

## Dr. Mary McIntyre Continues Service in a New Capacity

From the time Dr. Mary A. Greene-McIntyre transferred to the department in January, as medical officer she has been dealing with a series of immediate, high visibility concerns such as *Serratia marcescens*, medical needs in tornado response and *E. coli* O157:H7. As Assistant State Health Officer for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. McIntyre takes on new responsibilities over the Bureau of Communicable Disease and the Bureau of Clinical Laboratories, bringing to the position a long background of service to others and a passion for improving the community's health.

For Dr. McIntyre, (whose nickname is Dr. Mac) a strong work ethic began from a very young age when she and her three sisters worked on their family farm in Oxford, N.C. Not only did they rise at dawn and work until dark doing farm chores, they also helped their aunts and uncles harvest vegetables at their farms nearby. Employed from the age of 14, she received a full scholarship to Winston-Salem State University where she was awarded a B.S. degree in biology magna cum laude. That was where she met her husband, Dr. Julian McIntyre. Both attended medical school at Meharry Medical College in Nashville, and she served a residency in internal medicine at Meharry Hubbard Hospital.

A National Health Service Corps assignment brought them to Montgomery, and for more than 20 years her husband has been an obstetrician/gynecologist with



**Mary McIntyre, M.D., M.P.H.**

Health Services, Inc. Both of them have become very involved in the community, and the family has made the capital their home.

In 1995 she was awarded an M.P.H. in Health Care Organization and Policy from the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Public Health. In 1996 she also received Board Certification in General Preventive Medicine and Public Health from the American Board of Preventive Medicine.

Dr. McIntyre's employment experience includes work as an emergency room physician in Waverly, Tenn.; primary medical physician at Health Services, Inc., in Montgomery; and medical director and primary care physician at Montgomery Primary Health Care Center and Autaugaville Family Health Center. In 1997 she was named

Associate Medical Director with the Alabama Medicaid Agency and then Medical Director, Clinical Standards and Quality. Her certification/licensure includes her latest management pursuit - a Black Belt in Health Care Quality Improvement. In April she received a Certificate in Six Sigma Green Belt - Healthcare from Villanova University.

For the past 14 years, Dr. McIntyre has been involved in public health programs and has served on many advisory committees. These include Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's National Advisory Committee, "State Action for Oral Health Access," which she chaired from 2002 to 2006; Coordinating Committee Disability Surveillance; Diabetes Advisory Council (now Alabama Diabetes Network); State Perinatal Advisory

**continued page 15**

# Conference Focuses on Improving Status of Women Overall

The Office of Women's Health hosted its 4th Annual Women's Health Update at the Bruno Conference Center in Birmingham on Aug. 5. The theme of this year's program was "Population Health Management: Caring for the Whole Woman."

Registered nurses, nurse practitioners, pharmacists and social workers gathered to hear experts discuss topics that would help them to improve the quality of health care provided to women. Dr. Cynthia T. Williams, a nursing leader and Vice President for Clinical Organizational Effectiveness at St. Vincent's Health System, delivered the keynote address titled "Creating a Culture of Wellness in Women's Health."

Participants also attended breakfast sessions on management of obesity, the use of antidepressants in women, medications used to treat metabolic syndrome, and vitamin D supplementation for women.

Drs. Cynthia G. Cortes and Debra P. Whisenant, Associate Professors at the Ida V. Moffett School of Nursing at Samford University, presented the closing session where participants were challenged to think about the status of women from a global perspective and to realize that women in Alabama face some of the very same social, economic and health issues.

The conference concluded with a call for participants to develop a personal

and professional plan of advocacy and assistance to promote the overall status of women in Alabama. Participants agreed that through the individual and collective actions of health providers, differences can be made in the lives of Alabama women.

Planning is already underway for the 5th Annual Women's Health Update that is scheduled for Aug. 3, 2012, in Mobile. More information will soon be available on the Office of Women's Health website: [www.adph.org/owh](http://www.adph.org/owh).

*By Jessica Hardy*



**Margie Findlay, Ph.D., R.N., CNE, Vice Chair of the Office of Women's Health Steering Committee, is pictured with Dr. Cyndi Cortes and Dr. Debra Whisenant.**



**Shown are Nan Priest, MSHA, Chair, Office of Women's Health Steering Committee, with Dr. Cynthia Williams.**

## Alabama Department of Public Health

### Mission

To serve the people of Alabama by assuring conditions in which they can be healthy.

### Value Statement

The purpose of the Alabama Department of Public Health is to provide caring, high quality and professional services for the improvement and protection of the public's health through disease prevention and the assurance of public health services to resident and transient populations of the state regardless of social circumstances or the ability to pay.

The Department of Public Health works closely with the community to preserve and protect the public's health and to provide caring quality services.

## Alabama's Health

Alabama's Health is an official publication of the Alabama Department of Public Health, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease. If you would like to receive the publication or wish to submit information for future articles, please telephone requests to (334) 206-5300. Articles may be reprinted provided credit is given to the Alabama Department of Public Health. The department's website is <http://www.adph.org>.

Donald E. Williamson, M.D..... State Health Officer  
 Jim McVay, Dr. P. A..... Director, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease  
 Arrol Sheehan, M.A..... Editor  
 Takenya S. Taylor, J.D..... Contributing Editor  
 Noelle Ahmann ..... Graphic Designer

# PRAMS Announces Breastfeeding Data for 2009

**P**RAMS, the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System, is a project funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in order to help understand why some babies are born healthy and others are not. Approximately, 1,100 Alabama women are randomly selected to receive a questionnaire, which asks new mothers questions about their behaviors and experiences around the time of their pregnancy. An important topic covered by the PRAMS questionnaire is breastfeeding. In 2009, in Alabama:

- 64.8 percent of mothers reported that they initiated breastfeeding.
- Characteristics of moms who are most likely to breastfeed include the following: older, white, higher educated, married moms whose delivery was not paid for by Medicaid, who had normal birth weight babies.

