

The BEAT

Hospital District Honors Volunteers for Dedicated Service

By *Connie Chavez Villarreal*

Last year, volunteers donated nearly 80,000 service hours and contributed the equivalent of more than \$1.4 million in deferred workforce costs to the Harris County Hospital District. In recognition of their service, the hospital district hosted a volunteer appreciation luncheon on Friday, Feb. 22, at the United Way Community Resource Center.

"It's humbling to work with so many volunteers who do such wonderful, selfless work for the hospital district every day and touch so many lives," said Jennifer Barnes, director of volunteer and guest services. "Volunteers are an important part of our organization because they are a valuable extension of our staff – they help us provide services we otherwise couldn't provide."

Volunteers and guests enjoyed a rodeo-themed celebration, complete with a barbecue lunch and live fiddle performance. Keith V. Branch, from Harris County Juvenile Probation, was the keynote speaker. Hospital district President and CEO David S. Lopez and HCHD board member Carolyn Truesdell were also on hand to recognize and thank volunteers for their dedicated service.

"It's truly an honor to recognize these caring individuals, who give so much of themselves to help others," said Lopez. "Rain or shine, they overcome personal challenges and put other commitments aside to help

the hospital district fulfill its mission. They have a heartfelt desire to help and make a difference, and we thank them for that."

A group of almost 100 special volunteers was recognized for their valuable support during the event. The volunteers represented the spectrum of individuals, groups and organizations who have contributed their time and talents to the hospital district, HCHD Foundation events, HCHD patient advisory councils, and through special service projects that ranged from knitting baby hats and quilting blankets to hand-making newborn bereavement gowns as well as walker totes, which make it easier for patients

who use walkers to carry their medications and other belongings.

In addition, "2007 Outstanding Volunteer" awards were presented to: Patty Sanders, for the Texas Medical Center as a whole; Joe and Jane Cornelson for Ben Taub General Hospital; Geraldine Adkins and Eula Broussard for LBJ General Hospital; Dalton Goode for Quentin Mease Community Hospital; Jennifer Nguyen, for her work on behalf of the Community Health Program (People's Clinic); the MLK Patient Advisory Council; and Angie Galvan, a volunteer at Gulfgate Health Center, was presented with the Partnership Award.



The Harris County Hospital District honored volunteers on Friday, Feb. 22, at the annual volunteer appreciation luncheon, held at the United Way Community Resource Center.

HCHD Foundation Holds Annual Jubilee of Caring

By *Lacey Benbrook*

The Harris County Hospital District Foundation honored two extraordinary supporters of the hospital district Feb. 20 at the Fifth Annual Jubilee of Caring Gala.

The memory and legacy of the late Ben Love was remembered with the Ben Taub Humanitarian Award for Love's contribution as an inaugural HCHD Foundation board member. Foundation Board Chairman H. Ben Taub presented the award to Love's granddaughter, Elizabeth Love Ross, who accepted it on behalf of the Love family.

The Hank Coleman Above and Beyond Award was given to Dr. Susan Cooley King in recognition of her accomplishments and countless contributions to the hospital district. In addition to serving on the HCHD Foundation board, King is responsible for bringing Reach Out and

Read, a pediatric literacy program, to HCHD hospitals and community health centers.

Foundation Board Member Hank Coleman,



Hank Coleman, far left, joined honoree Dr. Susan Cooley King as well as Elizabeth Love Ross and H. Ben Taub at the Fifth Annual Jubilee of Caring Gala, hosted by the Harris County Hospital District Foundation.

the award's namesake, presented the award to King.

Almost three hundred people gathered at the River Oaks Country Club for the event, which was chaired by Rose and Harry Cullen. Funds from the event will be used to purchase an ultrasound machine for the future HCHD ambulatory care center, which will include diagnostic imaging services, radiation therapy, breast care, and specialty clinics.

"We are thrilled with the response and support we received from our supporters," said Ottley Sims, executive director of the HCHD Foundation. "The event was a success, for both the funds that were raised and the excitement it infused in the community regarding our upcoming campaign."

