



Wilmington Health Access for Teens WHAT's news

Volume 4, Issue 1

HOLIDAY 2007

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...and much more!

Wilmington Health Access for Teens (WHAT) appoints new Executive Director

After several months of conducting an extensive national search, Wilmington Health Access for Teens (WHAT) is proud to announce the appointment of Tay Keong Tan, Ph.D., as Executive Director. A graduate of Harvard University with a Master's Degree and Ph.D. in Public Policy, Dr. Tan brings a wealth of experience in the areas of policy

corruption projects, including the United Nation's first-ever anti-corruption campaign. These two positions afforded Dr. Tan the opportunity to further hone his skills in human resources management, budgeting, communicating with the media, project management and fundraising, while providing him with a wealth of experience.

Barbara Sturniolo, Board President of WHAT shared the viewpoint of the Board. "On behalf of the Board of Directors of WHAT, we're thrilled to have someone of Dr. Tan's caliber take our organization to new levels of excellence. He has extensive management experience in public and non-profit organizations which will help WHAT grow and develop in the years to come. We are also fortunate to have Connie Parker assume the role of Executive Director Emeritus and have a seat on WHAT's Board of Directors, while she continues her work for the advancement of adolescent health at the state and national level".

development, strategic planning, grants management and evaluation. Most recently, Dr. Tan served as the Executive Director of the Singapore International Foundation, whose volunteers brought much needed help and relief to southeast Asia's tsunami-stricken communities. The foundation's projects included The School Refurbishment Project, which repaired and upgraded four schools damaged by the influx of people seeking shelter. The Community Services Hub project provided opportunities for Sir Lankans to generate income, and provided recreation, health education and nutrition services to people in need. The Milk Program, another foundation project, involved the distribution of milk to over 2000 children living in three shelters.

From 2001 to 2003, Dr. Tan held dual appointments at the United Nations in New York City, as Special Assistant to the Under-Secretary-General and Chief of Staff of the Office of Internal Oversight Services. During his tenure at the United Nations, Dr. Tan was the project manager and chief architect of several anti-

Dr. Tan, his wife Paige and young son have resided in Wilmington for nearly three years. Dr. Tan's wife is an assistant professor of political science at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.



After several months of conducting an extensive national search, Wilmington Health Access for Teens (WHAT) is proud to announce the appointment of Tay Keong Tan, Ph.D., as Executive Director.

WHAT's Mission

Wilmington Health Access for Teens, Inc. improves the health of the youth of our community by ensuring access for all to quality physical and mental health services and by providing prevention, education, and outreach services to promote optimal health.

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Wilmington's Best Kept Secret: A Message from the Executive Director



A volunteer said to me that WHAT is this community's "best kept secret". Well kept secrets convey a sense of mystery and desirability. When she first said it in a town meeting attended by staff members, I surmised that she was just being nice and did not give it a second thought. However, when she repeated it to me in all sincerity and seriousness in a private interview, it struck me that the organization has left a strong impression her. What is so interesting or impressive about WHAT? Why has it been "kept secret"?

Like all new executives, I spent the first 40 days wandering through terra incognita to quickly figure out how the place works, what is the culture of its people, and what problems need fixing right away. As I began this inquiry, the answers to the questions revealed themselves to me. WHAT is an enigmatic wonder for three reasons. The first is its people. They are amongst the most diverse and interesting stakeholders I have ever met in under the rubric of a single organization in Wilmington. From healthcare workers and counselors to community organizers and health educators, WHAT's staff and volunteers come from all backgrounds and disciplines, bonded by a common mission and purpose. Our zealous teen volunteers and distinguished board members and advisors further add to the wealth of ideas, contacts and resources to help us improve our services and better reach the underserved adolescents in the community.

Second is the diversity and reach of its programs. WHAT's programs in physical and mental health care incorporate nutrition, anger management, group counseling and a wide range of public education, outreach and prevention activities. The physical care seemed to have taken root and blossomed in the wellness centers at Lakeside and New Hanover High Schools, with a new center planned for Ashley High School. Education, outreach and prevention programs include smoking cessation, substance and alcohol abuse workshops, pregnancy prevention, peer health education, teen leadership training and public policy advocacy. These programs have significantly broadened the repertoire of services WHAT offers to promote the health of our adolescents in partnership with many local organizations. More importantly, they underscore the foresight and creativity of WHAT in taking an inclusive and holistic interpretation of its mandate.

Last but not least, WHAT is an organization full of promise. In the short two months as its second executive director, I have witnessed our staff and volunteers invent new programs and set records in terms of patient visits and revenue. In that short time, we launched our group visit program and initiated our first ever community immunization blitz. Six project teams have been formed to look at how we might improve our services and administration. They will explore areas ranging from searching for new market space and enhancing the school centers' model to improving environmental conservation and fundraising to expand our work. The energy and enthusiasm of the staff and volunteers seem boundless. I could only marvel at how the executive management has to stretch to keep up with the initiative and ingenuity of the staff and volunteers.

