

2010 MCH & Immunization Conference
Presenters (listed by last name)

Evelyn P. Abello is a Mental Health Clinician for Southcentral Foundation's Dena-A-Coy-Residential, a substance addiction and mental health treatment program in Anchorage. She earned her Master of Science in Counseling Psychology from Alaska Pacific University, and had worked as a professional counselor in the dual-diagnosis unit of the Salvation Army's Clitheroe Center. Evelyn comes to the mental health field after a career in civil rights enforcement, retiring as Investigations Director for the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights after nearly 30 years of service, and with experience as an educator in the Philippines, where she was born and raised.

Thomas Azzarella has been working and training in the youth development field for over ten years. He has worked with youth from 4 - 24 years of age. He leads community trainings on wide range of topics related to supporting youth and improving youth program quality.

Cathy Baldwin-Johnson is a family physician, life-long Alaskan, and mother of two grown children. She started the practice now known as Providence Matanuska Health Care, a multispecialty clinic in Wasilla, Alaska. She is a 1980 graduate of the University of Washington School of Medicine and completed the Swedish Hospital Medical Center Family Practice Residency program in 1983. She is the co-founder and volunteer medical director of The Children's Place, a Child Advocacy Center in the Mat-Su Borough. She serves as the medical director for Alaska CARES, the CAC in Anchorage, and oversees the SCAN (Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect) Teams at Mat-Su Regional and Providence Alaska Medical Centers. She has served on the Alaska Children's Justice Act Task Force since its inception, and is current chair.

Joyce Barnett is a physical therapist with over 35 years of experience working with children. Her work has been primarily in Anchorage first as a school district therapist, then in private practice. She has taught course work for pediatric therapists and is a regular contributor to the profession of physical therapy in Alaska.

Margaret Blabey has served as a Maternal and Child Health epidemiologist in the Alaska Division of Public Health, Section of Women's, Children's, and Family Health since July of 2005. Margaret conducts research studies on a variety of topics with a particular focus on infant and child mortality and child health. She is the primary epidemiologist and analyst for the Maternal-Infant Mortality and Child Death Review program, and she also coordinates the Alaska Childhood Understanding Behaviors Survey (CUBS), a follow-up to the PRAMS survey of mothers of newborns. Margaret has a Masters in Public Health from Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

Barb Borton is an occupational therapist with an interest in feeding and swallowing problems as they relate to function and independence for children and their families. She has regularly dined with children at the Feeding Clinic at the Rehabilitation Centre for Children In Winnipeg, Manitoba for the past 14 years. She also is Research Development Coordinator at the Rehabilitation Centre for Children. Barb is also currently working on completion of her Masters of Science (Rehabilitation) degree.

Jay Butler is Senior Director of the Division of Community Health Services at the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium in Anchorage. Prior to joining the Consortium in April 2010, he was Director of the H1N1 Vaccine Task Force at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, and he was Chief Medical Officer of Alaska from 2007 to 2009. Earlier assignments have included serving as Alaska State Epidemiologist, 2005-07, Director of CDC's Arctic Investigations Program, 1998-2005, and medical epidemiologist in CDC's National Center for Infectious Diseases, 1991-98. He is a graduate of the University of North Carolina Medical School, has completed clinical training at Vanderbilt and Emory Universities, and is board certified in infectious diseases, internal medical, and pediatrics. He has authored or co-authored over 100 scientific papers and medical textbook chapters on infectious diseases and emergency preparedness. His varied professional experiences include working as a physician for two months at a mission hospital in Kenya, leading the CDC field response to the initial Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome outbreak in the US in 1993, and serving as the CDC liaison to FBI Headquarters in

Washington, DC during in the investigation of the anthrax attacks in the fall of 2001. He was a team co-leader during the CDC responses to the SARS outbreak of 2003, avian influenza in 2004, and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. He was governor of the Alaska chapter of the American College of Physicians from 2005 to 2009 and chair of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials Infectious Diseases Policy Committee 2008 to 2009.

Donna Cecere is the STD Program Coordinator of the Section of Epidemiology for the Alaska Division of Public Health. Since July 2000, she has supervised Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS) in Anchorage and worked to increase and support STD case reporting and partner management activities statewide. Prior to moving to Alaska, Donna served as a DIS in the STD/AIDS program for the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, conducting STD and HIV partner notification activities for 10 years in the Denver Metro area. She transitioned to public health from her work as a founding board member of the Colorado AIDS Project. Donna has undergraduate degrees in Sociology and Psychology and has completed graduate course work in Clinical Psychology.