- Only 23.6 percent of mothers were still breastfeeding two to six months after delivery.
- 35.6 percent of mothers did not attempt to breastfeed their babies.
- The main reasons for not initiating breastfeeding include not liking breastfeeding, not wanting to breastfeed, or taking care of other children.
- The main reasons for not continuing to breastfeed include mother not producing enough milk, the milk not satisfying the baby, or the baby had difficulty latching on.

The Alabama WIC Program provides education and support to help breastfeeding mothers achieve their breastfeeding goals. Earlier this year, the Surgeon General released “The Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding” outlining specific steps to support mothers choosing to breastfeed and to identify

barriers to breastfeeding. WIC helps remove barriers for mothers returning to work or school by providing education, breastfeeding supplies and breastpumps. Peer support is another recommendation identified in the Surgeon General’s report that is a component of WIC. Peer counselors provide additional encouragement and support to breastfeeding mothers. The WIC Peer Counseling Program is active in 24 sites and expansion continues.

If you have questions about PRAMS contact Izza Afgan, M.P.H., PRAMS grant administrator/project coordinator, Center for Health Statistics, at (334) 206-2689.

If you have breastfeeding questions contact Michell Grainger, M.S.N., R.N.C., IBCLC, state lactation coordinator, Bureau of Family Health Services, at (334) 206-2921.

## Julia Sosa Receives Dr. Moseley Hispanic Advocate of the Year Award

**J**ulia Sosa, M.S., R.D., of the Bureau of Professional and Support Services was honored for her advocacy work in the community during the Eighth Annual Brazos Abiertos Community Festival April 10 in Tuscaloosa. She was presented the Dr. Moseley Hispanic Advocate of the Year Award.

This award is given by the Hispanic Service Providers Coalition to “someone who has demonstrated professional achievement, involvement with the Hispanic/Latino Community and community service.”

The community offered the following words to honor her: “Julia has been working on behalf of the Hispanic/Latino community for over 18 years. She has been an integral part and a founding member of the Hispanic Services Providers, HSP, since its inception in 1998. Julia works within the State Office of Minority Health of the Alabama Department of Public Health. While her main focus is on healthy eating and overall well-being, she also serves as an interpreter, and tireless advocate for all minority groups in Alabama.”

The festival hosted over 300 participants and was supported by 36 sponsors with one to three sponsors in attendance at each display.



**Julia Sosa**

## PHA III Honors Disease Intervention Specialists

A special day of recognition was set aside to honor the disease intervention specialists (DIS) in PHA III. This annual event took place July 20 at the Tuscaloosa County Health Department. DIS Day started as a potluck luncheon over 10 years ago among the STD staff. It expanded into a two-hour celebration honoring the DIS from Immunization, TB and STD.

The program consisted of a song by Janice Drew, clinic aide, who was accompanied by Cedric Cotton on the keyboard. This is the second year Ms. Drew was able to honor the group with a musical tribute, and it has been requested she return to sing.

Dr. Albert White, Area Health Officer, expressed words of gratitude to the DIS. He stated how much their dedication means to public health. Dr. Mary McIntyre, Assistant State Health Officer for Disease Control and Prevention, also sent accolades to the DIS. She acknowledged the important roles the DIS perform by intervening to prevent diseases.

The theme for this year's event was patriotic. The menu was a barbecue-style buffet. A banner was ordered which included each DIS picture and her name. A cake was also decorated with a photo of each honoree. Representatives were present from several different disciplines throughout the health department. The celebration ended with games and door prizes.



**Shown left to right, back row, Gladys Webb, Deborah Bivins, Lauren Lyons. Front row, Carolyn Turner, Stephanie Mixon, Kaye Sutton. Vurlie Dexter is not pictured.**

"This will be a CELEBRATION to remember," Shawn Powell, event coordinator, said. "We wanted to show our DIS how much we appreciate them for their dedication and hard work for Public Health Area III."

The planning committee for this event included Ms. Powell, Connie Lightsey, Pam Nix, CaSandra Foster, Emma Morrow, Cynthia Timmons and Shakina Wheeler.

## Dallas County Health Department Promotes Healthy Lifestyles by Becoming a Tobacco-free Campus Sept. 1

As a former tobacco user, Jackie Holliday knows how difficult it is to quit smoking and the importance of living a healthy lifestyle. Holliday is administrator of the Dallas County Health Department and takes his responsibility to promote healthy behaviors for everyone seriously. Even though the use of tobacco has declined in recent years, it remains the leading preventable cause of death in the United States.

That is among the reasons for the transition of the Dallas County Health Department from a smoke-free facility to a tobacco-free campus on Sept. 1. The tobacco-free campus policy prohibits the use of tobacco product anywhere on the Health Department property at all times, including grounds, buildings and vehicles. Cigarette receptacles were removed and parking lot signage installed reminding staff and visitors that the department's property is tobacco free.

"We want to create a tobacco-free environment," said Holliday. "Prevention and promoting healthy behaviors are fundamental to our public health mission. With that in mind, and with the support of Dr. Donald Williamson, State Health Officer, I decided to establish the county health department as a tobacco-free campus."

Administrators and health officials collaborated for more than a year to establish a timeline, survey the opinions of both employees and clients, identify free cessation resources, and develop a custom policy and notification materials to alert the community, clients and employees of the change.

"We surveyed staff and clients and received overwhelming support for the tobacco-free policy," said Niko Phillips,

**continued page 13**

# Fitness Facility Increases Access to Physical Activity in Dallas County

*The leaders of one of the largest employers in Dallas County worked with the AL Strategic Alliance for Health to establish an on-site fitness facility to improve employees' health and well-being. This article describes how the project came about.*

International Paper Co. is located in Dallas County and is the world's largest producer of paper, packaging and forest products. It is also one of the county's largest employers with over 700 employees. It is located approximately 12 to 15 miles outside of city limits and away from urban opportunities such as access to a fitness center. The ability to exercise before, during, or after work is a challenge for employees. International Paper has been addressing the health and wellness of its employees over the past few years, however, organization leadership wanted to pursue an organized approach to work site wellness that could be evaluated and would be sustainable.

