

NCF AHP Quarterly

Developing Future Leaders and Advancing School-Based Health

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Paying It Forward: A Message from the President



Every year, we have the opportunity to recognize leadership excellence at the **Jim Bernstein Health Leadership Fund Dinner & Lecture**. It never ceases to amaze me how enthusiastic, joyful and energetic this event is each year. Three hundred people fill the Friday Center's Atrium with greetings to old and new friends. This will be the 9th year that people from all over the state come together in one place to celebrate, catch-up, and share news. People always ask us if we can simply hold the reception and forget about the dinner! It's the one place, year after year, where people get recharged to do good and important work by spending time with so many of their friends and colleagues.

This year, Tom Bacon, DrPH, recently retired NC AHEC Director, will receive the Career Achievement Award and four Fellows who have completed their projects and two-year program will be recognized. It's an evening of celebration and an opportunity to recognize Sue and Jim Bernstein and their "pay it forward" leadership style. The Fellowship and Scholarship were established to continue this tradition of community service and innovation.

Last year, John Price, retired Director of the NC Office of Rural Health and Community Care, visited each of the rural health centers eligible to receive scholarship funds for an employee or their dependent. As a result, this year the Foundation's Bernstein Health Leadership Committee made a commitment to make each award in person. I had the opportunity to attend these meetings in seven communities across the state. Directors from the centers nominate an employee or an employee's dependent, and ***two of the centers represented this year had never applied before. We were overjoyed to receive their applications.*** In most of our visits, the entire center staff attended the presentation of the award, celebrating and sharing how these students were part of the larger rural health center family. As the awarded students begin their college careers, their academic interests include engineering, physical therapy, behavioral health, medicine, video arts and film, and sign language.

Reflecting on the Fellowship, Scholarships and upcoming Dinner, I recall one of the center directors describing how important those first visits with Jim Bernstein and Harvey Estes were to planning for the healthcare needs of the community. The centers continue their work with active community participation on their boards, volunteers and fundraising. These communities, employees and children **embody** the "pay it forward" expectation. The Bernstein Health Leadership Fellowship and Scholarship are meant to act as catalysts for this way of thinking and most importantly, doing! Even though Jim has been gone for nine years, honoring this way of living will continue to make the greatest difference.

-Maggie Sauer

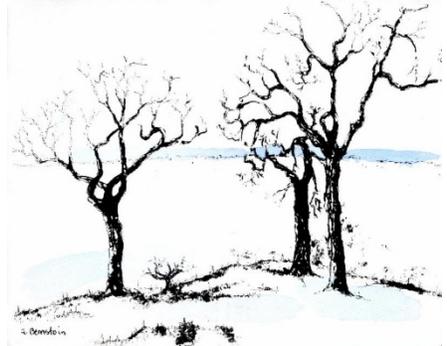
CEO & President

You Are Invited....

To the 9th Annual Jim Bernstein Health Leadership Fund Dinner & Lecture!

Every year the North Carolina Foundation of Advanced Health Programs hosts a premiere event that brings together health leaders from all over the state of North Carolina for an evening of dining and networking. Up to 300 health professionals attend this event that honors the work of Jim Bernstein and supports the Jim Bernstein Health Leadership Fellows program.

This year's event will feature Jonathan Oberlander as the keynote speaker, and Tom Bacon as the recipient of the 2014 Career Achievement Award.



Please join us for this exciting event, which includes a reception and dinner/lecture at the Friday Center in Chapel Hill, NC on the evening of **October 9th, 2014**.

School Telemedicine Program is Growing; receives national award in fourth year of operation

Most students in North Carolina have just started another year of school, another year of learning with teachers, friends, homeroom, and physical education classes.

For students in rural areas, good healthcare is not always easy to access. Many parents work full-time, and it can take up to an hour (or, in some places, longer) to get to the nearest hospital or doctor's office. This often makes finding the time to take your kids to the doctor, for a routine check-up or a seemingly small health issue, so difficult for parents that many don't do it. Consequently, many students don't receive medical attention they might need.