Sandy Collins has over 16 years experience working in public health in Alaska and has been the coordinator of the Alaska Birth Defects Registry (ABDR) and FAS Surveillance Program since 2008. She has a BS degree in nutrition and Master's in Public Health degree and is especially interested in the impact of diet on health.

Margi Clifford is a Licensed Professional Counselor and Experienced Registered Yoga Teacher. She serves as Alaska State Coordinator for Postpartum Support International. For the past 3 years Margi has worked to develop postpartum resources for The Children's Hospital at Providence which now conducts universal screening in The Maternity Center, offers outpatient counseling and provides support groups for families affected by perinatal mood disorders.

Denise Farleigh is a Diagnostic Radiologist, in practice with Alaska Radiology Associates since 1979. Currently the Medical Director for Providence Imaging Center with a practice that focuses primarily on breast imaging. Favorite activities include sailing and scuba diving. Some of the organizations of which she is a member include ACR, RSNA, Roentgen Ray, American Women in Radiology, Society of Breast Imaging, and AMA. Denise is married to Randy Farleigh and has a son, Nathan Cook. She loves sailing, scuba diving, and travel to almost anywhere.

Brad Gessner attended Dartmouth College, the University of Florida Medical School, the University of Washington School of Public Health. He completed his pediatric residence at the University of Colorado, and a preventive medicine residency at the University of Washington, and performed a US CDC Epidemic Intelligence Service Fellowship with the Alaska Division of Public Health. He created and until recently served as Director of the Maternal Child Health Epidemiology Unit, and has performed studies on numerous aspects of pediatric health including LRI, Helicobacter pylori, anemia and iron deficiency, child maltreatment, asthma, preterm birth, vitamin D deficiency, and others.

George Gilson is the on-staff Maternal Fetal Medicine specialist at the Alaska Native Medical Center in Anchorage. He has completed residencies in Family Medicine, and in Obstetrics and Gynecology, as well as a fellowship in Maternal Fetal Medicine, at the University of New Mexico. He has served in the Indian Health Service in Pawnee, OK, and Chinle, AZ, and in the National Health Service Corps in rural northern NM, and on the US-Mexico border in Brownsville, TX. He has extensive international rural experience and has served as an Ob-Gyn consultant for both MotherCare/USA and Johns Hopkins in Guatemala, Honduras, and Bolivia. He has worked extensively with Mayan indigenous people in Guatemala and has spent a sabbatical year working in that country with traditional birth attendants. Prior to moving to Alaska, he was at the University of New Mexico where he was an Associate Professor of Ob-Gyn, medical student clerkship director, and medical director of Labor and Delivery. He is author of the IHS web page, "The Perinatologist's Corner".

Debbie Golden is a perinatal nurse consultant for the Alaska Division of Public Health, Section of Women's, Children's and Family Health. For over 25 years she has worked in Alaska in a variety of public health positions for both state and municipal governments and March of Dimes. Her primary focus has

been perinatal health, and she also has worked in the areas of sexually transmitted infections, healthcare provider training, staff development, childcare health and school health. Debbie received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from University of Nevada-Reno, her M.S. degree in nursing from University of Portland in Oregon, and is certified in community health nursing by the American Nurses Credentialing Center. She is a member of: the Association of Maternal Child Health Programs; American Nurses Association; Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN); the Alaska Public Health Association; and is also a March of Dimes volunteer.

Heather Harris & The POWER Teen Program

Alaska Youth and Parent Foundation Executive Director, **Heather Harris**, started her career in nonprofits as a volunteer crisis line advocate with a local sexual abuse agency in 2000. She earned her Bachelor in Human Services, University of Alaska-Anchorage and went on to work with at risk youth. Heather has worked to educate in HIV, disaster preparedness and secondary education. She has extensive service in health, safety and youth services. Heather is responsible for the administration and operation of all program services and activities in the POWER Program.

POWER (Peer Outreach Worker Education and Referral) Program Team Leader, **Johnny Cartwright**, is a 16 year old Bartlett High School student. He is a good listener and enjoys talking and meeting new friends. He has been with the POWER Teen Outreach Program for one year. Johnny displayed leadership abilities, computer expertise, and was promoted to program team leader by his peers. He is responsible for supervision of Teen Peer Outreach Workers.

