



**SPRING / SUMMER 2014**

## **E-HEALTHBEAT**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR



Lillian Rivera  
RN, MSN, PhD

### Dear Team Members:

I'm proud to announce that the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade was the recipient of the 2014 Governor's Sustained Excellence Award.

This high-level assessment process examined how well we have continued to improve and innovate to sustain and grow our organization in a competitive environment.

A highly experienced Examiner Team visited our Health Department after they reviewed our application. It was a visit conducted at an executive level, which began with a presentation that highlighted many of the accom-

plishments and improvements from the past couple of years.

It's clear that we are not an organization that sits back after being recognized with a Sterling Award.

During the process, we identified opportunities for improvement, some of which have already been addressed.

The award encourages us to continue on our path of excellence to better serve and safeguard public health in Miami-Dade.

I would like to recognize all our employees and community partners, who made this possible.

Keep up the good work!

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# A Showcase of Services in Calle Ocho

The Women's Health & Preventive Services (WHPS), Public Health Preparedness and the WIC and Nutrition programs of the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County (DOH-Miami-Dade) reached out to the community during the Calle Ocho festival celebrated in March.

A total of 17 team members represented the programs and provided a wealth of health information, education and materials to those who visited one of the world's largest street fairs.

Over 2,000 participants visited the DOH-Miami-Dade's tents and stands and collected information on

Family Planning, Breast and Cervical & Colorectal Cancer services, Prenatal Care, Breastfeeding, Nutrition, WIC eligibility, Public Health Preparedness, The Medical Reserve Corps, and other services and programs.



*Team members from different programs represented the Health Department at Calle Ocho festival.*

# World TB Day Emphasizes Threat of the Disease

**T**he Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County in partnership with community partners recognized World Tuberculosis (TB) Day with a health fair and other activities.

Under the theme “Reach the three million: A TB test, treatment, and cure for all,” the events took place between March 24 and April 3 and were aimed at raising awareness and educating the public as well as healthcare

professionals about the threat of TB even in this age of superior medical advancements and technology.

“World TB Day serves as a reminder that tuberculosis is still a very significant public health concern. Tuberculosis continues to affect the lives of millions of people worldwide each year even though it can be cured,” said Dr. Lillian Rivera, Administrator of the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County.

The Tuberculosis Control & Prevention Program of the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County has been successful in reducing the number of TB cases in the county over the last eight years. There was a 41% decrease in TB cases in 2013 (136) compared to 2005 (228) cases.

In 2012, the TB case rate in Miami-Dade was 4.9, compared to 6.2 in 2011.



*Dr. Reynald Jean (center) and TB Program team members at one of the events.*

# Team Members Receive FIU Public Health Awards

Two team members from the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County (DOH-Miami-Dade) received in March the Paths of Public Health Award from Florida International University's Robert Stempel School of Public Health.

Olga Connor, Director of the DOH-Miami-Dade's Office of Communications and Legislative Affairs received the award for Advocacy, and Asit Sakar was recognized for his work related to Environmental Health.

The Paths of Public Health Awards was established to recognize individuals and organizations in public health for their contributions and commitment to promoting and protecting the health of the South Florida community. The awards also serve to raise the community's awareness and understanding of the contributions made by public health professionals. The first annual Paths of Public Health Awards was held on September, 2006.

"We are honored to have received these prestigious awards," said Lillian Rivera, R.N., M.S.N., Ph.D., Administrator of DOH-Miami-Dade. "Our Department is committed to promoting and protecting the health of our citizens." Rivera added, "We are proud that two of our team members have been recognized with these awards."

Florida International University's Robert Stempel School of Public Health is committed to recognizing outstanding South Floridians who are working to improve and maintain the health of the community. The awards are intended to recognize community contributions and achievements of the recipients.



*Olga Connor received the award for Advocacy.*



*Asit Sakar received the award in the category of Environmental Health.*

# CELEBRATING 12 YEARS OF PUBLIC HEALTH IN FLORIDA



The Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County celebrated 125 years of Public Health in Florida with an event at the historic Alamo building of the Jackson Health Campus.

The importance of public health as line of defense against communicable diseases and other illnesses, as well as relevant dates related to the history of public health in Florida, were highlighted by health officials.

Administrator Lillian Rivera said: "This 125th anniversary is an opportunity to reflect on the tremendous contributions public health professionals have made to improving life in Florida. The growth of Florida's population through the years was

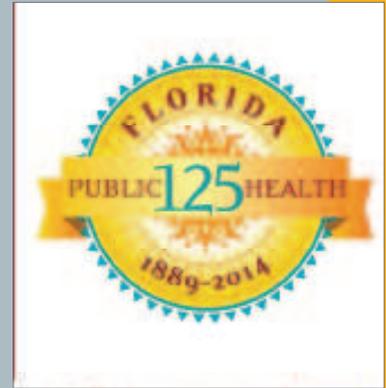
made possible largely with efforts to control disease, improve environmental health and address health equity throughout our great State."