That's why school-based telemedicine programs – where students have videoconference appointments from right inside their school building with doctors who are in other locations – are spreading across the country and showing successful outcomes. One such program is right here in the western part of North Carolina.

MY Health-e-Schools is a program started in 2011 by Dr. Steve North, a family physician who saw the need for better healthcare access for students in Mitchell and Yancey counties in western North Carolina.

How does a telemedicine program like MY Health-e-Schools work? At the beginning of each year parents can sign consent forms enrolling students in MY Health-e-Schools, which allows students to be seen during the school day by remotely located nurse practitioners or physicians. Parents or teachers can refer students, or the students themselves can make an appointment to be seen for anything from a cold to potential symptoms of ADHD.



Many things can be done at that appointment, which is conducted via high-definition videoconferencing using specially equipped stethoscopes and cameras. This allows a centrally located health-care provider to examine students at multiple schools without traveling, and therefore allowing more students to be seen across a large area. When more complex processes like lab work or further tests are needed, the provider refers the student to the closest hospital or specialist.

MY Health-e-Schools providers can address issues ranging from the common earache, stomachache or cold, to chronic disease management, medication management, check-ups, sports physicals, adolescent medicine, and even telepsychology and tele-behavioral health.

North first became interested in school-based health systems while working for Teach For America in Edgecombe county before attending medical school at UNC-Chapel Hill. Steve then moved to Rochester, NY for his residency and a fellowship in adolescent medicine, during which time he learned from the school-based health centers there.

North relocated back to North Carolina in 2006, and in 2007 became a Bernstein Fellow. During this time, he continued researching and seeking to better understand telemedicine systems and began developing the idea of a school-based telemedicine program in western North Carolina. He received initial grant funding from the Kate B. Reynolds Foundation and the Community Foundation of Western NC, and several other sources that matched funds in the following years.

With these funds, a pilot program was begun in 2011, serving three schools in Mitchell and Yancey counties. By the second year, the program was expanded to 10 schools in the two counties and, by the third year, to 14 schools, which meant that all the schools in the two counties without their own health center had access to a primary care provider through MY Health-e-Schools.

This year MY Health-e-Schools is expanding into schools in McDowell County, and the program now allows over 8,000 students in 21 schools in the three counties to have access to trained medical providers during the school day without leaving their school building.

MY Health-e-Schools also recently received the 2014 American Telemedicine Association's President's Award for Health Delivery Quality and Innovation, showing that, even in only its 4th year of operation, the program is still growing and has the opportunity ahead to better health-care access for rural communities in North Carolina.



In the meantime, MY Health-e-Schools is working to improve health care in the community, one student at a time. North talks about the program's impact with stories, including one of an eight-year-old student with high blood pressure who was seen at an appointment through the program. During the appointment the provider referred him to his primary care physician and to get labs done, during which time they discovered that the student had post-streptococcal glomerulonephritis (GN), a kidney disorder that can occur after a routine strep infection. Without the initial appointment with the MY Health-e-Schools provider, the disorder might have gone undetected for much longer and become much more severe.

North attributes the success of MY Health-e-Schools to being able to do a lot without a lot of resources, with tremendous community support.

MY Health-e-Schools is now the largest program part of North's nonprofit organization, the Center for Rural Health Innovation. For more information on MY Health-e-Schools, visit their website.

Special Note: The N.C. Foundation for Advanced Health Programs is pleased to announce Dr. Steve North will be joining its Board of Directors in 2015.

Bernstein Fellow Spotlight:
Jill Boesel Works with Wilmington Health Access for Teens

Rural areas are not the only places for which health care access is a challenge.

In urban areas like Wilmington, North Carolina, access is also an issue, especially for teens and young adults in underserved populations who face barriers like transportation, location, and insurance coverage. Jill Boesel, the Development and Outcomes Director at **WHAT**, or **Wilmington Health Access for Teens**, has been a part of closing the gap and bringing health care closer to where teens and young adults are.