Naturally, the exceptional people, programs and promise I have come to know already in my short time here lead us to the second question we asked earlier. Why were these so well kept from common knowledge? Perhaps so many people in the organization have been asked: "What is WHAT?" that the riddle "whatswhat" is enshrined in our website signature and email addresses. It is a marvel how so many long-time residents of Wilmington and sojourners of Oleander Avenue do not know about this "secret". Could you explain that? I plan to speak to this enigma in the next newsletter and outline some plans to unravel the mystery of WHAT. In the meantime, the volunteer that originated the "best kept secret" commentary has since applied to come on board as a staff member. I hope the wonderful qualities and good work that she witnessed in this organization will continue to shine in the years ahead.



Dr. Tay Keong Tan, newly appointed WHAT Executive Director, wasted no time and rolled up his sleeves to begin work at Wilmington Health Access for Teens. Dr. Tan joins other WHAT employees, pictured here from the left Geoff Zuckerman, Carlos Bryson, and JP Horvat, during the recent Fall Fest Cleaning Day observed by WHAT with a theme of cleaning and sprucing up the facility inside and out for the holidays.

Tay Keong Tan, Ph.D, Executive Director

Wilmington Health Access For Teens Receives State Award For Positive Health Impact On Eastern NC Youth

The Question Why Youth Empowerment Center of Eastern North Carolina, a regional outreach program of Wilmington Health Access For Teens (WHAT), has received the statewide Society Of Public Health Education (SOPHE) 2007 Kathy Kerr Outstanding Health Education Project Award. The award was presented at a luncheon on September 13, 2007 at the UNCW Warwick Center. The Outstanding Health Education Project Award is available annually to projects that make a significant impact in health education. This award is given to projects that have demonstrated outcomes that are both unique and outstanding in scope. Projects selected have received widespread recognition among health care professionals and the community, while showing a commitment to excellence and being a true collaborative effort.

Question Why East of Wilmington Health Access For Teens receives funding for this project by the Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission. The project is one of three youth centers located across the state that address the high rates of teen tobacco use in North Carolina through teaching teens to advocate for tobacco-free policies where they eat, play, pray, work and learn. In 2004, Question Why East and Wilmington Health Access For Teens launched a program based on a model provided by Wilson Consulting and Rensselaerville Institute. The program, called Real Time Community Change (RTCC), works with local youth advocates and adult leaders who want to make positive changes in their communities through citizen energy. This program has resulted in the establishment of a 100% Tobacco Free School policy in three Eastern North Carolina



Chandra Green (from left), WHAT Question Y health Educator and Steve Johnson, WHAT Question Y Director receive the Society of Public Health Education 2007 Kathy Kerr Outstanding Health Education Project award plaque from Denise Newkirk, awards committee chair of SOPHE.

school districts (Duplin, Clinton City and Lenoir) and strengthened one policy in Johnston County. One restaurant policy, Harold's in Columbus County, was changed due to local youth leadership. The RTCC project addresses three of the Essential Public Health Services established by the Institute of Medicine in 1988: 1) to inform, educate and empower people about health issues; 2) mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems; and 3) to develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts.

For more information about Question Why, WHAT or adolescent health issues, contact Joy Storms Grady at 910.790.9949.

WHAT
Thumbnail Fact

WHAT seeing more patients than ever

Since 1994, WHAT's mission has been to provide quality physical and mental health services to the youth of greater Wilmington and beyond. As the word gets out that WHAT is THE place to obtain healthcare in a warm and nurturing environment, our patient visits have grown steadily. Over the last year, our numbers have increased from 1,020 to 1,176, showing a 17% increase.

WHAT provides Flu Shots and More.....

continued on back page

With flu season just around the corner, WHAT opened its doors on November 12th from 10am to 4pm to provide its first-ever immunization drive to the teen community. Teen and Board volunteers were on hand to greet and direct those interested in obtaining flu shots. Staff was available to answer any questions, provide pertinent health information and most importantly, administer flu shots. Other immunizations given included Gardasil, Hepatitis B and Tetanus. In all, 22 teens received 35 injections during the "Immunization Blitz".