In her speech, Rivera also highlighted that Miami-Dade County was ranked as Florida's 6th most healthy county by the 2013 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation report of the nation's health.

Other speakers included Carlos A. Migoya, President and CEO of Jackson Health System; James J. Hutson, a surgeon from the University of Miami and great-grandson of Dr. James Jackson; historian Paul George, and Cedric McMinn, aide to State Representative Cynthia A. Stafford.

*From left to right: Lillian Rivera, Carlos A. Migoya, James J. Hutson, Paul George and Cedric McMinn*





*Dr. Lillian Rivera and Dr. Reynald Jean address participants.*



*Lori Jordahl recounted her experiences as a public health worker.*



*Team members gathered for the the celebration at the Health District Center.*

# Senior Leaders Host Employees of the Month

The Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County celebrated its 3rd Annual “Breakfast with the Boss,” an event that gathered Senior Leaders and Employees of the Month winners of 2013.

Employees participated in “getting to know you”, where the Senior Leaders had the opportunity to learn more about each of the team members invited.

Maria Del Mar Ochaita, from the WIC & Nutrition Program, was announced as the 2013 Employee of the Year. Kudos to Ms. Ochaita.



*From left to right: Dennis Morales, Daniela Martinez, Praveena Harnarine, Ruffer Guerrero, Janet Garces, Giancarlo Lissandrelli, Blanca Aldana, Kristina Castro, Hermi Molina, Alazandria Cruze and Dr. Lillian Rivera.*

# Community Outreach at its Best in Coconut Grove

In partnership with State Representative José Javier Rodríguez, the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County (DOH-Miami-Dade) held a health fair to inform the community about soil contamination, disease prevention and other topics related to public health.

Various programs from the Health Department exhibited at the event that took place at the Elizabeth Virrick Park, in Coconut Grove. Community leaders, health care providers, pediatricians, experts from the Poison Control Center, Federally Qualified Health Centers and local county agencies such as the Department of Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces attended the event to share with the community their expertise in public health and showcase their programs and services.

“Our recognition to all who worked so hard for our Health Fair. You all did an outstanding job. Delivering prevention messages for our children and parents is what it is all about,” said Dr. Lillian Rivera, Administrator of DOH-Miami-Dade.

During the fair, three educational sessions were offered to participants by Dr. Richard Weisman, Director of the Poison Control Center and Dr. Jeffrey Brosco, Medical Director of Children Medical Services in the South Region. They spoke about soil contamination in some public parks in Miami-Dade and answered questions from the community.



*Left to right, Lillian Rivera and State Representative José Javier Rodríguez give certificates of recognition to team members.*



*Children and their parents attended the event.*



*Experts explained facts on soil contamination.*



*Different activities were available to the public.*

# Former WIC Director Featured in Digital Publication

The digital publication “Public Health Heroes” featured Denise West, former Director of our

WIC Program, in an article that celebrated 125 years of public health in Florida and individuals

who have made a difference in their communities.

## Nutrition Program Director Influences a Career in Public Health

By Olga Connor, Director of Communications and Legislative Affairs, Miami-Dade County

For Miami-Dade County’s retired nutrition program director, Denise West, her earliest and most inspirational memories of the Department came from her hometown of Miami, as nurses administered the polio vaccine at her elementary school.

While searching for a career path as an undergraduate, West reached out to the county health department’s nutrition program director Levina Philips, RD. Philips’ influence led West to attend the University of California, Berkeley, where she earned a Master of Science in Public Health Nutrition.

These interactions ultimately led West into a career as a registered dietitian, 35 years of which included service with her public health department in Miami-Dade.

In 1979, as the public health nutrition program director, West expanded the WIC monthly caseload from 11,000 to more than 70,000 claims, gaining a national reputation for innovations in Miami-Dade County. Moving into a senior leadership position, she amassed WIC services with public and private partners, while introducing a WIC centralized information and appointment call center. She initiated the expansion of the call center to include a breastfeeding promotion program with a help line that lengthened WIC services to include Saturdays, and activated the WIC Hurricane Andrew response.

Denise West expressed the impact the Department had on her, “Public health has stretched me professionally to work creatively across disciplines with

many partners to accomplish goals and share resources.” This stretching involved developing systematic methods to improve clinic operations, customer service and business-forward results, as well as performing a large role in preparedness planning for executing two major immunization campaigns.