In October, 2007, International Paper partnered with Vaughan Community Health Services to conduct a health fair and provide health screenings to assess employees' blood pressure, weight, blood glucose and cholesterol. Of the 228 employee screenings conducted, one-fourth had a blood glucose level classification of "Needs Work" and another 49 percent were classified as "Fair." Additionally, 35 percent had blood pressure levels classified as "Needs Work" and 14 percent had total cholesterol classifications of "Needs Work." Organization leadership realized they needed to do more to address the health of their employees, but they were unsure of how best to proceed with a strategic plan for organizing, implementing and evaluating progress.

Vaughan Community Health Services and Strategic Alliance for Health staff

built a community consortium in Dallas County in 2009. After a comprehensive assessment, the Community Health Assessment and Group Evaluation (CHANGE) assessment Tool, the Dallas County Strategic Alliance for Health Consortium identified work site wellness as a strategy priority. This tool gave members a way to assess and document policies, systems and environmental supports currently in place throughout Dallas County that impact chronic disease. International Paper consistently attends consortium meetings and was identified as a work site in need of technical assistance to continue a more organized effort in pursuing a healthier work site.

The AL Strategic Alliance for Health team identified wellness committees as the intervention to implement. Wellness committees can lead worksite wellness programming with maximum buy-in from all organizational levels of the worksite and share responsibility among committee members for program planning, implementation and evaluation. A work site wellness committee identifies policy changes needed related to healthy choices. The committee can conduct assessments of existing policies, systems and environmental supports; develop action plans; and implement changes that will create opportunities to be physically active, make healthy eating choices, and avoid or reduce tobacco use. Sustainability was planned for throughout the process of establishing the committee as well as during the identification of initiatives to implement. The Alabama Strategic Alliance for Health Work Site Wellness Toolkit was provided to the committee chairperson at the 2010 DIY Policy Institute as a resource to implement this intervention. The toolkit provides information regarding what a work site wellness program is, what a work site wellness committee is, how to

establish a wellness committee, sample action plans, and agendas to assist the wellness committee through the first year of implementation. Also included are assessment tools, model policies, suggested activities and educational opportunities, and point-of-decision prompts. Wellness committees can use these tools and resources to engage in interventions to promote healthy lifestyle choices.

As the committee conducted Assessments, it became clear that employees desired opportunities to increase physical activity. The committee concluded a fitness center was the best solution for them. The committee began conducting research regarding the best way to create an on-site fitness center. They sought technical assistance from the AL Strategic Alliance for Health senior health educators, who have significant experience with physical activity, work site wellness, and fitness facilities. They spoke with other stakeholders on the consortium who have implemented work site wellness programs, as well as sought support from organization leadership, who committed to allocate space and funding for the fitness center.

The renovation of the 1,300 square foot space allocated began in August 2010 and was completed in October 2010. It is accessible from a main hall and the men and women's locker rooms. The locker rooms have been renovated as well. Commercial grade fitness equipment such as treadmills, elliptical and selectorized weight equipment has been installed. A free weight area and stretching area with mats is provided. This area is available 24 hours per day to International Paper Riverdale Mill employees on their own time and who have signed a Waiver and Release of the facility. Cameras in the fitness center send feed to be

**continued page 9**

# Text4baby Helps Pregnant Women and New Mothers

**A**mber spends much of her free time texting her friends and family and always seems to have her cell phone in hand. Now that the 25-year-old is pregnant she enjoys receiving free text messages that remind her about steps she can follow to have a healthier baby. Her friend Jessica, a busy mother of three, also appreciates receiving a text message as she waits in the car pool line at school. The text reminds her that her 6-month-old son needs an immunization.

In a new service provided through a public-private partnership with mobile phone companies, tips about nutrition, immunization and prevention of birth defects are being sent directly by text messages to the cell phones of pregnant women and new mothers who request the free mobile information service.

Premature births often result in infant deaths and disabilities. Text4baby is a health education program which provides timely and expert advice at no charge. Studies have shown that text messaging is an effective way to reach young women.

Pregnant women and new moms who text "BABY" (or "BEBE" for Spanish) to 511411 will receive weekly text messages, timed to their due date or their baby's birth date through the baby's first year. The messages have been

developed by government and nonprofit health experts such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the March of Dimes and are supported by partners in the private sector who have waived fees for this important service.

"We are pleased to partner with the text4baby initiative to give pregnant women and new mothers critical information they need so they can take charge of their health and the health of their babies," said Dr. Donald Williamson, state health officer.

Infant mortality is an indicator used to describe the health status of communities and states. The United States has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the industrialized world. Each year in the U.S. more than 500,000 babies are born prematurely and an estimated 28,000 children die before their first birthday. A total of 513 infants died in Alabama in their first year of life in 2009.

The Alabama Department of Public Health is participating in the text4baby campaign, and aims to reach 60,000 pregnant women and new mothers throughout the state this year.

For more information about this service to promote maternal and child health, go to [www.text4baby.org](http://www.text4baby.org).

## Commendations

**I**f you would like to praise employees for their accomplishments, send letters of commendation to the State Health Officer or the employee's supervisor and a copy by e-mail to [arrol.sheehan@adph.state.al.us](mailto:arrol.sheehan@adph.state.al.us) for inclusion in this list. Four items are needed: the employee's name, work unit, name of the person making the commendation, and his or her city and state.

**Linda Bolding**  
Center for Health  
Statistics  
*from Jordan Dancerf  
Phoenix, Ariz.*

**Gwen Davis**  
Health Provider  
Standards  
*from Debra Robbins  
Montgomery, Ala.*

**Danny Doyle**  
**Laura Smith**  
Communications &  
Marketing  
*from Melanie Rightmyer,  
R.N., M.S.N.  
Montgomery, Ala.*

**Rachel Durden**  
Technical Services  
*from Linda Railey  
Eufaula, Ala.*

**Jonathan Edwards**  
**Cassandra Hawthorne**  
Cardiovascular Health  
Branch  
*from Annette A.  
Montgomery, Ala.*

**Casandra Henderson**  
Center for Health  
Statistics  
*from Hanna Adams  
Athens, Ala.*

**Sharon Jenkins**  
Immunization Division  
*from Bonnie-Jean  
Hudson, R.N.  
Jonesboro, Ga.*

**Jeff Meank**  
Health Provider  
Standards  
*from Sandra M. Pace  
Atlanta, Ga.*

**Veronica Moore-Whitfield**  
Center for Health  
Statistics  
*from Delia Smith  
West, Ph.D.  
Fayetteville, Ark.*

**Theresa Mulkey**  
*from Linda G. Byam  
Wilmer, Ala.  
from L. David and Linda  
S. T. Urvina  
Mulvane, Kan.*

**Melanie Rightmyer,  
R.N., M.S.N.**  
Health Promotion and  
Chronic Disease  
*from Cynthia Bisbee, Ph.D.  
Montgomery, Ala.*