WHAT is a community-based nonprofit health care organization that focuses on improving health care access and integrated care for adolescents and young adults between the ages of 11 and 24 in the Wilmington area.

WHAT opened its first school-based health center in 1999 and currently runs centers in three of the four local public high schools in Wilmington. The centers are located on the high school campus, open to students as walk-ins or by appointment. The centers are staffed with multidisciplinary teams that include a primary provider, mental health counselor, and registered dietician at each site.



School-based health centers have several advantages from their location. In addition to overcoming the barriers mentioned above (transportation, geography and insurance coverage), WHAT minimize lost class time for students, as students are able to simply walk down the hall to their appointment. WHAT also minimizes lost work time for parents. Parental participation in appointments is strongly encouraged, but rather than a parent having to pick their child up, take them to the doctor and back to school, parents can simply come to the school for the appointment and then return to work.

In addition to offering health care services to students in the form of one-on-one appointments, WHAT also provides the entire school with ongoing education about the health care needs of students, and WHAT providers work closely with school counselors, social workers, faculty and administration to improve the overall health of students.

Along with the school-based clinics, WHAT also runs a centrally located facility that offers adolescents and young adults, ages 11-24, access to primary care, mental health, nutrition and prevention services. Three-quarters of the population served by WHAT clinics are either publicly insured or uninsured, which provides a fair share of challenges for the clinics, especially in the rapidly shifting health care environment in the country and in this state.



Jill Boesel came to the Wilmington area and to WHAT in 2007, and her primary role focuses on seeking and securing public and private grants and managing current grants. She is also a member of the organization’s leadership team, and believes that the key to her work is communicating very effectively the advantages of having a school-based health center situated conveniently on campus for students and parents.

“The most cherished aspect of my job is having the ongoing opportunity to develop relationships with so many incredibly talented, energetic and committed people—both within and outside of Wilmington—who are working relentlessly to pave the way for a better tomorrow here in North Carolina, despite the often seemingly insurmountable challenges we face in health care today,” Boesel says.

She points out that WHAT is focused on “whole person care”, where the traditionally separated areas of primary care, mental health care, nutrition, and other areas occur within a connected network. This enables the provider in each area to be aware of what is going on in other areas and proactive in connecting the dots when appropriate to give the patient the best overall care possible. By having different types of providers serving patients in a team-based approach in the same location, integrated care works naturally and improves the patient experience and outcome.

Boesel is a current Bernstein Fellow, and her project is very fitting with the true integrity of the Bernstein Fellowship program and the mission of Jim Bernstein: ensuring access to health care for the populations that are most vulnerable in our state. She is exploring how WHAT as an organization can improve the use of data for population health and patient engagement, within the context of an integrated school-based healthcare setting.

Boesel says: “My fellowship has afforded me the unique opportunity to connect with others doing similar work throughout other regions of the state, including my “fellow Fellows” and many others.”

Top Benefits of a School-Based Health Center (SBHC)



1. Minimize common barriers to accessing health care for adolescents such as geography and transportation, insurance coverage and family socio-economic status.
2. Minimize lost class time for students and lost work time for parents who would otherwise need to take time off to take their adolescent to an appointment.
3. Serve as a medical home for many high-risk students who may otherwise go without care.
4. Ensure linkage so that services are available 24 hours/day year around.
5. Encourage parental participation and provide the school community with ongoing education about the health care needs of the students.
6. Collaborate regularly with other local primary care practices, the school district and other community agencies.
7. Coordinate specialty and subspecialty referrals.
8. Provide students with health insurance eligibility and enrollment and connect them to public health insurance plans.

The 2014 Bernstein Scholars

Jim Bernstein played a key role in creating many of the rural health centers in North Carolina, with the belief that health care is community-based. He worked to ensure that community members are the owners and drivers of their own health programs, and began the Jim and Sue Bernstein Health Leadership Scholarships.