Let's Start an Epidemic — of Friendliness

By Lesa McLeod

We've all heard the saying that you only have one chance to make a good first impression — but what about making a lasting impression? We have to consider this in terms of how we treat our patients and guests in our facilities on a daily basis. What lasting impression are we making? When they enter our facilities, are they welcomed, or ignored? Do we acknowledge them, or do we look past them?

In order to deliver excellent service, it is imperative that we examine how we address our patients and guests. In our facilities, which are often busy and crowded, it is easy for our patients and guests to feel overlooked or invisible. As they may be feeling anxious and frightened already, it is especially important that they feel welcome and are acknowledged in a friendly way.

Think of what the welcome is like in the places you go to. At CiCi's Pizza, the staff greets customers the minute they walk in the

front door, even from across the room, and make them feel like the staff was just waiting for them to walk in so the party could get started.

Another example is Wal-Mart and Sam's Club. They always have someone at the front door to greet customers, answer questions, and direct the customers to different areas of the store, if they need it. It is an organizational priority that they make their customers feel welcome, important, and appreciated so they will not only enjoy their experience, but will return again and again.

At the Harris County Hospital District, we must strive to be as customer-oriented as these companies are — or even more so. When we create a friendly environment for our patients, it helps alleviate some of their anxiety and creates an atmosphere of warmth, welcome and professionalism. By greeting and acknowledging our patients immediately and

in a friendly way, we are conveying a message of confidence that they can trust us to take care of their needs.

This friendliness shouldn't be limited to only patients and visitors, though. Being friendly helps create a culture where people want to work. We should make a point of greeting and acknowledging our colleagues, as well. When you walk down a corridor or enter an elevator, make eye contact and say hello to everyone. Friendliness is contagious — it will eventually spread throughout the organization. Challenge yourself to be the force behind the friendliness epidemic by sharing your smiles and greetings with everyone.

As Harris County's own Renee Zellweger said in the movie "Jerry Maguire," "You had me at hello." Let's strive to make a great first — and lasting — impression with our patients, our guests and our colleagues.

Roux Named HCHD Chief Pharmacy Officer

By John F. Martinez

With a staff of about 400 associates tasked with filling more than two million outpatient prescriptions and eight million inpatient medication doses a year, managing the Department of Pharmacy for the Harris County Hospital District is a handful.

"Our pharmacy department operates much like a small corporation," said Chris Okezie, associate administrator of district services. "Every day, it plays a significant role in meeting the clinical goals of the district, and it requires great leadership."

With that in mind, Okezie sought out the perfect person to oversee the operational and administrative functions of the department. His extensive search, which included 18 finalists for the job from across the country, led him to one of his own — Ryan Roux.

Roux took the reins as the department's chief pharmacy officer in January. With more than a decade of pharmacy experience, Roux has worked at the hospital district since 2001 in several executive positions, most recently as administrative director of pharmacy.

"Ryan has exemplified HCHD values and standards," Okezie said. "His personal commitment to the district's goals and objectives has been evident through his achievements and interdisciplinary collaborations."

In his years at HCHD, Roux has been instrumental in the successful installation of the PYXIS medicine cabinets, implementing MedCarousel and providing leadership as co-chair of the district's Medication Use Safety Committee. He hopes to continue improvements in automation and work flow procedures as part of the district's effort to become a most efficient organization (MEO).

"We want to work smarter rather than harder," Roux said. "I see us like a three-legged stool, with pharmacy, nursing staff and physicians always working together to enhance our patient's health care experience."

Some of the goals for the pharmacy department include adding new clinical pharmacy II positions to the Community Health Program, bedside bar coding, the

creation of a central prescription refill program, and the electronic medication administration records system.

"I am committed to our growth as a department as well as the growth — both numerically and developmentally — of the staff," he said. "There is plenty more for us to accomplish and I'm excited about the challenge."

Roux is a graduate of the University of Houston and Ohio State University. He has testified before the Texas Senate Committee



Ryan Roux

on Healthcare Workforce Issues, served as the president of local pharmacy society and as public affairs council chair for Texas Society of Health-Systems Pharmacists and is a preceptor for pharmacy students and residents.



