

Public health at NMSU movin' on up

Program making strides since January



Bob Nosbisch
Getting the Word Out

When I was younger, I liked to watch "The Jeffersons" for many reasons, one of them being George Jefferson's intransigence in his dealings with Archie Bunker. Another reason why I liked the show was because of its catchy theme song. As you may recall, the memorable words, "Well, we're movin' on up," kicked off the song.

Public health at New Mexico State University is moving on up, too. Even though National Public Health Week is April 7-13, the faculty and students in NMSU's Department of Health Science have been moving on up since the new year began.

Recently hired academic head of the department Mark Kittleson will receive the national HEDIR (Health Education Directory) Technology Award at the American Association of Health Education's annual meeting in San Diego later this month. The award recognizes outstanding leadership in the use of technology in health education. AAHE President Tom Davis also will bestow a presidential citation upon Kittleson for his leadership in the profession.

"Mark is a member of a group that I think of as the 'Never Say No Club,'" said Davis, a professor of health promotion at the University of Northern Iowa. "He has never been too busy to take on an assignment or help with a question or problem, no matter how involved the task or how small the recognition. Mark is one of the heroes of our profession."

Another public health faculty member who is being recognized is Dr. Michael Young, the college's associate dean for research. Young recently was given a prestigious appointment as Chair of the Board of Associate Editors of the American Journal of Health Education.

Dr. Rebecca Palacios recently visited the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle to help identify a potential research partnership. As a result of that visit, she will work with Dr. Jonathan Bricker of the Center to develop a grant study to examine the effectiveness of two interventions for obesity in Hispanics. Cindy Kratzke is working with

Rev. Dr. Margaret Short of Memorial Medical Center to write about their health communication project at the hospital. They recently presented their research at a rural health conference in Tucson. Kratzke also co-facilitated a cross-cultural communications workshop with Dr. Monica Torres of the NMSU English Department in February.

The ties with Arizona continue with Dr. Sue Forster-Cox's recent appointment to the Southwest Public Health Leadership Institute/Leaders across the Border, hosted by the University of Arizona. Dr. Forster-Cox also

worked with campus officials in celebrating the 50th anniversary of Peace Corps and the two NMSU Peace Corps programs: USA/Fellows and the Masters International programs.

Graduate students in the Master of Public Health degree program also are on the move. A presentation, "Barriers to Health Communication: Readability of Chronic Disease Information on Pan American Health Organization U.S.-Mexico Border Office Web Site" has been accepted for the Society for Public Health Education's (SOPHE) mid-year conference in early May in Albuquerque. Kratzke supervised graduate students Elva Palmer and Andrew Vernon on this project.

Kratzke also worked with graduate students Aisha Kudura and Savannah Pierson on their abstract, "Diabetes and Diet: Evaluation of Online Health Materials for Older Adults and Implications for Health Education." This abstract has been accepted for the mid-year SOPHE conference. Kudura also has accepted a summer research internship with the National Institutes of Health-National Cancer Institute.

These are just a few examples of the work of the professionals in the NMSU Department of Health Science as they continue to educate people about disease prevention and health promotions. Kittleson is fond of saying, "We ARE public health," and there is no doubt that public health at NMSU is moving on up, thanks to these dedicated men and women and others who devote their lives to this growing profession.

Bob Nosbisch is a senior program specialist in the NMSU College of Health and Social Services.

“ He has never been too busy ... ”

TOM DAVIS,
AAHE president

Health Briefs

Gospel concert benefits C4CR

The Young at Heart Gospel Choir will perform a fundraising concert at 6 p.m. Sunday, On March 27, at the New Mexico State University Atkinson Music Recital Hall. This group of singers has performed across the United States.

Tickets are \$10 each, and all proceeds benefit Cowboys for Cancer Research. C4CR supports on-going collaborative cancer research being done at NMSU and the University of New Mexico Cancer Center.

For more information, contact Bernadean Rudean at 640-1425 or bernadeanr@msn.com, or contact Geraldine Calhoun at 642-5696 or gwcalhoun@msn.com.

MMC Cancer Center welcomes new doctor



FRANCIS

Memorial Medical Center is pleased to announce that Dr. Robert Francis joined the MMC Cancer Center Team as a permanent physician earlier this year.

Francis went to medical school in Philadelphia, completed his residency in New York City and trained in a hematology and oncology fellowship in Los Angeles. Francis is board-certified in medical oncology and hematology. He has spent the last six years as a locum tenens physician, a doctor who travels to different practices providing temporary coverage.

In 2009, Francis spent some time at the MMC Cancer Center providing coverage. When he decided to settle into a permanent position, he remembered the many positives that Las Cruces had to offer.

"Las Cruces is a great size city," he said, "big enough to get the support you need, but small enough to allow you to still get a personal touch."

Francis was familiar with the hospital after his stay in 2009 and said MMC was a very easy environment to work in.

"The MMC Cancer Center has had stable personnel," he said. "I'm seeing the same faces now as I did last time I was here, and a strong and stable team results in better care for patients."