**Reginald Strickland**  
Center for Health  
Statistics  
*from Kay Alibrandi  
Wilmington, N.C.*

# ALPHA Recognizes Outstanding Leaders in Public Health

Alabama Department of Public Health employees predominated as the Alabama Public Health Association recognized persons, groups and organizations from across the state who demonstrated exceptional merit during the past year in the field of public health. Awards Chairperson Viki Brant presented plaques to the recipients at the association's 55th Annual Meeting and Health Education Conference at the Renaissance Montgomery Hotel and Spa at the Convention Center May 13.

**Ross Allen Hudson**, social work director for Public Health Area 2, was named recipient of the Frederick S. Wolf Award, which recognizes an individual



**Ross Hudson**

who has been active in public health at the local level for more than 10 years. This person selflessly gives back to the community and is efficient, dedicated and professional in delivering public health services.

Nominators said, "This year's award winner hit the ground running when he began working in public health in 2000. He took a virtually nonexistent Social Work Case Management program and advanced it to a solid program."

His coworkers, area and state peers, and local staff wrote support letters using descriptive terms such as dedication, organized, understanding and problem solving with the ability to find and connect "niches" in program activities.

"He is a micro and macro thinker – with visions of not only how things need to be but how they can be in the future," supporters stated. Described as a true leader, he is not afraid to roll up his sleeves and "jump in" where he is needed. His reputation is of producing work that is well thought out and carefully planned. He is viewed as a critical player in helping build successful relationships with the communities and other partners. Coworkers acknowledge that Hudson has enriched their personal and work lives and feel fortunate for the opportunity to work with him.

The D. G. Gill Award is presented to an individual who makes exceptional contributions to benefit Alabama's public health. This year's honor was given to **William Charles Graves, Ed.D.**, of the Office of Primary Care and Rural Health. A 28-year veteran of public health, Graves serves as the manager and principal contact for Alabama's participation in the National Health Service Corps Program. This program provides incentives and facilitates placement of health care workers in the nation's neediest communities.

Through his leadership in this program Dr. Graves has helped locate hundreds of health care professionals to serve the underserved across the state. Dr.



**Charles Graves is shown with Viki Brant.**

Graves is responsible for ensuring each facility meets the rigid requirements set by the program. He works with hospitals, clinics and private providers who critically need staff to support their work with low income and uninsured residents.

Supporters said, "Having a servant's attitude was a motivator in Dr. Gill's career, and therefore important in this award. In the beginning years of his career, he encouraged many young people as a school teacher, and he still serves his church by picking up youngsters in the community on Sunday mornings. That spirit of servant-hood and encouragement has continued and has been seen as he encourages many students to pursue careers in the health care field today."

**Janis Pritchett** of the Bureau of Financial Services was named the 2011 recipient of the Virginia Kendrick Award. The Virginia Kendrick Award is presented to an individual who



**Janis Pritchett**

provides notable service to the people of Alabama while serving public health in a supportive role.

Ms. Pritchett has provided notable service in the complex world of finance

**continued page 8**

## ALPHA, continued from page 7

during her 25 years of service to the State of Alabama, including more than 16 years with the department. She is currently a grant accountant. She serves as a partner, along side of program managers for 29 different grant accounts, assisting those who depend on her for successful grant management.

One program manager said, "Janis is someone who gives her all to her job and wouldn't know how to do anything less." Others described her as "very patient and kind." She enjoys her time with her husband and two daughters, of whom she is very proud. She also enjoys serving her church with her beautiful voice, singing solos and ministering in the church choir.



**Teresa Fair and Viki Brant**

Wellness Nutritionist **Teresa Fair** of the Nutrition and Physical Activity Division was chosen as the recipient of the Guy M. Tate Award. She has had an impact on improving the public's health across the entire spectrum of life from working with children in WIC to providing nursing home consultation.

Supporters said, "She has a very realistic approach to wellness and as a dietitian is quick to add that a healthy lifestyle is much more than the food one eats. She looks at the big picture and tries to help individuals find what they want to change and how best to make those changes."

Embracing a culture of healthy choices as her natural way of life, Ms. Fair's letters of support continued as follows: "Whether Teresa is creating fun ways to

get employees up and moving or serving as a leader in the dietetic association, she always inspires people to do their best."

A co-worker wrote, "It is a pleasure to work with a person whose only desire is to make a difference in the lives of everyone she comes in contact with."

The Guy M. Tate Award is given to a public health employee, group or agency providing outstanding service or contribution. The recipient of this award is to have 10 years experience or less in public health with service promoting and protecting public health in Alabama which goes beyond the daily job assignment.

The Ira L. Myers Award for Excellence recognizes an individual, group or organization that, through excellence in work, has made a significant impact on some aspect of public health in Alabama. Nominees are not required to have a direct affiliation with or represent any specific discipline, group or organization. Rather, they should represent excellence in effort and significant achievement toward the promotion and protection of public health.

This year's recipient is **Thomas E. Moody, M.D.**, of Birmingham, who is the only person to have received both the Ira L. Myers Award for Excellence and the University of Alabama School of Medicine's Martha Myers Role Model of the Year Award.

Supporters stated that Dr. Moody's mission is to assure that every man in Alabama is provided an avenue to be screened for prostate cancer, and he goes the extra mile to do so. Dr. Moody views what he does as his "mission work" and he freely uses his abilities and knowledge to help others. Dr. Moody is described as an amazing man whose commitment and dedication to fight prostate cancer in Alabama is unsurpassed. One of his peers said, "Dr. Moody is a testament to the statement 'one man can make a difference,' and he serves as a role model for all of us."