LBJ Chili Cook-off

Board Member Mary Spinks enjoyed a sample of chili from one of the 11 entries at the Lyndon B. Johnson General Hospital Chili Cook-Off on Feb. 27. The cook-off served as the hospital district's welcome of the beginning of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. Staff enjoyed free chili and played a variety of carnival games, including the horseshoe toss and a prize wheel. The medicine/surgery services team won a Best Presentation trophy for its "Po Fokz Chilly" entry, surgery clinic's chili was named the spiciest, and the Biomedical Department won for tastiest.

Mobile Mammography Unit Unveiled

By Connie Chavez Villarreal

Harris County Hospital District Foundation board members, donors, HCHD board members, staff and supporters gathered under clear blue skies on Thursday, Feb. 28, for a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Holly Hall for the hospital district's new mobile mammography unit, which will allow the organization to provide 5,000 additional breast cancer screenings per year to the residents of Harris County.

"One of every eight women in America will be diagnosed with breast cancer during her lifetime," said Loretta Hanser, mammography director. "But now, thanks to our new mobile mammography unit, the hospital district is offering more women the gift of early detection – one of the most important tools in the fight against the disease."

Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer affecting women in the United States. When it is found and diagnosed early, though, it is often curable.

The hospital district's new mobile mammography program will allow Harris County patients to be screened in their own neighborhoods, at HCHD community health centers where they already receive primary care. These include the Baytown, Acres Home,

Northwest, Settegast, Gulfgate and Casa de Amigos health centers.

H. Ben Taub, chairman of the HCHD Foundation board of trustees, and HCHD president and CEO David S. Lopez were at the festivities to thank donors and agency representatives for their generosity and congratulate hospital district staff for the tremendous accomplishment.

Adorned with a flowing pink ribbon along its sides and "Delivering the Promise of Early Detection," the van boasts state-of-the-art exam rooms, a waiting area, and a skylight featuring a screen of colorful leaves and tree branches.

This is the first mobile unit in the Houston area equipped with digital mammography technology and real-time image transfer capabilities, which will result in better time management and the ability to provide additional patient care and breast cancer screenings.

"Typically, mobile units must shut down for two to three hours every day so images can be downloaded. This mobile unit, however, is equipped with digital technology that allows mammography images taken on board to be transferred, or downloaded, in real time to

another location for storage and reading," said Hanser.

The mobile unit will help reduce patient waiting times for screenings, and will help patients secure the necessary services to promote timely follow-up care and treatment, if cancer is suspected.

"This project is about saving lives," said Ottley Sims, executive director of the HCHD Foundation, which hosted the ribbon-cutting ceremony and coordinated the funding for the mobile unit. "Many hospital district patients have challenges with transportation, particularly if they live in outlying areas, so they may put off getting a mammogram. Now, thanks to the mobile unit, we can come to them to ensure they receive their annual screenings."

The mobile mammography unit was produced by LifeLine Mobile, a manufacturer of medical mobile units in Columbus, Ohio. The entire process took more than six months to complete. The project is a result of support from the Harris County Hospital District Foundation, the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, the Pink Ribbons Project, the Baylor Methodist Community Health Fund and Fuji Film.



By Nicole M. Benningfield

Three individuals who exemplify the ServiceFIRST standards of Friendliness, Integrity, Responsibility, Satisfaction, and Teamwork are being recognized this month as ServiceFIRST Heroes.



Jocelyn Sagrado – LBJ General Hospital
Jocelyn Sagrado, nurse in the High Risk Nursery at LBJ General Hospital, was nominated by Shui Wong, a fellow nurse.

“I have observed Ms. Sagrado providing exceptional, loving care to an infant who was hospitalized for almost six months. Ms. Sagrado works in my neighboring unit, night shift,” Wong wrote.

“Every time I worked with Ms. Sagrado, I saw her spending quality time caring for this infant. She carried him, rocked him, sang and talked to him as long as he stayed awake. I think her interactions with this infant are crucial to his development and growth.

