

Perspectives

SPRING 2009

Mary's Center for Maternal & Child Care Saving lives and creating stronger communities — one family at a time.

Maria's Message

I write you with warm greetings on behalf of all my colleagues at Mary's Center who are still buzzing with pride from the First Lady's visit to Mary's Center in February. In only her third week at the White House, Mrs. Obama joined in the Center's bustling activity for a vibrant afternoon of reading with our toddlers and inspiring participants of our Teen Program. She also came with a mission: to learn first-hand about the needs of her new community and to express our nation's urgent need for more community organizations like Mary's Center that offer comprehensive integrated health, education, and social services.

In light of the economic crises, the services we provide our most vulnerable citizens are needed at unprecedented levels. Our cost effective and efficient model of health care linked to comprehensive wraparound social services and family literacy resonated with the First Lady. She acknowledged that Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) like Mary's Center are replicable nationwide and make economic sense.

These centers provide a medical home with coordinated care, saving over \$17 billion per year and improving the overall economic well-being of the communities served. Should the federal government approve the FY2010 Funding Request of \$2.602 billion for the Health Centers program, by 2015 these vital entities would expand to accommodate 30 million Americans, regardless of their ability to pay.

For every one dollar invested in prenatal care, eight dollars are saved on pre-term and low-weight births. A dollar invested in adult literacy programs results in six dollars of increased earnings, and a dollar invested in childhood immunizations helps avoid six dollars of medical costs later in life. When all of these services are delivered in one central location, the economic impact is extraordinary. According to a recent NACHC report, there is

Before the First Lady's departure from Mary's Center on February 10th, she and her staff expressed their commitment to an ongoing relationship with Mary's Center. Since the visit, our President and CEO, Maria Gomez, has visited the White House on various occasions to meet with other White House staff and discuss issues affecting the communities we serve. Another special occasion occurred when the First Lady invited Mary's Center's COO, Alvaro Simmons, and three teen participants whom she met during the visit, to accompany her in her box during President Obama's first State of the Union Address to Congress on February 24th.

There were mutual hugs between Mrs. Obama and the children from our Family Literacy Program after reading *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*



The First Lady with the Management Team.



"I was raised to believe that when you get, you give back," said the First Lady when she was asked why she came to visit Mary's Center during her conversation with After School Teen Program participants.

potential for the United States to save up to \$67 billion annually by investing in primary care at patient-centered medical homes.

During her visit, Mrs. Obama spoke boldly about this need for increased resources for our health centers and schools, highlighting the uniqueness of community-based safety net organizations that offer multiple supportive services. In her conversation with the teens, she drew a link between opportunity and civic responsibility. "I was raised to believe, number one, that when you get, you give back," said Mrs. Obama during her visit in response to a teen who asked why she came to visit Mary's Center. We hope that one day not far into the

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Established in 1988
A Federally Qualified Health Center since 2005

National Council of La Raza Affiliate
United Way affiliate since 1999

NCLR
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LA RAZA



United Way #8263
CFC #66350

Maria's Message *continued*

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Our Mission

Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care builds better futures through the delivery of health care, education and social services. We embrace culturally diverse communities to provide them with the highest quality of care, regardless of their ability to pay.

www.maryscenter.org



Mrs. Obama with Board Members and participants.

future, the teen posing that question will be in a position to give back to his community. At Mary's Center, that is what we strive for: strengthening families so they have the capacity to give back.

Mrs. Obama expressed a vision of providing families and young citizens with opportunities to

“get and give back.” The realization of this vision begins with resources like Mary's Center. As I look back on this extraordinary occasion of being honored by the First Lady's visit, I think about how Mary's Center makes it possible for our teens to give back to their community because their most basic needs of health, education, and the intangibles like a sense of belonging and dignity are being met by our organization. Thank you, Mrs. Obama, for your support of our safety net community health centers, and for making your first official visit right among your new neighbors up the street.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Maria S. Gomez".

Maria S. Gomez, R.N., M.P.H.

President & CEO

Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care

Our teens attend the Presidential Address to Congress

Elizabeth Carballo, Akrem Muzemil, Juan Francisco Rodriguez, and our COO, Alvaro Simmons, were invited to join Mrs. Michelle Obama at her box during the President's Address to Congress on Tuesday, February 24th.

“It was the most unforgettable experience I've ever had,” expressed Akrem Muzemil when asked about this historic moment.