POWER (Peer Outreach Worker Education and Referral) Program Outreach Worker, **Brandi Kriger**, is a 17 year old Bartlett High School student. She enjoys dog showing and drawing. Brandi has been with POWER for 5 months and absolutely loves her job. She enjoys being able to help people and being a part of something important. She is responsible for outreach, drop in center and presentations in our community.

Michael Harris is a Biomedical researcher and Associate Professor at the University of Alaska Fairbanks Institute of Arctic Biology. The focus and clinical relevance of his research is SIDS. He is also the father of 4, and has considered SIDS from the perspective of a parent and a researcher for the last 15 years. Prior to joining UAF in 2003, Dr. Harris was a postdoctoral fellow for 3 years at Dartmouth College working within a large collaboration focused on SIDS. The leader of this project was Hanna Kinney, the researcher who identified a neuroanatomical deficit in SIDS infants suggesting that vulnerability to SIDS may have a physiological basis related to failure of specific neurotransmitter systems. The primary focus of his current research is to determine the necessity and sufficiency of serotonergic processes within the brainstem in controlling breathing, the functional consequences of brainstem serotonergic deficits, and the potential for such deficits to contribute to pathophysiologies such as SIDS. This work is directed at understanding the basic essential mechanisms of respiratory control, and will contribute to the development of diagnostic tests and therapeutic strategies to reduce the occurrence of SIDS.

Jessica Harvill joined the State of Alaska Tobacco Prevention & Control Program in January 2009 as the Tobacco Cessation Interventions Manager. She manages the Tobacco Cessation Interventions grant program, Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line and the new Tobacco Education & Alaska Tobacco Quit Line Outreach program. She earned a BA in Anthropology from the University of Alaska Anchorage and a Master of Public Health with a concentration in Social and Behavioral Sciences from Boston University.

Tom Hennessy trained in Preventive Medicine and Family Practice, Dr. Hennessy worked for Indian Health Service on the Navajo Reservation from 1990 -1994. He joined CDC through the Epidemic Intelligence Service where he served at the Minnesota Dept of Health and later with the CDC Foodborne and Diarrheal Diseases Branch in Atlanta. Tom moved to Alaska in 1998 where his work with the Arctic Investigations Program has focused on addressing infectious disease health disparities among Alaska Native and American Indian persons. He directs the 35-person CDC infectious disease field station located on the Alaska Native Medical Center campus in Anchorage.

Matt Hirschfeld has been a pediatric hospitalist at the Alaska Native Medical Center since 2005. He is currently the Medical Director of the Department of Pediatric Hospital Medicine.

Sherrell Holtshouser has worked in public health with a focus on women's and children's health in both rural and urban Alaska, for over 30 years. Currently, she is the Family Planning Nurse Consultant for the Alaska Division of Public Health Section of Women's Children's & Family Health. She has two children in college and enjoys long walks with her husband and dog and sharing her home with hosts of family friends.

Katherine Huffman loves combining her background in teaching with sexual health instruction in her role as educator and trainer for schools and community agencies across Alaska. In addition to trainings for school professionals, she is excited to continue her work increasing family conversations about sexuality through Parent Talk Workshops and Trainings of Facilitators in rural hubs in anticipation of October Family Sexuality Education Month.

Cornelia Jessen is the Program Manager for the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium's STD Program. She has been working with the HIV/STD Prevention Center to increase HIV/STD screening, testing and education through developing an internet-based sexual health intervention for Alaska Native youth, training Community Health Aides in HIV/STD education and rapid HIV testing and to promote the 2006 CDC HIV/STD screening recommendations throughout the Alaska Tribal Health System. She also collaborates with state and other non-profit partners on projects aimed at preventing violence and promoting healthy and safe relationships. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and a Master of Arts in Applied Anthropology from the University of Alaska Anchorage.

Teresa Markham has been an EMS Instructor and Injury Prevention specialist at YKHC for the past six years. In 2010 she oversaw the opening of the YKHC Retail Store, and currently serves as its operation manager. She is a volunteer at the Bethel Fire Department and a member of the Bethel Volunteer Emergency Services Association's Board of Directors. In 2008 she received a Special Commendation from the Governor's Office for her work with injury prevention in the YK Delta.