The MMC Cancer Center is fully staffed with two full-time physicians, an oncology nurse practitioner, specially trained chemotherapy nurses, oncology pharmacists and a certified cancer registrar.

Red Cross seeking local heroes

The Southwestern New Mexico chapter of the American Red Cross is seeking nominations for local heroes that will be recognized at the Spirit of the Red Cross banquet Friday, May 20, at the New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum.

Local heroes are members of the community who go above and beyond the call of duty to exhibit a true act of selflessness. Their heroic acts

embody the principles and ideals of the American Red Cross humanitarian mission to provide relief to victims of disaster and help people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. Local heroes selected include individuals who have assisted others during emergency situations, as well as those who live their everyday lives as heroes by helping others in need. These brave individuals will be nominated by the public and later selected by a panel of community leaders.

Community members can nominate a friend, family neighbor, coworker, firefighter, student, member of the armed force or police officer. Heroes must either live or work in the service area, which includes Catron, Grant Luna, Hidalgo, Sierra, Doña Ana and Otero counties.

To nominate a local hero, visit www.spiritoftheredcross.com.

NMSU Spring Wellness Fair on March 13

A Spring Wellness Fair will take place to benefit New Mexico State University students and the local community from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, March 13, at Preciado Park, next to O'Donnell Hall.

The goal of the Spring Wellness Fair is to provide the community with useful information and resources about staying healthy. On-campus programs, local businesses and nonprofit groups with a health-related emphasis are invited to participate and give out information on their programs.

The event will be family-friendly, with performances on stage by various wellness-related groups. There will also be a joust and a bungee run for children and adults.

For more information, contact Lori Haussamen at 646-7338.

National Nutrition Month comes to Las Cruces

National Nutrition Month officially came to Las Cruces via proclamation from Mayor Ken Miyagishima during the City Council meeting Monday, March 7. New Mexico State University's Human Nutrition and Food Science Association (HNFSA) will participate in the ceremony and also hold a food drive to benefit people in need.

The food drive will continue throughout March and the mayor and HNFSA encourage those who attend the mayor's district meetings to bring nonperishable food donations, including canned goods, pasta, ready-to-eat cereals, rice and beans. The donations will go to Casa de Peregrinos' emergency food program.

"National Nutrition Month is a wonderful way to bring public awareness about good nutrition and is also an opportunity to reach out to those in our community who need help achieving good nutrition," said Wanda Eastman, professor of family and consumer sciences at NMSU and faculty advisor to HNFSA. "When we consider all the problems with pediatric obesity and the increase in diabetes and other chronic diseases, one of the ways we can prevent and control them is with good old fashioned good nutrition."

HNFSA will place bins around the

NMSU campus at Gerald Thomas Hall and Corbett Center to collect donations. Members of the community can bring food donations to the mayor's district council meetings that will take place on March 15 and 29 in different locations around Las Cruces.

County hosts blood drive

Doña Ana County employees and the general public will have the opportunity to give blood from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Friday, March 18, in the rotunda of the Doña Ana County Government Center at 845 N. Motel Blvd. The blood drive is coordinated by Janine Divyak. To schedule a time to donate, call 525-6130.

Bright Star scholarship deadline nearing

Dr. Brian Gilbert of Bright Star Dental will again grant the Bright Star Dental Healthcare Scholarship to five Las Cruces graduating seniors.

The scholarship provides five \$1,000 one-time awards to students planning a career in health care. One recipient will be named from each school: Mayfield, Oñate, Las Cruces High, Mesilla Valley Christian and home-school.

Students who apply must write a 500- to 1,000-word essay that includes general information about the applicant (i.e. hobbies, interests, abilities, personal characteristics, etc.); what field in health care the applicant has chosen; why this particular area was chosen; what dreams and goals the applicant has for his/her health care career; and the applicant's name, address, phone number and school affiliation.

Applications are due Thursday, March 31. For more information, call Lorena Ruiz at 526-4334, email brightstardental@gmail.com. Complete scholarship requirements are online at www.brightstardental.blogspot.com.

NMSU sorority raising funds for autism

The Alpha Xi Delta chapter at New Mexico State University will host AmaXing Challenge: Xi Marks the Spot at 10 a.m. Sunday, March 13, at the NMSU Intramural fields to raise autism awareness and funds in support of the sorority's national philanthropy partner, Autism Speaks.

Xi Marks the Spot is a campus treasure hunt where each team will be required to accomplish 10 different tasks at stations set up across campus hosted by the NMSU Alpha Xi Delta chapter to raise autism awareness and funds in support of Autism Speaks, the nation's leading autism advocacy organization and Alpha Xi Delta's national philanthropy partner.

Autism is the fastest growing developmental disorder, affecting 1 in 110 children born today. Despite the high prevalence and growing health care costs associated with caring for a child with autism, autism research receives less than 5 percent of the research funding of other, less prevalent, childhood diseases.