Prior to the speech, our Teen Program participants and Mr. Simmons had the opportunity to visit the White House, converse with President Barack Obama and Mrs. Obama, and get their pictures taken with the presidential couple.

“Awesome” is how they all described the visit afterwards.

The teens are Mary's Center's After School program participants who met the First Lady when she visited Mary's Center on February 10th. During that visit, they each posed questions to Mrs. Obama regarding her visit to the Center and her husband's plans to address their most



Our teens and COO Alvaro Simmons (at left) before departing to the White House to meet with Mrs. Obama and attend the Presidential Speech.

concerning issues, including access to college, gang violence, and positive opportunities for America's young citizens and future leaders.

Coming from modest backgrounds, the three public school students viewed this invitation as evidence of the President and First Lady's commitment to engaging their new community and creating positive change for America's vulnerable families and children.

Contact Perspectives

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About Perspectives

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Perspectives is Mary's Center's newsletter showcasing the daily work of the center, the positive outcomes it achieves, and the valuable support given by its donors and the community at-large. Working together, Mary's Center is able to achieve its goals and make a difference in the lives of those being served.

Circulation: 6,000 copies distributed

Mary's Center Garners Awards

Maria Gomez receives Washington Business Journal Minority Business Leader Award

Mary's Center's President and CEO, Maria Gomez, was recently announced as one of the winners of the Washington Business Journal's Second Annual Minority Business Leader Awards.

The Minority Business Leader Awards honor the District area's top minority business leaders who have exhibited outstanding performance in both their companies and the broader community within the last 18 months.

The Washington Business Journal honored the winners at the Minority Business Leader Awards program on Thursday, April 2, 2009, at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. The finalists were profiled in a special supplement of the April 3rd edition of the Washington Business Journal.

Mary's Center congratulates its President and CEO for this well-deserved recognition that acknowledges her 20 years of exceptional work and commitment to making a difference in the lives of thousands of families throughout the Washington metropolitan region.

Verizon Tech Savvy Award

The Even Start Family Literacy Program of Mary's Center was selected as one of four regional winners of the third annual Verizon Tech Savvy Awards for developing and delivering exemplary programs in information communications technology literacy for parents and children.

"Mary's Center is honored to be a recipient of this award, which enables us to provide the valuable educational base our families need to succeed," said Maria Gomez, President and CEO. "Learning cannot end when the school day ends. Every moment presents a learning opportunity, and we must capitalize on our time with students and their parents to engage, educate and inspire them to excel."



Al Browne, Vice President of Education and Technology Initiatives, Verizon Foundation; Sharon Darling, President of the National Center for Family Literacy; Berta Perez, Mary's Center's Computer Instructor; and Christie Vilsack, former First Lady of Iowa and wife of current US Secretary of Agriculture.

The Verizon Tech Savvy Awards are a joint creation of the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL), former First Lady of Iowa Christie Vilsack, and the Verizon Foundation.

The award was presented on March 2nd at the 18th annual National Conference on Family Literacy, hosted by NCFL in Orlando, FL. The program will receive \$5,000 to continue and expand its efforts.

Mary's Center's teacher finalist of the Toyota Family Literacy Teacher of the Year Award

Karen Hertzler, a Mary's Center's Adult Education Instructor and Accountability Leader for the Even Start Family Literacy Program, was one of the finalists of the Toyota Family Literacy Teacher of the Year Award.

The winner, an educator from Miami, and the three finalists including Karen Hertzler, were selected from more than 150 nominations by the National Center for Family Literacy to honor educators who demonstrate an impact on families through early childhood education, school-based programs, adult literacy and ESL programs, parenting education, library literacy programs and community literacy programs.

Hertzler has a graduate certificate in Adult Education from the University of the District of Columbia and a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work, as well as a Spanish minor from the Eastern Mennonite University. She has been working for the Even Start Family Literacy Program since 2003 and teaches the Basic II Family Literacy classes.

In 2004 and 2006, Mary's Center adult education teachers Lorie Preheim and Mark Faloni received the Toyota Family Literacy Teacher of the Year Award.

The award presentation took place at the 18th annual National Conference on Family Literacy in Orlando, FL, during the first week of March.



Karen Hertzler (middle) with the plaque she received as a finalist of the Toyota Family Literacy Teacher of the Year Award, Christie McKay (left), Mary's Center's Director of Education, and Lorie Preheim, Academic Dean.