Melissa Merrick is a licensed clinical social worker who works as a Behavioral Health Consultant in a primary care clinic. In this role, she focuses on a number of health behaviors including working with women and adolescents to promote positive behavior change. Melissa has received extensive training in motivational interviewing and the stage of change model and uses these skills daily. For the last three years she has been training primary care teams on the benefits of using motivational interviewing for promoting healthy behavior change and reducing burnout.

Marilyn Pierce-Bulger is a certified nurse-midwife and family nurse practitioner who has spent many years providing care and creating services tailored to the unique needs of the Alaska Native population. She has expertise working with high social risk women and designed a nationally-recognized infant mortality reduction project for the Alaska Native Medical Center (Nutaqsiivik.) She currently works part time for Southcentral Foundation Primary Care, is the Anchorage FASD Diagnostic Team coordinator at Assets, and is a consultant working on the National Institutes of Health SIDS reduction effort (*Healthy Native Babies*) that targets northern Alaska Native/American Indian communities.

Mary Pomeroy is a physical therapist with over 35 years of experience working with children. Much of her work has been in Anchorage and Palmer and she adds to this experience in rural Alaska and Africa. She has worked in clinic and school settings and is currently in private practice. Mary has taught course work for pediatric therapists and is a regular contributor to the profession of physical therapy in Alaska.

Caroline Renner is the Nicotine Research Program Manager at the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium in Anchorage, Alaska. She manages nicotine related research in Alaska Native Tribal health organizations across the state. In addition to conducting research on attitudes, behavior and biology of nicotine use and dependence, Ms. Renner provides technical assistance and clinical and non-clinical training among statewide health organizations that wish to establish evidence-based nicotine treatment and control programs or conduct nicotine related research.

Sarah Roberts is a third year resident physician in the Alaska Family Medicine Residency Program through Providence Hospital in Anchorage, Alaska. She is originally from Michigan and earned her medical degree from Michigan State University. Her interest in perinatal mood disorders is linked to a family tragedy that was truly devastating, and models her passion for this subject after her own mother who is advocating for PMD's throughout the State of Michigan. Dr. Roberts plans on staying in Alaska following the completion of her residency training.

Cheri Scott is one of the founding members of the Stone Soup Group where she is the manager of the state funded Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Family Support Program and Parent Navigator for the state's Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Project. She works with families, service providers and agencies to provide training, identify service gaps, coordinate existing resources and enhance the variety of support options available to parents and caregivers of children with special needs. A certified FASD Trainer, she help develop the state-sponsored FASD 101 and 201 curricula used throughout Alaska. She is one of the authors of the Training Guide for Parent Navigators, a curriculum used to train parent advocates for multidisciplinary diagnostic teams and family support programs in Alaska, Canada and the lower 48 states. She sits on the Alaska FASD partnership Steering Committee. In 2001 she received the first FASD Leadership Award presented by the Alaska State Office of FASD and is the first parent to be awarded the National Organization for FAS Advocacy Award in 2006. Cheri has three children. The youngest experiences multiple disabilities including FAS. She is highly respected for her understanding of the complex challenges and blessings families experience when raising a child with FASD, as well as for her extensive knowledge and personal insight.

Desire´ Shepler holds a B.A. in Psychology and will complete a Masters Degree in Public Health at the University of Alaska Anchorage in December 2010. As a lifelong Alaskan, Desiré possesses a sincere passion to help Alaskans. This has lead to her work researching topics directly related to health in Alaska. Desire´ currently is completing an evaluation of the Child Advocacy Center's Model of Care impact on the rate of re-victimization of child sexual abuse victims in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley.

David Sperbeck is the Director of Psychological Services at the North Star Behavioral Health Hospital, where he has evaluated and treated children and adolescents since 1984. Dr. Sperbeck is a Full Clinical Professor of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences at the University of Washington School of Medicine where he has taught principles of clinical diagnosis, forensic psychology, and neuropsychology since 1987. Dr. Sperbeck is a Fellow of the National Academy of Neuropsychology and has practiced in Anchorage since 1982.

Hillary Strayer serves as the Senior Injury Prevention Specialist for ANTHC's Injury Prevention Program. From 2007 to 2009, she worked with ANTHC and the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health as part of a CDC Fellowship, focusing on drowning, elder falls, and costs of injuries. She has worked for three years with ANTHC and regional staff to plan and instruct injury prevention trainings and support prevention efforts throughout the state. Hillary provides data analysis, risk assessments, program development training and technical assistance to the Tribal Health Organizations.

