



...NEWS at 11SN...

*A Quarterly Publication for VA Employees of VISN 11
This newsletter is also available on the VISN 11 HomePage*

Mentoring Towards The Future

The first VISN 11 Network Mentoring Program began with an exciting retreat on November 6-7, 2002, at the Potawatomi Lodge in Pokagon State Park near Angola, Indiana.

During the two-day retreat in this beautiful rustic setting, selected

participants were paired with leaders from VISN 11 facilities forming 15 mentor/mentee teams.

Leadership characteristics were identified using the Myers-Briggs instrument and mentoring concepts were explained. Group and individual activities among teams were encouraged through a series of interactive exercises. Evening sessions provided an informal setting for participants to network with individuals from other facilities.



The Mentoring Program is a one-year structured activity that is consistent with principles of the High Performance Development Model and Core Competencies. The purpose of the Mentoring Program is to establish and assist leadership mentoring in VISN 11. Mentees are expected to develop and implement a Personal Development Plan defining developmental objectives and activities to achieve them. An added benefit is the positive exchange of perspectives that will occur between VISN facilities. There will be future opportunities for additional VISN 11 employees to participate.

VISN 11 mentor/mentee teams include the following:

- Susan Bowers (VAIHCS) and Linda Polardino (Battle Creek)
- Patricia Baker, R.D. (NIHCS) and Kim Wright (VAIHCS)
- Menahem Lender, M.D. (Saginaw) and Helen Rhodes, R.N. (NIHCS)
- Robert Beller (NIHCS) and Marc Magill (VAIHCS)
- Leslie Wiggins, R.N. (Detroit) and Nancy Sullivan (VAIHCS)

Mentoring program continued on page 5

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News at 11 is published by VISN 11 for distribution to its employees and other interested stakeholders. Requests for further information on items to be covered or questions to be answered in future editions should be addressed to Edward Dornoff, 4646 John R., Detroit, MI, 48201.

Allen Park Reflections

On October 21, 2002, a Flag Lowering and Closing Ceremony was held at the Allen Park, Michigan VA Medical Center. This ceremony marked the end of more than 60 years of service to Michigan veterans at the Southfield Road/Outer Drive site. The ceremony was attended by veterans, employees, elected officials of the City of Allen Park, the State of Michigan, and the United States Congress. The keynote speaker was U.S. Representative John D. Dingell, the new Detroit facility namesake.

Henry and Clara Ford, owners of the Ford Motor Company, donated the Allen Park site to the government in 1937 for the purpose of building and maintaining a health care facility for veterans. The deed indicated that if the specified services to



Allen Park 1930s

veterans cease, the property would revert back to the Fords. When the John D. Dingell VA Medical Center was activated in downtown Detroit in 1996, a number of potential uses of the Allen Park site were considered. Ultimately, the decision was made to effect an orderly return of the property back to the Fords. Demolition has started at the site and will continue through spring of 2003.

The historic nature of the buildings will be memorialized through documentation of the facility in narrative and picture in a report called an Historic American Buildings



Allen Park 1950s

Survey maintained by the National Parks Service. In addition, the role of the Allen Park facility and its service to veterans will be commemorated through a memorial that will be erected on the site.

Saginaw Successes

Combined Federal Campaign Commitment

Gabriel Perez, medical center director, agreed to shave his head if employees exceeded the Combined Federal Campaign goal by 15 percent. Employees took the challenge and exceeded the goal by 40 percent.

As well as payroll deductions, employees contributed through a silent auction, bake sale, luncheon, and raffling off holiday theme baskets. At the conclusion of the campaign, Perez held true to his challenge and had his head shaved in the medical center's auditorium as a standing-room-only crowd cheered on.



Gabriel Perez, medical center director, had his head shaved after employees exceeded their Combined Federal Campaign goal.

Staff Supports The Homeless

The Customer Service Committee held a food drive during the last two weeks of November for the Saginaw Rescue Mission, where several homeless veterans have been referred over time. The committee's goal was to fill five shopping carts. However, once again Saginaw employees met the challenge and filled seven shopping carts of nonperishable goods for the Saginaw Rescue Mission.

Safety

To maintain continuous readiness and prepare for the upcoming JCAHO triennial survey, the VISN 11 Environmental of Care (EC) office recently oversaw a JCAHO EC mock survey at each VISN 11 facility during November and December 2002. Gary Slack, P.E., C.C.E., president of Healthcare Engineering Consultants, performed the mock surveys. Slack interviewed key staff, reviewed policies and procedures, toured physical facilities, and evaluated documentation related to the Joint Commission EC standards.