Our transition with VPP

For the past five years, Venture Philanthropy Partners (VPP) has helped Mary's Center advance to the next level through tremendous contributions of financial resources, time, expertise, and talent. December 2008 marked the end of the funding period, but we will continue to reap the benefits of VPP's investment for years to come.

Some of the major accomplishments resulting from the partnership have included:

- Capacity building, as evidenced by doubling the number of patients served from 8,000 in 2004 to over 16,000 by 2009;
- Opening a full-service satellite office to reach underserved families in Ward 4;
- Expanding into Montgomery County to provide a full array of primary care and social services;
- Securing \$7 million in capital funds from DCPCA to build a new site in Ward 4 in 2009;
- Developing the Senior Leadership of the organization, including hiring a COO, CFO, Communications Director, and Quality Improvement Director;
- Building a strong Board of Directors with members who contribute a variety of expertise in public health, medicine, health care management, politics, business, finance, and other fields;
- Successfully developing the Even Start Family Literacy Program into its own charter school;
- Implementation of an electronic medical records system to streamline patient care and simplify administrative tasks;
- An upgraded financial software system that has enabled our Finance Department to be more effective stewards of the revenue stream;
- Increased organizational visibility; and
- Building strategic relationships with external partners and key stakeholders.

As we move forward, Mary's Center will remain a part of VPP's investment portfolio and VPP will continue to provide strategic assistance as necessary. A large percentage of the funding that was provided by VPP helped us to cover the salaries of important leadership positions and other overhead costs that are crucial to the daily operations of Mary's Center. Therefore, we encourage our existing and prospective donors to consider the increasing need for funding in these areas, and thank you in advance for supporting the important administrative components of running our most important programs and services.

Donation Center

Donations are always welcome at Mary's Center. If you have an in-kind donation, please contact Jessica Arendal at 202.420.7052 or jarendal@maryscenter.org to schedule an appointment to drop off your donations.

Hours of operation: Monday through Friday 10:00 A.M.–3:00 P.M.
Donations are accepted by appointment only.

A Thoughtful Holiday Season

Despite the economic downturn, the kindness of our supporters, friends, staff, and volunteers made it possible for Mary's Center to celebrate one of its most successful holiday seasons to date!

The Holidays started with food drives and donations from individuals and organizations, all of whom collectively brought together turkeys and non-perishable products for our Thanksgiving celebration. Their incredible generosity allowed us to provide 230 families with a complete Thanksgiving meal.

The toy drives and financial contributions for our Client Holiday Party during this joyful season allowed us to distribute over 800 toys to Mary's Center participants. More than 200 children received a new coat this winter, and nearly 40 teen participants were able to host their holiday party at the Center.

Most notably, Mary's Center received over \$90,000 in monetary contributions from our year-end appeal, the highest amount received to date. This amount represents a 100% increase in giving compared to last year's appeal.

No words can express our gratitude toward those individuals and organizations who contributed to these efforts. Moving forward, we are committed to continuing our efforts toward building brighter futures for our families, especially during these most difficult economic times.



Nearly 300 families had a picture taken with Santa at the Center's Holiday Party.



Staff and volunteers made the holiday season extra special for our participants by packing meals for Thanksgiving Drive and helping out with the Holiday Party.

Tips for making in-kind donations to Mary's Center: Most items must be new. Cribs, strollers, educational toys and games can be gently used and in good condition. Mary's Center is authorized to deny any item that does not meet these conditions. The health and safety of our clients is very important to us.

Thank you for your interest in making a donation to Mary's Center. Your contribution will make a difference in the lives and futures of the families we serve. All in-kind and monetary donations are tax-deductible.

Mary's Center expands services in Maryland Washington Adventist Hospital supports initiative to expand prenatal care



Left to right: Alvaro Simmons, Mary's Center COO; Maria Gomez, Mary's Center President and CEO; Jere Stocks, President Washington Adventist Hospital; Dr. Mark Fracasso, Mary's Center VP of Medicine; and Paul Nicholson, Washington Adventist Hospital VP and CFO.

Nearly a year after opening its primary care clinic in the Long Branch area of Montgomery County, Mary's Center will add prenatal care to the full range of primary care services currently being offered.

A \$250,000 community service grant presented by Washington Adventist Hospital on February 23rd will enable Mary's Center to begin offering prenatal care to expectant mothers. The grant will serve many women in need of care in Montgomery and Prince George's counties, regardless of their ability to pay.

