

2013 list of PHNAC award recipients

Most Innovative Project

Gail Stoltzfus, Custer County Public Health

Gail Stoltzfus, RN deserves the Most Innovative Project Award for her Free Sports Physicals Project. She lives in a small, mountain county with limited access to care. When that impacts our children, it is even more of a concern. Many of our residents are either uninsured or underinsured, and they cannot afford the physicals which are necessary for their children to participate in intermural sports. Gail Stoltzfus began working on this project several years ago and continues to refine and enlarge it. This year she made it possible for at least 115 Middle and High School students to receive free sports physicals. In order to accomplish this, she arranged for space at our medical clinic, convinced several of the medical providers to volunteer their time and professional expertise, and communicated with school personnel and parents. She also works with the school nurse and administers any needed vaccinations at the time of their physicals. This year she arranged for five separate clinics, trying to provide for as many students as possible. This has been very positively received by students, parents, and school personnel alike. It has also boosted the public relations for our medical providers who were facing criticism from the community for not having community projects. This has been a very unique, innovative and ambitious project which is worthy of replication in other public health agencies.

New Public Health Nurse of the Year

Melanie Rogers, Jefferson County Public Health

With only three years of experience in the field, Melanie Rogers has already demonstrated great aptitude as a public health nurse and is an emerging leader. Her interest and focus are in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, especially for youth, which have greatly benefited several new initiatives recently implemented in our family planning clinic. As part of a marketing plan to increase our outreach to teens in Jefferson County, Melanie developed the idea for the 'Go Ask TISH' text line. Since its launch in February, over 300 texts have been received. Melanie also created and stars in a video series called, "Sex Ed with Mel... in 30 minutes or less." Videos are posted on the JCPH website, YouTube, and recently featured on the Beforeplay.org Facebook page and website. Videos topics include "How to use a condom," "STDs," and "Birth control methods." Thus far, she has created seven videos which have been viewed over 1500 times. Melanie does a brilliant job of using her artistic style and sense of humor to lighten up some potentially embarrassing topics and help young people feel they are able to relate to her. These undertakings have been in addition to her regular responsibilities of seeing clients in our family planning clinic, case management, and outreach of the HIV program. Melanie's enthusiasm, positive attitude, and passion for her work have made her a wonderful asset to our agency. She has made important contributions to public health nursing in Colorado and is extremely deserving of the PHNAC New Public Health Nurse of the Year award.

PHNAC Award for Excellence

Carol McDonald, Denver Public Health

Carol is passionate about public health and service to the Denver and Colorado communities. She has fostered and implemented programs for nursing students from all over Colorado to acquire rotations in Denver Public Health clinics, thus increasing awareness of Public Health as a nursing specialty. She manages and participates in outreach programs to provide ongoing education to nurse consultants and daycare employees. These programs have increased awareness of immunization regulations and needs, and promoted increased vaccine coverage of our youngest citizens. During the recent upsurge in whooping cough in our State, she helped design and execute a special program to provide free vaccinations to daycare providers in metro Denver to help reduce transmission of pertussis. Carol has championed excellence in Public Health nursing by her service to the many committees, nursing groups and organizations she participates in. She helped design and implement the “new nurse” orientation to Public Health which is now a part of PHNPC’s contribution to the annual PHIR conference. She is a mentor and who encourages all public health nurses to actively participate in every aspect of public health nursing. And, Carol never forgets that Public Health is really about the individual people who live and work in our communities.

Lillian Wald Award

Kindra Mulch, Kit Carson Health Department

Though not a native of Colorado (she was born and raised in Kansas), Kindra has embraced the Colorado spirit for 30+ years. She has been intimately involved in agriculture (working with her husband on the family farm) and a member of a small rural town located in eastern Colorado. Kindra is not afraid of speaking her mind, and has been involved on several boards and workgroups including the local Family Center Board, Rural Solutions, Centennial AHEC and others. In order to be effective on these boards, she maintains a high level of understanding regarding the issues that are important to her community. Because of her inquisitive nature, she stays abreast of the issues of the day and is not afraid to ask compelling questions or voice her opinion (which is well informed) when it is vital that stakeholders know what the moving parts and facts are. This allows for those not involved at a high level to make informed decisions that are sound and that will have a positive impact. She is passionate about her profession--just ask her! Kindra spent over a decade on the Colorado State Board of Public Health, always aware of her role as a public health nurse and using that title to inject the nursing perspective. She took this position very seriously, rarely missing a meeting and spending countless hours prior to meetings reading preparatory materials. She influenced many of the recent changes in public health including medical marijuana and public health law. She is a subject matter expert in many areas, especially Robert’s Rules of Order. She has brought to light the benefit of having solid relationships with our Human Service colleagues which allows for nurses to do a better job providing services to our communities.