**Dr. Moody and Viki Brant**

Dr. Moody is the recipient of numerous awards including the Mary Lou Wright Distinguished Leadership Award presented by U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions for his exceptional public service and dedication in the fight against prostate cancer. The Martha Myers Role Model of the Year award was presented to him in 2009 for his travels across the state raising awareness about prostate cancer.



**Connie Morrow**

The Anne M. Smith Public Health Nurse of the Year Award is presented to the nurse who exemplifies the mission of public health nursing in Alabama. **Connie Morrow**, who has been a public health nurse at the Talladega County Health Department for more than 20 years, is described as a "caring and compassionate nurse who truly believes her calling in this world is to serve and care for others."

Letters stated, "Connie uses her medical training to help those in the community who cannot help themselves.

**continued page 9**

**ALPHA, continued from page 8**

She genuinely loves her patients, and her love extends to the profession as well. Connie serves as a preceptor and mentor for nursing students and as a role model for the new nurses in the area. She is always ready to help and provides encouragement to her fellow nurses.”

A peer wrote, “Connie’s actions and attitudes have certainly influenced me in my nursing practice. She is the type of nurse I strive to be.”



**Sandra Renee Faust**

The recipient of the Ruth O. Harrell Scholarship to the Master of Science in Nursing Program at the University of South Alabama College of Nursing was **Sandra Renee Faust** and winner of the Ira L. Myers Scholarship to the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Public Health was **Sherri L. Davidson**, branch manager of the Analysis and Reporting Branch of the Epidemiology Division.

**Fitness, continued from page 5**

monitored in the security guard gate area, which is adjacent to the center, for safety. Other items installed are mirrors for monitoring exercise form and a water cooler. Additionally, the space is a tobacco-free space as chewing tobacco is popular among employees.

This intervention will be evaluated based on usage rates documented by employee scanning identification cards. Additionally, as health screens



**Sherri L. Davidson**

Inducted into the Class of 2011 of the ALPHA Hall of Fame were **Lem Burell** and **Michael Jones**.

Burell has been Public Health Area 6 Environmental Director since 1987. Letters of support stated, “Truly a man of many talents, his leadership in his community is demonstrated by the many volunteer organizations in which he is a member.” He is active in the Lakeview Baptist Church where he teaches a Sunday School class. He has been an active member of the Gideons International since 1985 and has held numerous positions of leadership throughout his years of membership. He served as ALPHA president in 2005-2006 and was newsletter editor for many years. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Alabama Clean Water Partnership.

Michael A. Jones was an employee of the department for more than 15 years and

are conducted, data will continue to be collected and monitored. Because of the large number of employees all over the world, the home office is not able to provide data about the health status of employees of a specific work location.

The on-site fitness center represents a policy and environmental change. International Paper adopted a policy stating its commitment to sustaining efforts to improve the health and well-being of their employees. Additionally,



**Lem Burell**

has been a staunch supporter of ALPHA. He now serves as the State Purchasing Director at the Alabama Department of Finance, yet he remains active in the association. “This continued involvement clearly demonstrates his dedication and commitment to public health and the association. He is known by fellow association members as one who worked hard to increase membership by his caring and attitude. Also, he is also known as ‘a man who gets things done.’”



**Michael A. Jones and his wife Lisa**

the company invested approximately \$125,000 in the fitness center. AL Strategic Alliance for Health was able to provide funding for informational posters on how to use the fitness equipment properly as well as items such as resist-a-balls and pairs of one to five pound dumbbells. The wellness committee’s future goals are to incorporate healthier vending machine choices and implement a more restrictive tobacco policy.

*By Leslie Knox*

## Kathy Vincent

Staff Assistant Kathy Vincent, L.C.S.W., is shown with State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson at her retirement reception at the Thompson Mansion June 29. Numerous colleagues, past and present, from throughout the state attended. Ms. Vincent's many responsibilities included oversight of Alabama's Children's Health Insurance Program, the Bureau of Home and Community Services, and the Bureau of Professional and Support Services. In addition to other service, Ms. Vincent served as Dr. Williamson's assistant for 18 years and she retired effective July 1.



## Ashvin Parikh

Ashvin K. Parikh, assistant area administrator for Public Health Area 7, retired effective Aug. 1 after 20 years of service. At a reception honoring him on July 27, fellow employees commissioned and presented him a painting of the four new county health department buildings constructed under his leadership. A proclamation from U.S. Rep. Terri Sewell was also read. State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson, left, presents a certificate to him.



## Retirees

### June

**Bonnie Blue**  
Program Integrity

**Gracie Davis**  
Sumter County  
Health Department

**Patricia Easley**  
Public Health Area XI

**Shirley Gant**  
Jackson County  
Health Department

**Judith Glenn**  
St. Clair County  
Health Department

**Willie Neal**  
Pike County  
Health Department

**Paula Pratt**  
Montgomery County  
Health Department

**Virginia Pruitt**  
Clinical Lab

**Eileen Rogers**  
Public Health Area X

### July

**Sara Bradley**  
STD

**Barbara Goodwin**  
DeKalb County  
Health Department

**Ruby Gordon**  
Dallas County  
Health Department

**Cynthia Jewell**  
Public Health Area X

**Janet Pope**  
TB

**Hugh Railey**  
Food, Milk & Lodging

**Colleen Turner**  
Autauga County  
Health Department

### August

**Linda Dubose**  
Covington County  
Health Department

**Randolph Johnson**  
Finance

**Patsy Rains**  
DeKalb County  
Health Department

**Mary Rudolph**  
Center for  
Health Statistics



**Virginia Johns** retired as deputy director of the Bureau of Communicable Disease after more than 18 years of service. Co-workers, family and friends joined her at her retirement reception June 24 in Montgomery.



**Connie Wood**, health services administrator, was honored Aug. 25 at the Cullman County Health Department Community Room for her 45 years of public health service.

## Online Service Celebrates a Year of Helping Tobacco Users Quit

**T**ori Howell never thought she could give up cigarettes.

She had quit several times before, but it never lasted long. When she heard a radio ad about a free service offering counseling and medication to help her quit, she was ready to try again.