In response to West’s work with opening and supervising three new health centers, Miami-Dade County Administrator Lillian Rivera, RN, MSN, PhD, said, “Denise West fully embraced the Sterling management principles and is a mentor to our emerging leaders. Her passion, determination and vision have made a positive impact in the community.”



Denise Duvall West, RD, LD/N, FADA, MPH  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

*“Public health has stretched me professionally to work creatively across disciplines with many partners to accomplish goals and share resources.”*

South  
east

# Full-Scale Exercise Tests Miami-Dade Response to Bioterrorist Attack

At the the end of January, the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County, under the guidance of the Public Health Preparedness Program, led a three-day full-scale regional exercise to assess its ability to collaborate with Emergency Management, Law Enforcement, Fire Rescue, Hospitals and other local, regional, and Federal partners to respond to a catastrophic man-made emergency. The exercise was a required deliverable for the Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) grant. The exercise played out the scenario of a hypothetical release in our county of *Francisella tularensis*, a bacterium classified by the U.S. government as a Category A agent, a classification that includes agents such as plague, anthrax, and ebola. *F. tularensis* causes an infection called tularemia that can be lethal if not treated with antibiotics.

From detection to demobilization, all aspects of the response were tested and the entire region was involved. State and Federal partners were also engaged and played their respective roles in the exercise. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provided physical assets and guidance to ensure all deliverables were met. "This live-action training with our partners is a valuable tool to strengthen our ability to respond to an actual event," said Lillian Rivera, administrator of the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County. "We want to be ready to take the necessary actions to preserve the health and well-being of our residents and visitors," she added.

CDC's Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response, Division of Strategic National Stockpile provides technical assistance to the 72 metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) chosen to be included in the CRI with the development of plans to receive,



***Two of the many participants simulate a bioterrorist attack.***

distribute, and dispense medical assets received from CDC's Strategic National Stockpile. To ensure continued readiness, CDC and state public health personnel conduct annual technical assistance reviews to assess the plans for each local jurisdiction within their CRI MSAs and measure capacity and proficiency in functions considered critical. The TAR scores (reviewed on a scale from zero to 100) for each local jurisdiction are combined to compute an average TAR score for the CRI MSA. A score of 69 or higher indicates a CRI location is performing in an acceptable range in its plans to receive, distribute, and Strategic National Stockpile medical assets. Our own CRI earned a TAR score of 100% this year!

CRI is a federally funded program designed to enhance preparedness in the nation's largest cities and metropolitan statistical areas where more than 50% of the U.S. population resides. Through CRI, state and large metropolitan public health departments have developed plans to respond to a large-scale bioterrorist event by dispensing antibiotics to the entire population of an identified metropolitan statistical areas within 48 hours.

***Contributors: Rene Ynestroza / Natasha Strokin***

# 2014 Governor's Sustained Excellence Award Goes to Us

**A**ccolades continue coming in for the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade. This time around our organization was recipient of the 2014 Governor's Sustained Excellence Award, a recognition that enables Governor's Sterling Award winners retain their role model status.

Administrator Lillian Rivera received the award from Florida Governor Rick Scott at a ceremony that took place in June.

This high-level assessment process examines how well an organization has continued to improve and innovate in a competitive environment.

Some of the achievements that merited the award: an overall customer satisfaction of 98.1 percent for 2013-2014, the percentage of 2-year-old children fully immunized who are currently County Health Department clients has seen a steady improvement from 90% to 98%, from 2009 to 2013.

The department has also maintained high customer engagement, participating in hospital forums and consortium activities. The Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade, an initiative of the

Health Department, coordinated 95 activities aimed at improving access to services and enhancing overall community health.



***Governor Rick Scott and Dr. Lillian Rivera.***



***Senior Leaders and team members pose with the award.***

# Teaming Up for a Healthy Future

The Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade (DOH-Miami-Dade) partnered with a group of local students to celebrate Fit Kids Day, an initiative that promotes fitness and healthy eating among youngsters.

DOH Miami-Dade brought exhibits, free screenings and other activities to an event that attracted dozens of sponsors and hundreds of participants in Pinecrest and Key Biscayne.

Fit Kids Day, an idea of local student Sofia de la Peña, showcases nutritious foods and physical activities like zumba, yoga, martial arts, basketball, tennis, soccer and volleyball.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, childhood obesity is considered a national health crisis, with one in three children ages 2-19 being overweight.



*Participants interact with team members from the Health Department.*



*Fit Kids Day is an event by kids for kids.*

# Laboratory Program Gets Lift From Mayor, Commissioners

Our Laboratory Services team celebrated in May the National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week (NMLPW) with a retreat at the A.D. Doug Barnes Park, together with other programs, including Epidemiology and Disease Control, Immunizations, Tuberculosis Prevention and HIV/AIDS.

