

Anne E. Dyson Child Advocacy Award 2009 Recipients

Project Leader Name: I.J. Brenda Anosike, MD

Project Title: Young Leaders of Medicine Mentoring Program (YLOM)

The Young Leaders of Medicine Mentoring Program was a community/hospital-based program that was started in the summer 2007. YLOM takes place at the Hasbro Children's Hospital in Providence, Rhode Island. It was designed to work with selected high school students (grades 9-12) in the Providence community who are interested in the health/ medicine career and community service. Each month the students meet with pediatricians to discuss different diseases that affect children with an associated adolescent issue. As apart of this program, the students get the opportunity to work with elementary students and meet with doctors and nurses to learn about the body. As a final project, the students set-up a charity health fair in Providence in order to bring care and resources to our families that cannot otherwise see their doctors due to time or financial constraints. In these difficult times, however, it has been hard for a great deal of our neighboring families and even for the student, themselves. The ultimate objective of the health fair is to bring awareness and care to the community.

Project Leader Name: Ananya Guha, MD

Project Title: Familias Fuertes

Familias Fuertes is a resident-initiated, community based outreach program combating obesity in families in the International District of Albuquerque through supervised physical activity, nutritional education, and health promotion. Children of the International District of Albuquerque, an impoverished Hispanic immigrant community in Albuquerque, have an increased risk of obesity and associated health consequences. Not only do children suffer in this community from poor nutritional choices, but the violence which has earned this area the nickname "War Zone" prevents most children from participating in outdoor activities and routine physical exercise.

Familias Fuertes began as a pilot project last year, with weekly two hour sessions where women and children stretch, play, exercise, and eat healthy food together. Women also get the opportunity to work out in a gym while children engage in a mixture of supervised structured and unstructured play. The program teaches children to model parent's healthy behavior and teaches parents that their children can enjoy healthy food and activity. With the positive response and consistent participation from the community, we aim to create formal exercise, nutrition, and health curricula, study the effectiveness of the health curricula to improve lifestyle and health outcomes, and expand the number of families enrolled in the program.

In addition to covering health topics, health education sessions will include information and enrollment assistance for available government programs, including Medicaid, Food Stamp, and WIC programs. In addition, health education sessions will address how to navigate the complex medical system to find a medical home for their children at either Young Children's Health Center or the University of New Mexico, and advocate for their child during health visits. With these various components, Familias Fuertes utilizes and augments existing community resources and social capital to promote a comprehensive culturally-appropriate healthy lifestyle curriculum for families in the International District.

Project Leader Name: Richard P. Hobbs, III, MD

Project Title: Healing for Homeless Children

The Samaritan Health Center's Healing for Homeless Children (HHC) program is based in the Durham Rescue Mission, the area's largest homeless shelter. The Samaritan Health Center provides comprehensive, free medical care for homeless adults and children in Durham, North Carolina.

Healing for Homeless Children is a clinic initiative that seeks to provide a temporary medical home for these often transient, resource-poor children. Specifically, HHC screens all new children to the Mission, assesses and treats chronic and acute medical conditions, coordinates care with local case workers, refers for specialty services, and promotes literacy by providing books through Reach Out and Read. After initial evaluation, children receive preventative, chronic and acute care while the family resides at the homeless shelter, and longer if necessary.

The primary goal of HHC is to advocate for the medical needs of these children, who often fall through the cracks of a difficult to navigate medical infrastructure. Above and beyond providing needed medical care, however, the HHC seeks to link these children with ongoing community resources to meet behavioral, educational, nutritional, social and spiritual needs. All the care is free and provided by volunteers, including University of North Carolina and Duke University attendings, residents, medical students, and other allied health providers.