Scholarship recipients are selected by the Jim Bernstein Health Leadership Committee, a committee made up of members of Foundation's Board of Directors. This year the committee sought to strengthen the relationships between Foundation and the scholars and wanted to recognize the important contributions that are made to the community by scholars' families and health centers.

To do this, Maggie Sauer, President and CEO, along with members of the Foundation's Board of Directors, took the opportunity to visit nearly all of the scholars in their home communities. They were able to meet several parents and staff members at the rural health clinics involved in the scholarship program, and hear the stories of how this student came to be nominated for the scholarship. A member of the Board of Directors joined her on most visits to present the award, with Olson Huff, committee chair, participating in the visits in western North Carolina, and Tom Irons, chair of the Board, participating in the visits in Mt. Olive.

This year, nine individuals were awarded Jim and Sue Bernstein Health Center Scholarships to help offset the cost of their higher education. Eight of this year's scholars are children of employees of a rural health center, and one scholar is a current employee of a center.

The following Rural Health Centers and scholars were represented this year:

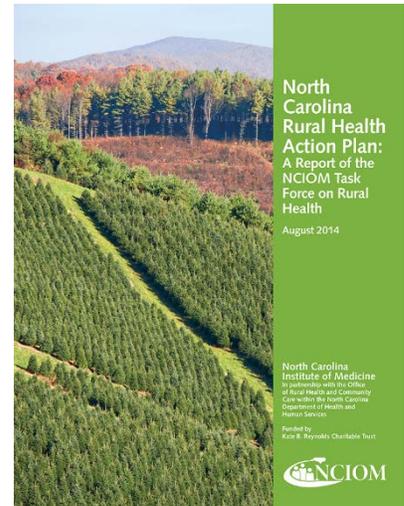
Celo Health Center.....	Caleb Stevenson
Hot Springs Health Program.....	Travis Rice
Black River Health Services.....	Moriah McTavish
Rural Health Group - Roanoke Rapids.....	Elarnta Darden
Rural Health Group - Enfield.....	Breanna Joyner-Foreman
Rural Health Group - Enfield.....	Keanna Joyner-Foreman
Mt. Olive Family Medicine Center.....	Ali Marie Eakes
Mt. Olive Family Medicine Center.....	Rose Brock
Benson Area Medical Center.....	Katherine Burnette

North Carolina Rural Health Action Plan Seeks to Battle Health Disparities in Rural Areas

The North Carolina Institute of Medicine (NCIOM) recently published the North Carolina Rural Health Action Plan.

The Plan is a report created by the NCIOM Task Force on Rural Health, of which Maggie Sauer, President and CEO of the Foundation, was a member. The NCIOM, in collaboration with the Office of Rural Health and Community Care (ORHCC) in the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, and other partners brought together the Task Force to develop a plan that would be both comprehensive and coordinated for rural areas throughout the state. This plan was funded through the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust.

The North Carolina Rural Health Action Plan describes the unique obstacles that North Carolina faces in improving outcomes. It describes the underlying causes of health disparities in rural areas of the state, and outlines six key strategies that can be implemented at the state and local levels to address those problems and begin to close those gaps.



NC Oral Health Collaborative Has a "Presence"

The North Carolina Oral Health Collaborative (NCOHC) is proud to announce our new website, **oralhealthnc.org**. In addition to the new website design and easy navigation, visitors will have access to the latest news in oral health and initiatives taking place across North Carolina.

Also, the NC Oral Health Collaborative has launched our new social media pages. **Please "like us" on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @NC_OHC**. The new online presence will connect us with stakeholders across the state and nation. We are always looking for ways to raise awareness about the importance of oral health, and our new website and social media outlets are a great way to do so!

We look forward to providing you with up-to-date information on our collaborative through new resources. If you are not a member and would like to join us in these efforts, please visit **oralhealthnc.org** and visit our membership page for more information.

The NC Oral Health Collaborative is committed to being one of the many solutions in our state to the oral health crisis in North Carolina.