NMLPW is an annual celebration for the medical laboratory professionals and pathologists who play a vital role in every aspect of health care. Lab Professionals Week is held annually the last week of April.

Locally, the Miami-Dade County Office of the Mayor and Board of County Commissioners issued a proclamation to celebrate and support medical laboratory professionals in our community. The proclamation was presented to the staff by Administrator, Dr. Lillian Rivera.



*Team members from Laboratory Services and other programs.*



*A little bit of entertainment at the retreat.*



*Employees show techniques and practices during the retreat.*



*The proclamation was presented by Administrator Lillian Rivera.*

# Nurses Celebrate National Week at Museum



*National Nurses Week is celebrated May 6-12.*

Nurses from the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade celebrated in April National Nurses Week with an educational visit to the History Miami Museum, in downtown Miami, to learn more about the history of South Florida and enjoy different exhibitions devoted to the Hispanic influence in the region, and other topics.

National Nurses Week begins each year on May 6th and ends on May 12th.

The nursing profession has been supported and promoted by the American Nurses Association (ANA) since 1896. Each of ANA's state and territorial nurses associations promotes the nursing profession at the state and regional levels. Each conducts celebrations on these dates to recognize the contributions that nurses make to the community.



*Participants enjoy a moment at the museum.*

## Local Ministry Recognizes Health Department for HIV/AIDS Prevention

**A** local ministry recognized the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County (DOH Miami-Dade) for its work in preventing HIV/AIDS and educating the community about the disease.

Leroy Smith, Chief Apostle at the More Than Conquerors Outreach Ministries, presented the awards to Dr. Lillian Rivera and Heather Beaton, Administrator and Chief Legal

Counsel, respectively, during a brief ceremony at the Health Department.

DOH Miami-Dade has a comprehensive HIV/AIDS program that provides services and medicines to the population affected by the disease, and develops regular awareness campaigns to educate and involve the community in preventing it.



*Left to right: Heather Beaton, Leroy Smith and Lillian Rivera.*

# Test Miami Brings Free Screenings to Liberty City Residents

The STD-HIV Prevention and Control Program reached out to the community in Liberty City to offer free testing and screening for sexually transmitted diseases.

The event, called Walking One Stop, was supported by elected officials and local government agencies as a way to mobilize a dynamic coordinated community response and bring social and economic service referrals door-to-door to that neighborhood.

As part of the effort, the Test Miami Mobile Unit, tested and screened more than 100 individuals for HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis.

Test Miami is a collaborative effort of the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County and other local partners to promote routine HIV testing by physicians, improve Miami-Dade residents' understanding of HIV and reduce the transmission of the disease.



*Left to right: State Representative Cynthia Stafford, Praveena Saxena and Yolanda Davis-Camacho, from the Health Department, and Commissioner Audrey Edmonson.*



*More than 100 residents were tested and screened.*

# IN the Spotlight

## EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE EMPLOYEES AND PROGRAMS RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR PERFORMANCE AND PROFESSIONALISM. YOUR HARD WORK MAKES OUR COMMUNITY HEALTHIER AND SAFER.

JANUARY



Dawn Fontus  
*WIC*

FEBRUARY



Ximena Lopez  
*Administration*

MARCH



Erico Grover  
*WIC*

APRIL



Agustin Tellez  
*TB*

MAY



Jennifer Lawrence  
*EDC-IS*

JUNE



David Rigg  
*HIV/AIDS*

## Olga Connor Receives Sherman Winn "I Care" Award

Olga Connor, Director of Communication and Legislative Affairs of the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County, received the Sherman Winn "I Care" Award on April 3, 2014 during Miami-Dade County Days in Tallahassee.

The award, sponsored by the Miami-Dade County League of Cities and named after the late Representative Sherman Winn, was presented by his son Steve Winn. It's given to individuals whose work has made a positive difference in the community.



*Olga Connor and Meade Grigg, Deputy Secretary for Statewide Services.*

# IN the Spotlight

## TEAM OF THE QUARTER WINNERS

**2014 Team of the Quarter**  
**January - March**  
**AIDS Drug Assistance Program**



**ADAP Staff Allapattah**  
 Front: Noelia Hernandez, Loanis Gonzalez, Hermi Molina, Jorge Moras  
 Middle: Matthew White, Guerline Jean-Joseph, Javier Romero  
 Back: Julio Salguero  
 Not shown: Maria Arias

**Germa Dubuisson**  
ADAP Program Supervisor

**Sybille Coles**  
ADAP Coordinator West Perrine

**2014 Team of the Quarter**  
**April - June**  
**Accounts Receivable**



**AR Staff**  
**Financial Management**  
**Located at MICC**

**Esperanza Acosta** **Juan Gonzalez** **Ruffier Cuervo** **Lydia de La Rosa** **Sonia Smith**