COLORADO
Coalition for the Medically Underserved
Dedicated to improving care for Colorado's medically underserved

September 2007 Member Newsletter

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CCMU 11th Annual Conference

The Colorado Coalition for the Medically Underserved presents its 11th Annual Caring for Colorado's Medically Underserved Conference "**Shaping the Future of Health Care in Colorado**" on **Friday, September 21**, from 8:00 am – 4:15 pm with registration and networking beginning at 7:30 am. We are excited to present Julie Winokur, award winning journalist and filmmaker, and Dianne Stewart, Director of Public Works for the Demos Center as our keynote speakers. In addition, the 208 Health Care Reform Commission will present the four proposals under consideration by the Blue Ribbon Commission and go over the budget implications for each.

Break Out Sessions

A *Media and Messaging to Shape Reform*
Led by Julie Winokur

B *Restating the Common Good to Inform Reform*
Led by the Demos Public Works Project

C *Looking Forward: Colorado After Referendum C*
Led by The Bell Policy

D 2010 All Kids Covered and KidzBlitz Initiative
Led by CCMU

Register now at www.blacktie-colorado.com and enter event code CCMU11. The event is at the Radisson Hotel Denver SW (I-225 & Parker Road). It promises to be a great conference again. Hope you'll be there!

The 11th Annual Caring for Colorado's Medically Underserved Conference is Sponsored in part by:
COPIG
Colorado Community Health Network
Denver Health Foundation
Poudre Valley Health Services
Exempla Good Samaritan Medical Center
Faegre & Benson
Kaiser Permanente
Mental Health Center of Denver
Metro Community Provider Network
New West Management Service Organization
Physician Health Partners
Platte Valley Medical Center
Radisson
Sky Ridge Medical Center/HealthONE
University Hospital
University Physicians, Inc.
VanderArk Foundation

(as of 9/18/07)

SCHIP Update!

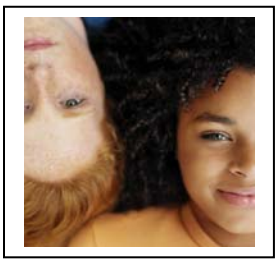
By Tara Trujillo, MNM, Health Initiatives Director, Colorado Children's Campaign

As you may know, the federal SCHIP program, which gives us Colorado's CHP+ program and provides health care coverage for over 54,000 children and pregnant women in our state, is set to expire on September 30. Additionally, we have 180,000 uninsured children who could be shut out of coverage if congress chooses to restrict the program unnecessarily. Our work at the state level to insure kids is directly dependent on congress' actions on this issue.

Our Senators and Representatives are currently debating the measure in congress and they need to hear from you how important health insurance for Colorado's most vulnerable kids is! This is a critical time for you to contact your Washington legislators – September 30 is only two weeks away!

See *SCHIP* on Page 4

CCMU's New KidzBlitz Initiative



Problem:
One in six children (14 percent) lacks health insurance in Colorado; that amounts to nearly 180,000 children. Many of the 180,000 are eligible for public programs, but are not enrolled.
Medicaid eligible: 65,468 Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) eligible: 57,189

Goal:
Reduce the eligible, but not enrolled children in Medicaid and Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) programs.

KidzBlitz Concept:
The idea for KidzBlitz came out of discussions between various groups of people questioning what it would take to enroll eligible children into Medicaid or CHP+. The Colorado Coalition for the Medically Underserved convened a steering group to explore ways to address the problem.

See *KidzBlitz* on Page 3 for the Plan!

Public Hearings with 208 Commission

By Michele Swenson, Health Care for All Colorado

The 208 Blue Ribbon Commission for Health Care Reform is scheduled to make its final recommendations to the legislature by the end of January. The Lewin Group just completed its evaluation of four diverse proposals selected by the 208 Commission. Now the Commission is working on its own 5th Proposal. There is one more opportunity for the public to weigh in on health care reform – see the schedule of October congressional district meetings (on page 5), and mark your calendars. At the end of this update is a list of suggested comments on which the Commission is requesting comment. Only 1 of the 4 health care reform proposals evaluated by the Lewin Group was shown to insure everyone AND save money - the Colorado Health Services Single Payer Insurance.

CCMU is committed to fostering informed debate about all health care reform options and proposals. Please submit your thoughts and views to Eric & Amy Hansen for future publication in the newsletter.

5th Proposal

The Blue Ribbon Commission for Health Care Reform is writing their own 5th Proposal, also to be evaluated by Lewin. They are considering a 2-track system of public-private insurance with an individual mandate to purchase private insurance and a tax penalty for failure to do so - similar to the Massachusetts model. (See Massachusetts Health Care – Universal in Name Only at The Bell Policy Blog: http://www.thebell.org/blog/208/?q=node/41)

Unfortunately, without strictly regulating private insurances, the experience in Massachusetts with an Individual Mandate is that even the most "affordable" private insurance premium is unaffordable for many - $660/month per family and $330/month per individual. These policies tend to be high-deductible, high-co-payment, stripped-down policies that do not provide adequate health or financial protection.