According to WHAT health care providers, vaccines for our children and young adults have become more complicated over the past few years. It used to be that when a 12 year old

came into the medical clinic for his or her school physical, all that was needed was the tetanus and diphtheria booster and the 2 measles, mumps and rubella and 4 polio vaccines. The tetanus shot is now the Tdap which extends the protection beyond early childhood. Late teens and young adults had become the most common age of infection. Hep B is a series of 3 immunizations which are often given at school. As those who are getting it in infancy get older, it will be less likely that it will be needed by the adolescent. Meningococcal vaccine was recommended for college students who were living in the dorms. Now it is recommended at age 12 to extend coverage to a younger age group. It can actually be given as young as age 2 for high risk populations.

WILMINGTON HEALTH ACCESS FOR TEENS

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Connie Parker Receives Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award at Reception Given in Her Honor



Wilmington Mayor Bill Saffo attends reception in honor of Connie Parker, former WHAT Executive Director, and is pictured here with Ms. Parker after his remarks on her outstanding contributions to WHAT, youth and the community.

At an elegant and well-attended reception held at the Cameron Art Museum, WHAT Board of Directors honored Connie Parker, former WHAT Executive Director, for her many years of dedicated service and contributions to Wilmington Health Access for Teens. On behalf of the board, Barbara Sturniolo, Chair, welcomed over three hundred well wishers from the community, local service agencies, the medical community, foundations, government and staff to the event. Mrs. Sturniolo was mistress of ceremonies for a program that included tributes to Ms. Parker, beginning with her vision to create an organization just for teens through the many ensuing accomplishments under her leadership as Executive Director. Dr. William McMillian, former president of WHAT, spoke on behalf

of all past presidents lauding Ms. Parker's accomplishments through the years and extended best wishes as she begins her new journey. Long-time WHAT employee, Maria Van de Bovenkamp, made a tearful presentation to Ms. Parker on behalf of WHAT employees, thanking her for nurturing and growing WHAT and its employees. Knowing that Ms. Parker is an avid gardener and orchid fan, the staff presented her with a gift of more than a dozen orchids representing the years of service she had given to WHAT. Mayor Bill Saffo was also a part of the program, bestowing words of praise and appreciation for the contributions Ms. Parker had made to the Wilmington community and its youth. A special presentation from the board was a portrait of Ms. Parker to be hung in the foyer of the WHAT Oleander facility with a plaque indicating Ms. Parker as the Founder of WHAT. The highlight of the evening was a surprise announcement and presentation by Bill Caster, New Hanover County Commissioners Chairman, of the *Order of the Long Leaf Pine*. The *Order of the Long Leaf Pine* is the highest civilian honor that can be granted in the state of North Carolina. The *Order of the Long Leaf Pine* is among the most prestigious awards presented by the Governor of North Carolina and is presented to individuals who have a proven record of extraordinary service to the state. Contributions to their communities, extra effort in their

careers, and many years of service to their organizations are some of the guidelines by which recipients are selected for this award. Ms. Parker now joins the rank of past recipients which includes Michael Jordan, Charles Kuralt, Maya Angelou, Rev. Billy Graham, William Friday and artist Bob Timberlake. Ms. Parker, delighted and overwhelmed by the award, gifts of appreciation and tributes, assured those in attendance that WHAT had surpassed her dreams, but that she plans to continue her work at the state and national level to address the health needs of teens.



Dr. Tay Keong Tan, new WHAT Executive Director, congratulates Connie Parker for receiving the prestigious *Order of the Long Leaf Pine*. Ms. Parker now joins the rank of past recipients of the *Order of the Long Leaf Pine* which includes Michael Jordan, Charles Kuralt, Maya Angelou, Rev. Billy Graham, William Friday and artist Bob Timberlake.

Contributors from July 1, 2006 through November 30, 2007 (continued from page 4)

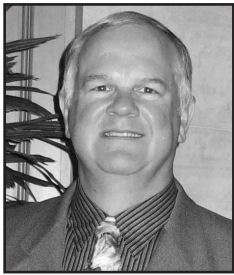
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From the Desk of Tom Martinko, MD, Medical Director



Methicillin Resistant Staph Aureus (MRSA) was initially a problem in hospitals and health care settings. In the past decade,

multiple drug resistant staph aureus has spread into the community (Community Acquired MRSA or CA-MRSA) and become a major source of health concern in many cities and schools. One strain in particular, the USA300 strain, spreads very rapidly. Some schools have even closed temporarily to sanitize all surfaces to halt further spread. Although these measures probably have little if any impact on the disease.

CA-MRSA initially looks like a small skin infection or boil. If untreated, it can increase in size. Hematogenous spread or, spread by the bloodstream as bacteria, is common such that MRSA is now the leading cause of osteomyelitis, inflammation of the bone, outside of the neonatal period. Compared to previous sources of osteomyelitis, MRSA is more likely to cause chronic disease, have multiple sites of bone infection, have a higher rate

of recurrence and be associated with deep vein thromboses.

