against the flu, and 100 students participated in dental screenings with our on-site dentists. 50% of those screened needed follow-up dental care, which students have been able to get on-site in the school-based clinic. Boston Public School food services offered nutrition education, UMass nursing students and Boston College Graduate nursing students supported the health screenings, and Trefler foundation paid for bottled water, apples and granola bars for students. On April 29, 2010 we will be hosting our 15-year anniversary and open house. Call 617-635-7862 for more information.