See *208 Commission* on Page 4

Introducing *Ventanilla de Salud*!

By *Julissa Molina Soto*, *Associate Director of Latino Outreach, American Diabetes Association*

A 2005 report entitled Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities in Colorado uncovered great shortfalls in health care for Colorado's Latino population. The Latino population experiences the highest rate of un-insured with one in four individuals lacking coverage. Even more distressing, Latino children account for almost 30 percent of the state's uninsured children. In response, a program called *Ventanilla de Salud* (Window of Health) was designed to increase access to preventive health care and health information through the Mexican Consulate in Denver.

Read the full report at http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/ohd/ethnicdisparitiesreport/REHD-05.pdf.

Ventanilla de Salud is a collaborative project of the Denver Office of the Mexican Consulate and the American Diabetes Association (ADA)-Colorado Area. The program offers healthcare-related legal advice and referrals to the thousands of Latinos who visit the Denver Office Mexican Consulate. Ventanilla de Salud is designed to help new immigrants overcome barriers faced accessing health and social services. It also aims to the health of Latinos through education, demonstrating how social factors—language skills, significant cultural differences, poor education, and poverty—affect health outcomes. Through a partnership with the ADA-Colorado Area's Latino Health Promotion and Disease Prevention program, *Por Tu Familia*, consular visitors also receive health education sessions on topics of particular importance to low-income Latinos.

Ventanilla de Salud is encouraging Latino businesses to join in the fight to make a dramatic difference and to create lasting changes in the lives of Mexican immigrants in the Denver metro area. Funding from Latino businesses would provide important assistance, enabling Latinos to make informed health decisions, promoting community health, as well as helping the program remain cost-effective, efficient and culturally-competent.

Moreover, the program welcomes any opportunity to meet with local Latino representatives to further discuss ways to collaborate. For more information on how your business can support *Ventanilla de Salud* and the American Diabetes Association-Colorado Area's *Por Tu Familia* program call Julissa Molina Soto at 720 855-1102 ext. 7027.

KidzBlitz from page 2

KidzBlitz Plan:
The KidzBlitz enrollment effort will include organizing volunteers to help families complete the application process, and drive up the total number of applications in the system. A challenge in the current enrollment process is the length of time it takes to process applications. The rising number of applications in the system may highlight the desperate level of need that exists to address the fragmentation and obstacles in the current system.

By increasing the number of children that are ready to be enrolled (completed the application process) in Medicaid or CHP+ will bring political pressure for change because of the increased visibility of the new population.

For more information on how to volunteer, visit www.ccmu.org and click on KIDZBLITZ!

SCHIP from page 1

We urge you to use your voice for Colorado's children now. As has become our mantra in our work on this issue, Congress needs to do the right thing, so Colorado can do things right!

Please let me know if you have thoughts or questions about this issue. As always, we appreciate you speaking out on behalf of Colorado's kids. www.coloradokids.org.

Commission from page 2

You can also read about Minnesota's disappointing experience trying to legislate not-for-profit private insurances - how the insurers use creative bookkeeping and have taken control of the regulatory process at The Bell Policy Blog at http://www.thebell.org/blog/208/?q=node/44.

It is important to let the 208 Commission and our legislators know that we want real systemic reform, not incremental reform that merely continues shifting costs without addressing a major cause of inflationary health costs - the high administrative costs of commercial insurers, who guarantee shareholder profits by insuring the healthy and excluding everyone else as a 'pre-existing condition.' Over 30% of our health care dollars go to wasteful administrative costs of private insurances - 20% administration, marketing and profit-taking, and another 12% administrative costs imposed by insurances on providers and hospitals. The CHS Single Payer Proposal calls for limiting overhead costs to 5%. Medicare has an overhead cost of 1.8%. More background information: www.healthcareforallcolorado.org under "208 Commission."

We are scheduling meetings to bring information related to health care reform to our state and federal legislators. If you are willing to visit with your state or federal legislators, please email me at mswenson@theopolitics.com.

Read about different views of reform, and participate in **The Bell Policy Center Health Care Blog: www.thebell.org/blog/208 .**

Members in the News

New CCMU Team Member!

Leta Gill, RN, CLNC, of the Regis Service Learning experience a component RN to MSN program announces her alliance with CCMU team.

Ms. Gill brings 25 years of experience in the health care system and a belief in a universal and civilized health care that emphasizes quality of life.

Her intern role will be as liaison to the 208 Blue Ribbon Commission on Health Care Reform. She will represent the coalition at all meeting.

Ms. Gill looks forward to making a difference in the healthcare system as a member of the coalition and sharing her philosophy of a quality patient care in building a good health care product.

New CCMU Volunteer!

Our new volunteer, Tarah Schroeder, has a BA in International Relations/Environmental Studies from USC and is currently taking classes at Metro State in Biology. She is also completing her prerequisites for nursing school. Tarah is committed to helping in her community, creating a positive effect by focusing on others. She is also interested in discovering and understanding patient needs and struggles as part of her future career plans.

Babies, Babies, Babies!