Incision and drainage is the most important treatment but most experts recommend adding in an antibiotic. A culture of the wound should be performed by the healthcare provider. Most community acquired strains have been sensitive to Septra, clindamycin, and to doxycycline. Twice weekly baths with 1 tsp of Clorox per gallon of water can also prevent recurrence.

Patients with fever, suppressed immune systems, or possible serious infections should be hospitalized and started on intravenous antibiotics. An MRI should be performed on areas of concern for osteomyelitis. Strict contact precautions are indicated to prevent further spread.

In the schools and other community environments, spread is more likely due to person to person contact. Frequent cleaning of surfaces such as wrestling mats or locker room benches with an antiseptic solution is indicated. Abrasions should be kept covered and treated with a topical antibiotic at the first sign of erythema or inflammation. Hand washing with an antibacterial soap or with a hand

sanitizer is still probably the most effective measure against the spread of MRSA, influenza, or diarrheal diseases.

For more information, check www.cdc.gov.

Tom Martinko, MD
Medical Director
WHAT

Dr. Tom Martinko, board-certified Adolescent Medicine Specialist, joined the Wilmington Health Access for Teens as Medical Director this summer. Dr. Martinko has been practicing this specialty that serves a growing segment of the population age 10 to 19 for the last 24 years. Most recently, he has served as Chief of Adolescent Services, Department of Pediatrics at the Madigan Army Medical Center in Tacoma, Washington. Previously in his career he was Chief of Adolescent Medicine at Womack Army Medical Center at Fort Bragg, NC, serving the families of the military stationed in that area. Available by appointment, Dr. Martinko sees teen patients for a wide variety of health needs including routine physical exams. Dr. Martinko is available to speak to groups on current teen health topics. Please contact him at 910.790.9949 to schedule an informative presentation.

Past President of Synergy Presented at National Conference



On June 27, 2007, Alex Loizias, Past President of Synergy, presented at the National School-Based Health Care Convention in Washington, DC. Alex's presentation was entitled "The You in Youth: How You Can Increase Youth Participation". Alex is no stranger to working hard for teen health. She joined WHAT as a Peer Health Educator in her freshman year at New Hanover High School. Throughout her high school years, Alex was dedicated to the mission of WHAT, becoming President of Synergy during her senior year. She has presented at the Adolescent Health Advocacy Day at the North Carolina state legislature and was one of only ten youth from across the state invited to sit on the North Carolina HIV/STD Advisory Board. She is currently in her freshman year at UNC Chapel Hill, where she received a full scholarship.

WHAT provides Flu Shots and More.....

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Varicella vaccine recommendations have recently been changed to include a second dose. Those who have had chicken pox do not need to be vaccinated. Hepatitis A is no longer just for travelers. The recommendation is now that everyone gets protected. The 2 shots are given at least 6 months apart. Most adolescents will need to start their series. The Human Papillomavirus cervical cancer vaccine is licensed for females between the ages of 9 and 26. It is a 3 shot series that will provide protection against four HPV types, which together cause 70% of cervical cancers. It is highly recommended, but only a few states are requiring it. Males are not getting it yet – or at least not in the U.S.

Dr. Tom Martinko, Medical Director, feels very strongly regarding these vaccines and the need to get them in a timely manner. Dr. Martinko remarked at the recent Immunization Blitz: "These vaccines are crucial to the health and well-being of our teens. The teens may complain about all of the needles, but they



will thank us for caring about them and taking their health seriously."

For those of you who have generously provided us this past year with your financial support, we'd like to let you know what your support has meant to some at-risk teens.

Your support has provided:

- A suicidal teen access to an immediate resource for help to see her through a crisis
- Antibiotics for a 12 year old boy with a severe infection whose mother had not brought in earlier for care because she thought she wouldn't be able to afford it
- A 14 year old teen mom received parenting and nutritional information necessary to take care of her newborn child
- "Baby Think It Over" programs to prevent teen moms from having to get information necessary to take care of newborn babies
- Physical and mental health services for a 14 year-old victim of sexual assault by specially trained professionals who can care for her physical and mental needs, as well as, carefully collect the necessary legal evidence to effectively prosecute the perpetrator
- A sports physical for a 15 year old gifted athlete who otherwise would have been unable to join his school basketball team
- Nutritional counseling for a 310 pound 12 year old boy who came to us with significant physical and emotional problems because of his excessive weight
- Anger management and depression counseling for a teen whose parents are divorcing.

These are just a few real life examples of teen needs that your contribution helps to address and there are many more unmet needs, please consider giving a donation to WHAT today! Thank you for your support!

Visit us **online** at www.whatswhat.org for organizational information and to make your donation online!

Your Annual Giving Envelope Is Enclosed!



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