"We at Mary's Center are continually striving to serve the needs of our communities," said Maria Gomez, president and CEO of Mary's Center. "Our partnership with Washington Adventist Hospital allows Maryland families to receive quality and culturally appropriate services, which leads to healthier communities."

Mary's Center has served nearly 1,100 patients and had over 1,600 total visits in its ten months of operation at the 3,600-square-foot primary care center located at 8709 Flower Avenue. This year, there are plans to expand the number of individuals served at this site.

"Our continuing partnership with Mary's Center and the primary care center in Long Branch further expands access to health-care services for the communities we serve," said Jere Stocks, President of Washington Adventist Hospital. "We recognize that our communities benefit greatly when we form partnerships like this one. Together we are strengthening the region's health care safety net."

Services at the Center are provided by a multidisciplinary health-care team including two nurse practitioners, an internist, and a pediatrician. Mary's Center will soon hire an obstetrician at this site.

Your Support goes a long way

Mary's Center acknowledges the generous support received every day from individuals, foundations, entities and all those who believe in our cause. Your support makes it possible for us to continue to meet the needs of the thousands of families who rely on our services.

We thank the following foundations for their financial support during the last quarter:

Alexander and Margaret Stewart Trust: \$75,000 for the Teen Program

Freddie Mac Foundation: \$25,000 for the Teen Program

Jones Foundation: \$45,000 for the Teen Program

Nordstrom: \$5,000 for general operations

Share Our Strength: \$25,000 to enhance the WIC nutrition education program

Summit Fund of Washington: \$100,000 for the Teen Program

The Morningstar Foundation: \$20,000 for general operations

The Naomi and Nehemiah Cohen Foundation: \$50,000 for general operations and contraceptives

The Trellis Fund/Betsy Karel: \$50,000 for Advocacy and Communications

Thank You!

Mary's Center welcomes new members of the Executive Team

Mary's Center is very excited about the recent addition of our new Vice President of Medicine, Dr. Mark Fracasso, MD, MBA, CPE, and new Chief Financial Officer, Josephine Morris-Young, MBA.

As VP of Medicine, Dr. Fracasso directs Mary's Center's entire medical program and also provides direct services to our participants two days per month.

Dr. Fracasso has over twenty-five years of experience in the medical field as a practitioner, administrator, physician adviser, and medical consultant. He also has direct experience working with medically underserved communities. Dr. Fracasso completed his residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Washington Hospital Center in Washington, DC. He has also served as clinical faculty at Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine. He received his BS from Fordham University, MD from Georgetown University School of Medicine, and MBA from the University of Miami.

Josephine Morris-Young brings over fifteen years of experience in various accounting operations. As Chief Financial Officer, she provides executive leadership, vision, and oversight for Mary's Center's overall financial plans and accounting practices. Ms. Morris-Young's past professional experiences include working with Blue Cross Blue Shield, Inova Health System, KPMG, ManTech



Dr. Mark Fracasso MD, MBA, CPE, new VP of Medicine, and Josephine Morris-Young, MBA, new Chief Financial Officer.

Solutions and Outsource Partners International, all of which make her well suited for the position and familiar with the financial needs and systems of Mary's Center as a Federally Qualified Health Center. She received her BS in Accounting from the University of Maryland and her MBA from Averett College.

Join "Mary's Center's President's Club"!

Mary's Center's President's Club is comprised of dedicated supporters whose annual gifts of \$500 or more make them part of a special community of people who have made a significant commitment to advance the work of Mary's Center. The generosity of this group enables the center to build better futures for the individuals and families that come to Mary's Center for health care, education and social services.

As a President's Club member, you will receive special updates about Mary's Center, invitations to special events and presentations, special recognition in our publications (with your approval), and above all the satisfaction of knowing that your support directly contributes to the health and well-being of the individuals that walk through the doors of Mary's Center every day.

- YES!** I would like to become a member of the President's Club today with my first annual donation of \$500!
- I am unable to join the President's Club at this time, but would like to contribute a donation of \$_____.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mail to: Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care
c/o Jessica Arendal, Development Dept.
2333 Ontario Road, NW
Washington, DC 20009

Questions? Phone: 202.420.7052
Email: jarendal@maryscenter.org

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Signed: _____

Date: _____

- Please contact me about advantages of making a Planned Gift.
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Mary's Center for Maternal & Child Care

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