Six months later, the 50-year-old Fairhope resident is glad she did. She's grateful for the help she received from [www.alabamaquitnow.com](http://www.alabamaquitnow.com), Alabama's online site to help those who want to quit tobacco use.

Since the service began one year ago, more than 1,600 Alabamians have registered for its free services, including master's level counseling, a personalized quit plan and four weeks of free nicotine replacement therapy patches for those who are enrolled in the program and are medically eligible.

Howell said she was thankful for the online help. "I tell everyone about it," she said. "Knowing that someone was checking on me helped," she said. "This was someone who didn't know me, but felt the need to know how I was doing."

In the past, Howell said she had "quit smoking for every reason but the right one." She finally quit for herself, because "I didn't want any

more stress in my life," she said. "It's the best thing I've done. I'm never going to smoke again."

The site is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Tobacco users can log in and begin the counseling process. Anyone can visit the site for information or register to become a member. Members can chat with other users who are quitting at the same time.

While anyone can visit the site, free counseling services and nicotine replacement therapy patches are available to Alabama residents only. [Alabamaquitnow.com](http://Alabamaquitnow.com) is funded through the department with a grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

ADPH also offers the Alabama Tobacco Quitline, a phone-based service that provides the same free program to users who prefer to talk to a counselor for help to quit. Callers may dial 1-800-QuitNow (1-800-784-8669) and sign up for phone services. Alabama's Quitline has been in operation since 2005 and is funded by ADPH and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Alabama has one of the highest smoking rates in the nation, said Jim McVay, director of the Bureau of Health

Promotion and Chronic Disease. More than one in five Alabama adults use tobacco, he said.

"By offering free Internet and telephone services, no one has to leave home or pay for medication to help them quit," he said. "Plus, you are twice as likely to quit for good if you have help."

Counselors are available at both services from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Messages left after hours will be returned the next business day. A Spanish-speaking counselor is available, and other languages are available through a translator program for the phone service.

Health care providers can use the referral form on the [Alabamaquitnow.com](http://Alabamaquitnow.com) site to refer their patients, or use the form found at [www.adph.org/tobacco](http://www.adph.org/tobacco) to refer patients to the telephone service.

For more information about [Alabamaquitnow.com](http://Alabamaquitnow.com) or the Alabama Tobacco Quitline, call Julie Hare at (334) 206-3830.

*By Julie Hare*

## Environmental Services Employees Answer Public Inquiries - Mold Problem

**QUESTION:** We have a bad mold problem in our church. No one seems too concerned about this and they won't call the Environmental Protection Agency. It's a bad problem for me because I have COPD. What should I do about this situation?

**ANSWER:** Mold is not regulated by the state or federal government; there are no standards for mold. You can contact your local or county building code enforcement or permit office and file a complaint report about moisture

problems. Mold problems are due to moisture, and building defects such as roof or plumbing leaks must be corrected to eliminate mold.

To make the people aware of the hazards of mold, I recommend you visit [www.epa.gov/iaq/mold](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/mold) and download fact sheets and distribute them to the church officials. Meanwhile, and in extreme cases of mold infestation, I also recommend you wear a mask to prevent breathing in mold spores whenever you attend or visit the church.

# Satellite Conferences Explore Factors That Play a Role in Health



**A satellite conference on May 18, “Woman to Woman: Addressing Social Determinants to Health,” explored how various social determinants affect women and their health. Participants learned about the services provided to women at county health departments in Alabama, and determinants that have an impact upon health. These include income, social convention, and access to resources for underserved women. Evidence-based programs and interventions that promote the health and wellness of women were discussed. Faculty shown, left to right, are Izza Afgan, Sherry George, Kerri Pruitt, Nan Priest and Elana Parker Merriweather.**



**“The Psychology of Men” satellite program faculty covered some of the medical issues men face and the influences that can prevent them from seeking treatment. Medical and mental health issues that have an impact upon men, reasons men don’t access health care services, and behavioral influences on men’s health care were discussed. Pictured at the June 18 satellite conference are panelists, left to right, Brent Hatcher, Elana Parker Merriweather, Rick Meriwether, Maury West and Drew Nelson.**

## Materials Available on Safe Use of Acetaminophen

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration launched a national public health campaign called “The Safe Use of Acetaminophen.” This campaign is designed to educate the public about a very common active ingredient, acetaminophen, the dangers if it is misused, and how to use it safely.

Acetaminophen is in more than 600 over-the-counter and prescription pain relievers and fever reducers, cold and flu, allergy, and sleep-aid medicines. Acetaminophen is safe and effective when used as directed. But if you take even a little more than directed, or use more than one medicine that contains acetaminophen, it can cause serious liver injury and may lead to death.

To help inform consumers about how to safely use acetaminophen, FDA has produced the following campaign materials:

- Posters
- Magazine print public service announcements
- Fact sheets
- Daily medicine log
- Brochures
- Point-of-sale information messaging
- Videos

- In-store broadcast announcements
- Radio announcements
- Internet banners
- Internet widgets
- FDA Consumer Update articles

The posters, fact sheets and brochures are available in print and can be ordered at no cost by writing to [dpapubs@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:dpapubs@fda.hhs.gov) or calling (301)796-3703. The other products can be downloaded and used as described. Please click this link to reach the campaign’s website:

<http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/BuyingUsingMedicineSafely/UnderstandingOver-the-CounterMedicines/SafeUseofOver-the-CounterPainRelieversandFeverReducers/ucm164977.htm>

Or, go the FDA’s Acetaminophen homepage, [www.fda.gov/acetaminophen](http://www.fda.gov/acetaminophen), to learn about recent FDA actions. The link called “Consumer Education: Using Acetaminophen and Nonsteroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs Safely” will take you to the education campaign page.

If you have any questions or comments, please send a note to [dpapubs@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:dpapubs@fda.hhs.gov), or call (301)796-3703.

# APhA Foundation Announces Creation of Charlie Thomas Scholarship

Alabama's first and only state Pharmacy Division director has been honored with the establishment of the Charlie Thomas Scholarship by Phi Lambda Sigma, the national Pharmacy Leadership Society.