“Ms. Sagrado demonstrated excellence in nursing care by providing such wonderful attention to this infant.”



Anthony Hemphill – Ben Taub General Hospital
Psychiatry Technician
Anthony Hemphill was nominated by a patient who wrote, “He helped me with everything I needed. He took me for

Anthony Hemphill

Heroes: **Jocelyn Sagrado, Anthony Hemphill, Francis Zermeno**

walks and talked to me, getting my mind off negative things. Anthony got me clothing and bedding, and I didn’t even have to ask. He’s very compassionate and kind. He listened to me and gave me positive advice.”



Francis Zermeno – Gulfgate Health Center
Francis Zermeno, patient service representative, was nominated by a patient who wrote, “Thank you Harris County Hospital District for having a great employee working for

you. She has made a big impact on my life.

“I am a cancer survivor, and she makes me smile when I am feeling down. She tells me to hang in there, everything will be OK.

“It is people like her that make people feel a lot better when all is wrong. I really appreciate everything that she does for me, and for you all. Please take this as commendation on my behalf to congratulate her for work well done, and please let her know the things that she does well.”

Foreign Press Visit

Twenty-three foreign political reporters visited Ben Taub General Hospital on March 6. The group was in Houston as part of a U.S. State Department 11-day Foreign Media Briefing and Tour to three cities in Texas, which helped them better understand key issues regarding the 2008 national political elections, the economy, immigration and health care. Following a tour of the emergency center, the group participated in a roundtable discussion with David S. Lopez, president and CEO; George V. Masi, COO; Dr. Fred Sutton, chief medical officer; Dr. Charles Begley, professor of management, policy and community health at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston; Dr. Steve Brown, Lyndon B. Johnson General Hospital chief of staff; and Dr. Ken Mattox, Ben Taub chief of staff.



ACCOLADES

Several staff members from Information Technology’s field services and help desk recently received certification as Microsoft certified desktop support technicians.

They are: **Orlando Aviles, Peter Borys, Wesley Brown, Carl Bruce, Rick Carlisle, Phillip Crumby, Lance Dao, Ron Davis, Sam DeLeon, Hector Garza, Roy Harvey, Trey Hennigan, Tony Hsu, Terry Keeble, Charles Kelley, Horace McKoy, Khanh Nguyen, Gilbert Padilla, Jonathan Paxton, Armie Ray and Les Reeves.**

Maria Edwards, R.N., hematology coordinator in the Medicine Clinic at

Ben Taub General Hospital, received her ambulatory care nursing certification from the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

Dr. Nasser Lakkis, chief of cardiology at Ben Taub General Hospital and professor at Baylor College of Medicine, was awarded the 2008 Gifted Teacher Award by the American College of Cardiology in recognition of his “innovative, outstanding teaching characteristics and compassionate qualities.”

Angie Ozaeta was named director of quality and patient safety at Ben Taub General Hospital.

Ellen Martin, patient advocate at Ben Taub General Hospital, will present, “The Role of the Patient Liaison in a County Public Hospital” to the Society for Healthcare Consumer Advocacy of the American Hospital Association in April in St. Louis.

Dr. Kenneth L. Mattox, chief of staff at Ben Taub General Hospital, conducted a tour of 31 members of Leadership North Houston, an organization that exposes business and civic residents to various aspects of health care. Hospital District Board of Managers member Elvin Franklin Jr. invited the group to tour Ben Taub.

March Service Standard: Friendliness

Friendliness is contagious – greet and acknowledge your customers. For more information about ServiceFIRST, call 713-566-6063.

1. Promptly acknowledge each patient, customer or guest with a smile.
2. Let those who are waiting know you’ll be right with them.

3. Make eye contact and use a friendly greeting such as “hello,” “good morning” or “good afternoon.”
4. Introduce yourself by name and job function and what your role will be.
5. Offer your assistance with any of their needs.

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For comments or questions, e-mail news@hchd.tmc.edu