Gina Rempel is a developmental pediatrician who has seen children with complex lives for more years than she cares to remember. She is the Chief Medical Officer at the Rehabilitation Centre for Children and Director of the Feeding Eating and Swallowing Team (FEAST) where she sees children on an in and outpatient basis at the Rehabilitation Centre for Children and the Children's Hospital in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She is also an Associate Professor in Pediatrics and Child Health at the University of Manitoba.

Kyla Retzer is currently an Epidemiologist investigating oil and gas industry injuries at the Alaska Pacific Regional Office of CDC's National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health. Earlier, she worked for the Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation as an Injury Prevention Specialist, then transferred to the ANTHC Epidemiology Center in 2006. In 2008, she became the ANTHC Injury Prevention Program Manager, delivering data reports, training, and outreach to the communities served by the Alaska Native Health System.

Shannon Shea has been working with children and families in a varied capacity for the last 15 years both

as an educator and social worker. Currently, she is the supervisor for the Family Support Services Unit at The Children's Hospital at Providence (TCHAP). This unit is a multi-disciplinary team working to support children and families receiving care at TCHAP as well as promote patient and family centered care throughout The Children's Hospital.

Ros Singleton received her medical degree from Northwestern Medical School, Chicago in 1982, pediatric residency at Children's Memorial Hospital, Chicago, and MPH from Loma Linda University. Ros started her career as a pediatrician on the Navajo reservation. Since 1988, she has worked as a pediatrician at Alaska Native Medical Center, director of Immunization Program for Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, and guest researcher with Arctic Investigations Program – Centers for Disease Control. Ros has collaborated in research on RSV, Hib, pneumococcal disease and respiratory disease. With her husband and two sons, she enjoys a nordic skiing, running and biking.

Jay Wenger is Associate Director for Science, Division of Preparedness and Emerging Infections, CDC, and has been at the Arctic Investigations Program (AIP) since mid-2007. He received his medical degree from Temple University Medical School, Philadelphia, PA, in 1981, and completed a residency program in internal medicine and a fellowship in infectious diseases at Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio. He joined the CDC in Atlanta as an EIS officer, and subsequently worked as staff epidemiologist and branch chief in the bacterial meningitis and pneumonia group. He was then detailed to the WHO in Geneva, Switzerland to coordinate new vaccine introduction in developing countries for 6 years and subsequently detailed for 5 years to manage the WHO polio surveillance program in India. He is currently principle investigator on AIP projects on pneumococcal carriage (and impact of the new pneumococcal conjugate vaccine), and antibiotic usage in Alaska Native people, and continues to pursue additional research interests in epidemiology of bacterial meningitis, pneumonia and vaccine preventable diseases.

Brad Whister is a Dental Officer with the Alaska Dept. of Health and Social Services Chair, he is on the Data & Surveillance Committee, a member of the Association of State & Territorial Dental Directors, and he is with the Oral Health Technical Advisory Group to the U.S. Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Jan Whitefield received a doctorate in electrical engineering from the University of New Mexico in 1976 and a medical degree in 1980, also from the University of New Mexico. He is currently the Co-Medical Director of the Alaska Women's Health Services and is a Clinical Professor for the University of Washington and the Alaska Family Practice Program. Dr. Whitefield is also a Medical Advisor for the Alaska Nurse Practitioners. In addition he is an advisor for the State Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Program and the Municipality of Anchorage Reproductive Health and Women's Health Clinics.

Laurel Wood has served as Program Manager for the Alaska Immunization Program since 1995. Her position involves federal grant development and coordination of an outstanding team of individuals who provide statewide immunization activities, including vaccine distribution, VacTrAK (immunization information system) management, healthcare provider/general public training and education, and school and clinic assessments. Before coming to Alaska, Laurel worked with the Tennessee Department of Health and Environment, where her duties included serving as Program Manager for a multi-county Communicable Disease Program, Director of the Tennessee HIV/AIDS Program, and Chief of the Section of Epidemiology. Laurel completed undergraduate work in Biology and holds a Masters in Public Administration. She is the former Chair of the national Association of Immunization Managers.

KJ Worbey is the Clinical and Quality Assurance Director for Southcentral Foundation's Behavioral Service Division. She has experience as a clinician in outpatient and residential care, and is committed to SCF's goal of ending child abuse and neglect in this generation.