The scholarship honors Charles C. Thomas, RPh, FAPhA, for his work in and advocacy for the pharmacy profession and his founding of Phi Lambda Sigma while he was a student at Auburn University. Today the society has continued Thomas' vision of developing future leaders by expanding its reach to chapters in 98 colleges and schools of pharmacy.

As director of the Pharmacy Division, Thomas' duties include supervising the Controlled Substances Database in Alabama. In addition, he actively supports and engages in student development by the rotations through ADPH that he coordinates and hosts for intern pharmacists from schools of pharmacy as well as his active participation in pharmacy programs that foster student development.

"The future of health care rests with the students that we mentor today," Thomas said. "By establishing systems for current students to excel in leadership, we are ensuring that we will have competent, motivated health care professionals for the future."

Prior to working for the Alabama Department of Public Health, he practiced in community pharmacy for more than 35 years and was the owner of a community pharmacy in Huntsville.

## **Tobacco, continued from page 4**

tobacco prevention and control coordinator. "More than 80 percent of the staff and nearly 70 percent of the clients were in support of the tobacco-free initiative."

Exposure to tobacco smoke – even occasional smoking or secondhand smoke – causes immediate damage to your body that can lead to serious illness, according to U.S. Surgeon General Regina M. Benjamin.

Having a tobacco-free campus protects staff and clients from the dangers of secondhand smoke and encourages others to become tobacco free. "I encourage other worksites to carefully evaluate the advantages of establishing a tobacco-free policy," said Holliday. "The goal is to support cessation and the subsequent improved health effects that reduce absenteeism and promote increase in production."

He is a past president of the Alabama Pharmacy Association, Alabama State Board of Pharmacy and Auburn University School of Pharmacy Alumni Association. He is an active member of APhA, having served as Chair of the APhA-APPM Committee, APhA-PAC and on many advisory committees. He received the Phi Lambda Sigma Founder's Award, NARD Pharmacy Leadership Award, MSD Pharmacy Leadership Award, Alabama Commission on Pharmacy Distinguished Service Award and Birmingham Retail Druggists Service Award. Thomas is an APhA Fellow and recipient of the APhA-ASP Linwood F. Tice Friend of the Academy of Student Pharmacists.



**Charlie Thomas**

The scholarship will be awarded to a student pharmacist at the 2012 APhA Annual Meeting and Convention in New Orleans. Recipients will be selected for their service and leadership within their community, student groups and APhA-ASP chapter, as well as their commitment to enhance the overall pharmacy profession.

The APhA Foundation is affiliated with the American Pharmacists Association, the national professional society of pharmacists in the U.S. The APhA Foundation, a nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C., works to design solutions to medication use problems in America. The APhA Foundation's mission is to optimize the role of pharmacists in improving people's health.

Holliday added that other county health departments in Public Health Area 7 will soon make this same transition. "Health department offices in Choctaw, Hale, Lowndes, Marengo, Perry, Sumter and Wilcox counties will become tobacco-free campuses effective Dec. 1," he said.

Materials promoting the state's free resources to help quit tobacco use are available in public waiting areas at the health department. Both the Alabama Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-Quit-Now and the online service, [www.alabamquitnow.com](http://www.alabamquitnow.com), offer master's level counselors, an individualized quit plan and four weeks of free nicotine therapy replacement patches to users enrolled in counseling and who are medically eligible.

For more information, contact Niko Phillips, tobacco prevention area coordinator, (334) 877-2876.

# Parents Urged To Keep Safety in Mind This Fall

The 2011-2012 school year is here. Parents and students alike are excited about moving on to new grade levels and schools, and new teachers, classrooms and friends. With these great new adventures come concerns about the safety of our youth.

Three areas of increasing concern are traffic injuries, sports injuries and falls. According to recent reports by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, every hour 150 children between birth and age 19 are treated in emergency departments for injuries sustained in motor vehicle crashes. More than half of the 7 million sports and recreation-related injuries that occur each year are sustained by youth between ages 5 and 24. Falls are the leading cause of non-fatal injuries for all children ages 0 to 19.

The Alabama Department of Public Health asks parents to take these suggested precautions to ensure a safe school year.

## Car Passenger Safety

- All car occupants should be safely secured in a seatbelt or with a child safety seat.
- All children ages 12 and under should be seated in the back seat of vehicles.

- Be sure to follow all requirements of Alabama's Graduated Driver License (GDL) program.

## School Bus Safety

- While waiting for the bus, children should take five giant steps back from the curb until the bus has stopped completely.
- Remind children to stay seated at all times and keep head, arms and hands inside the bus.
- Be careful that clothing, book bags and key rings don't get caught in the handrails or doors.
- When getting off the bus, children should walk to the closest sidewalk or side of the road and take five giant steps away from the bus.
- If something is dropped near the bus, the bus driver should be alerted so that the child can be seen when picking up the dropped item.

## Preventing Football-related Injuries

- Enroll children in organized teams through schools, community clubs and recreation areas that are properly maintained and committed to injury prevention.
- Ensure child athletes are hydrated with water or sports drinks and appropriately dressed to prevent heat-related injuries or illness.

- Make sure football players understand the rules related to injury prevention and learn to block and tackle without using the head.
- If a player is injured, get medical guidance before returning to practice or play.

## Preventing Injuries in All Sports

- Children should wear protective gear when playing ALL sports. Gear should include mouth and wrist guards, knee and elbow pads, and a helmet when skating or biking.
- Sports protective equipment should be correctly maintained and in good condition.

## Falls

- Check to make sure that the playground equipment your child uses is properly designed and maintained and that there is a safe, soft landing surface below.
- Use home safety devices, such as guards on windows, stair gates and guard rails. Children should wear bike helmets any time they are on a bicycle.