Dan and Sara Matlock welcomed their daughter Amelia Rose Matlock, born March 28th at 7:35 in the AM. She weighed 6 pounds 5 ounces and was19 inches long. Amelia's Daddy is a PRO-CO author and a Dr in training in Gerontology.

Calendar of Events

The Colorado Coalition for the Medically Underserved is pleased to provide information about two important and significant events:

The Center for Bioethics and Humanities, University of Colorado, at Denver Health Sciences Center proudly presents

"Ethical Aspects of Providing Access & Reforming Health Care"
Monday, October 8, 2007
6:00-9:00 pm

National Jewish Hospital--Molly Blank Conference Center
1400 Jackson Street, Denver, CO 80206
Program cost $30 and includes complimentary box dinner.
Keynote: Matthew Wynia, AMA Director of Ethics Institute.

The League of Women Voters, Colorado Social Legislation Committee and the Colorado Nonprofit Association present

"Where Colorado Stands, Where Colorado Falls"
Wednesday, October 17, 2007
7:30-9:30 am

The forum will highlight the issues, facts, politics and potential strategies to begin addressing the crisis of "Life after Ref. C," which will end in 2010. **Keynote: State Treasurer Cary Kennedy.**
Panel discussion: "Looking Forward: Colorado after Referendum C", presented by the Bell Policy Center, the Colorado Children's Campaign and the Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute.

Forum is **FREE** and open to the public but please register as the number of attendees is LIMITED TO 200. For more information go to https://wwwcoloradononprofits.org/workshops_reg.cfm:id=5764 or contact Jennifer Gremmert at Energy Outreach Colorado, (303) 226-5052 or jgremmert@EnergyOutreach.org

208 Commission (Blue Ribbon Commission) for Healthcare Reform Public Hearings

10/4	Boulder (TBD)	5-8:00 pm
10/5	Colorado Springs (TBD)	5-8:00 pm
	Lamar (Lamar Community Bldg	5-8:00 pm
10/6	Denver (Auraria Campus)	2-5:00 pm
	Parker (Parker Town Hall)	9 am-12 pm
	Pueblo (Pueblo Convention Ctr)	9 am-12 pm
	Canon City (Canon City HS)	5-8:00 pm
10/10	Durango (Durango Rec Center)	5-8:00 pm
10/11	Greeley (UNC Campus)	5-8:00 pm
	Grand Junction (City Hall Audit)	5-8:00 pm
10/12	Silverthorne (Silverthorne Lib)	5-8:00 pm
	Fort Collins (Lincoln Center)	5-8:00 pm
10/13	Craig (TBD)	1-4:00 pm
	Brighton (Adams Cty Court)	1-4:00 pm

For more information on the public hearings visit the Commission website at http://www.colorado.gov/208commission.

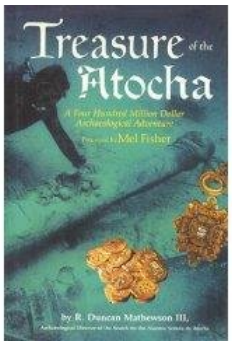
Hear about all four proposals under consideration by the 208 Commission at CCMU's Annual Conference, Friday, September 21!

Colorado Covering Kids & Families

Health Policy Work Group
When: October 3
Time: 10-11:30 am
Where: 600 Grant St
2nd Floor Conference Rm

Agency Partners Work Group
When: October 26
Time: 9-10:30 am
Where: 600 Grant St, Ste. 800
Large Conference Rm

Coach's Corner



Atocha

On the 6th of Sept, 1622, the Spanish galleon, *Atocha*, sank in a hurricane off the coast of Key West, Florida, carrying a fortune of gold, silver, and jewels whose crippling loss would only hasten the decline of the Spanish empire. On that sandy bottom in 55 ft of water, the *Atocha* would lie silent for over 360 years.

In 1985, Mel Fisher's **16 year quest** culminated in the greatest offshore treasure discovery *ever*…nearly *$500 million dollars*! The mother lode of the *Atocha* had been found!

Mel Fisher's unwavering determination to discover the lost Spanish galleon was embodied *daily* in his mantra, *"Today's the day!"* He had fixed his eyes on a dream and steadfastly pursued this vision **in spite of** enormous personal loss and hardship.

What is your *Atocha*? Toward what goal are you striving? Regardless of what it is, realize that its discovery begins with a daily commitment and belief, "*Today's the day*".

CCMU is committed to ensuring access to timely, affordable, quality care for everyone in Colorado and we can--we will--we must achieve our goals. Your voice is critical to our success; if you have not recently joined or renewed your membership; please take a moment to complete the membership form following this newsletter. We will be updating our website with current legislative initiatives by the first of the year, so get dialed in and stay tuned to ways your organization can be involved in these exciting times. If you have any questions or need more info, just call...thanks!! Molly Markert, Executive Director, CCMU (303) 832-7727.

www.ccmu.org

Is your event or program supporting the mission of CCMU or the medically underserved in Colorado? Let us know! Contact Eric and Amy Hansen, Newsletter Editors, at eric.w.hansen@earthlink.net.