For additional injury prevention information visit: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and [www.adph.org/injuryprevention](http://www.adph.org/injuryprevention)

*By Samille Jackson*

# Volunteer Symposium Draws Interesting Speakers

The 2011 Volunteer Symposium theme was "Responders and Disaster Affected Individuals: Bridging Gaps of Understanding and Misunderstanding." Mildred Muhammad, Executive Director of After the Trauma, Inc., was one of the excellent speakers at the symposium on June 16 in Montgomery. Ms. Muhammad shared her chilling domestic violence survival story with participants; her former husband and abuser led a murderous rampage that killed 11 people and injured four others in a plan to ultimately murder her. Other renowned speakers included Enterprise High School Principal Rick Rainer, Deborah "Debi" Hall of the National Transportation Safety Board, Robin L. Riggins of the Baldwin County Mental Health Center, and young survivors of the Enterprise High School Tornado and Hurricane Katrina.



**Mildred Muhammad**

## **Dr. McIntyre, continued from page 1**

Committee; Oral Health Coalition of Alabama; National Governor's Association State Oral Health Policy Team (now known as Alabama Oral Health Strategic Team); Governor's Black Belt Action Commission, Health Committee; National Quality Assurance Foundation's Child Health Advisory Committee; Multi-State Collaboration for Transformation; Alabama Wellness Coalition; Together for Quality (TFQ) Stakeholder Council; Together for Quality Clinical Workgroup; Cardiovascular Health Advisory Council; Alabama Asthma Coalition; Stroke Systems Operations Group; Alabama Healthcare Improvement and Quality Alliance; and Alabama AAPD Head Start Dental Home Initiative State Leadership Team. She has also made numerous presentations and has served on expert panels.

Dr. Tom Miller, Deputy Director for Medical Affairs, said he was delighted to have a physician of Dr. McIntyre's caliber join our agency. He has known Dr. McIntyre since the early 1990s and has worked with her on many joint efforts and collaborations throughout the years. He said, "You will have to look hard to find a physician with Dr. Mac's work ethic and commitment to bettering the lives of others."

In her time in Montgomery, she became familiar with the department, many staff members and public health programs. Reflecting on her career and life, she said, "I have been blessed over the years." At each stage of her life Dr. McIntyre has worked on a five-year plan that now has brought her to the Alabama Department of Public Health.

Dr. McIntyre added, "I think I fit in here because I've been involved in women's health initiatives and volunteered with the Office of Women's Health. I am on a planning committee with the Sisterbration organization where the focus is on HIV and AIDS in women of color. I have also served on a health disparities task force.

### **Looking Beyond Ourselves**

Spending a childhood in a home that included extended family, Dr. McIntyre has followed the credo of her family to "look beyond ourselves to others," and she follows the golden rule. "I try to treat people the way I want them to treat my family members and me, given the same circumstances."

When the McIntyres were in medical school and during their residencies, a relative whom they lovingly called

"Big Mama," moved from Nashville, Tenn., to help care for their children. This relationship continued, and Big Mama lived in their home in her declining years and they cared for her until her death a few years ago. Now Dr. McIntyre's mother who has Alzheimer's disease and needs 24-hour care lives with the family, with the assistance of a sitter who comes in Monday through Friday in the daytime hours. The McIntyres have continued the family tradition with four generations under one roof.

Dr. McIntyre has successfully juggled her time among family, work and community service activities such as teaching health literacy at her church. She is very knowledgeable and supportive of Living Well Alabama and believes in bringing educational pieces alive.

### **Emerging Issues**

In a world of change, the newly appointed assistant state health officer strives to keep up to date on issues on the horizon by participating in conference calls and other means. "Everybody's trying to see how public health fits into health care reform and what our role will be," she said. "Another question mark is health exchanges," Dr. McIntyre said. "We anticipate 500,000 people being insured by Alabama Medicaid who are now uninsured. The majority are low-income adults who have been ineligible for Medicaid. In addition, others will be eligible for insurance through health exchanges. We want to partner and collaborate with the provider community to make sure no patient gets left behind. In public health we provide the critical public health functions that allow providers to perform other services."

For example, because of federal funding cutbacks some changes are being made out of necessity such as no longer providing tuberculosis screening tests to low-risk individuals such as teachers and students.

"Now the focus is on people in the high-risk categories, and we do contact investigations for the people we need to test and treat," she said. "We need to educate and work with providers and adjust to provide needed services."

Challenges and opportunities are ahead in health care reform as well as with laboratory and communicable disease issues. With Dr. McIntyre's energy and enthusiastic desire to help others, public health in Alabama has a powerful proponent.



# Calendar of Events



## September 14

Mental Health Issues in Underserved Youth and the Aging Population.

For more information contact Elana Parker Merriweather, (334) 206-7980.



## September 27

Infection Control Update for Home Health Aides and Attendants, 2-4 p.m.

For more information contact Becky Leavins, (334) 393-5528.



## September 28

HIV in the Rural South, 10 a.m.-noon.

For more information contact Elana Parker Merriweather, (334) 206-7980.



## October 6

ADPH Statewide Staff Meeting, 3-4 p.m.

For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.



## October 20

Treatment of Resistant Hypertension in the African American Population, 9-10 a.m.

For more information contact Ramona Hawkins, (205) 221-9775.



## October 26

April's Tornado Fury: Road to Recovery, (Part 1 of 2)

For more information contact Elana Parker Merriweather, (334) 206-7980.



## October 27

The History of Public Health Informatics: Where Do We Go From Here?, Part 1 of 2, noon-1:30 p.m.

For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618



## November 1

April's Tornado Fury: The Social Impact on Personal Care and Health Access, Part 2 of 2, 10-11:30 a.m.

For more information contact Elana Parker Merriweather, (334) 206-7980.



## November 8

UAB Training Center Program, noon-1:30 p.m.

For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.



## November 9

Infection Control Update for ADPH Nurses, 8-9 a.m.

For more information contact Thresa Dix, (334) 206-3377.



## November 9

Clinical Care Guidelines for Caring for Patients with Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease in the Ambulatory Setting, 2-4 p.m.

For more information contact Debra Griffin, (334) 206-2066.



## November 15

HIV and the Migrant Community, 2-4 p.m.

For more information contact Elana Parker Merriweather, (334) 206-7980.



## November 16

Health and Social Disparities in the American Indian Populations, 2-3:30 p.m.

For more information contact Elana Parker Merriweather, (334) 206-7980.



## November 18

ADPH Nurse Practitioner Update, 9-11 a.m.

For more information contact Ramona Hawkins, (205) 221-9775.