Medical centers received their report with a comprehensive list of deficiencies noted for each of the EC areas as well as practical recommendations to ensure compliance. Each medical center will develop a plan of action for each deficiency and recommendation, and will provide periodic updates to the VISN 11 EC office until each issue is resolved. In addition, the VISN 11 EC office and Slack will be presenting a summary of the survey findings to the VISN 11 Executive Leadership Council in early 2003.

Overall, the surveys were very informative and well received by the Engineering and Safety & Health professionals at all VISN 11 facilities. Slack also commented on the number of favorable responses he received during the building tour staff interviews, and on the large percentage of employees wearing appropriate identification.

Dollars & Sense

The federal government remains under a Continuing Resolution at least through January 11, 2003. A Continuing Resolution is authorization from Congress and the President to continue to operate without a current year appropriation. The new Congress will probably extend the Continuing Resolution through January 31, with a full budget being passed during the interim period. Agencies generally operate at the same spending level as the previous fiscal year. Historically, this is an exceptionally long Continuing Resolution. Also, President Bush recently authorized pay raises of 3.1 percent with no accompanying locality pay increases.



VISN 11 Multicultural Workplace Award



VISN 11 has named Stephen Farrow, M.D., and the John D. Dingell VA Medical Center, the recipient of the 2002 VISN 11 Multicultural Workplace Award.

This award recognizes outstanding contributions to the advancement of diversity and multicultural understanding in the workplace and community.

Dr. Farrow and his team of VA volunteers, called the Community Health & Hypertension Research Education and Screening Team (CHHREST), participated in community health screenings in churches and community centers in Detroit, Pontiac, Mt. Clemens, and Canada. Their mission was to educate and screen the underserved in the community who tended to have undiagnosed hypertension. CHHREST goes into the community frequently involving neighborhood young people – Boy Scouts and college athletes – to do their good work. At times numbering as many as 50 VA employees, CHHREST has fostered team building among a group of many employees of culturally diverse backgrounds resulting in an improved working environment and healthier community.



Stephen Farrow, M.D., and Linda Belton, network director

CARES is Underway



***Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services
“right care, right time, right place, right cost”***

VISN 11 has worked very hard in preparing for Step 3 of the CARES process. Step 3 includes a comprehensive evaluation of all the current facilities, resources, workload, and programs in relation to the projections for the targeted years of 2012 and 2022. VISN 11 “Planning Initiatives,” that is, gaps between what we have now and what we will need in the future, have been identified.

During November 2002, field and VACO representatives assembled in Washington, D.C., to conduct an analysis of each VISN. On November 22, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced the approved listing of CARES Planning Initiatives for each VISN. You can view the Planning Initiatives for all VISNs at <http://www.va.gov/CARES>, and you can see the VISN 11 CARES Process, Calendar, Planning Initiatives, and other important documents and maps at the <http://www.va.gov/visn11cares/> Web site.

All VISNs now begin the process of developing the CARES Market Plans – Stage 4. VISN 11 has identified three market areas (Central Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan) that all have sufficient population and geographic size to benefit from the coordination and planning of health care services through either VA, DoD, or private facilities to support a full-continuum health care delivery system.

For the next three months, the VISN 11 CARES Market Teams, CARES Work Group, and the Executive Leadership Council will identify, develop, and approve the strategies for meeting the projected demand for the targeted years of 2012 and 2022. The Central Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan market teams will be conducting two meetings each to discuss and develop viable options for scenario development. These team meetings will

include both internal and external stakeholders (union leaders, affiliates, congressional offices, major veterans service organizations, other VA offices, and various state/local officials) in the development of these options. The VISN 11 Management Assistant Council members were briefed on the CARES process, products, and partial outcomes at their January 2003 meeting. In late February, the VISN 11 Executive Leadership Council will review and approve the recommendations generated by the market teams and the VISN 11 CARES Work Group.

On February 28, 2003, the VISN 11 Network Director will forward the CARES Market Plan to the National CARES program office in Washington, D.C. Initial review of the network plans will be conducted by the CARES program office, Under Secretary for Health and the Secretary’s office. After that, an independent nine-member National CARES Commission will be formed to review and hold stakeholder meetings throughout the country to hear stakeholder comments/concerns to the draft National CARES Plan. After their review is completed (summer 2003), their report and the draft National CARES Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for approval.

GEC Service Line Update

VISN 11 was one of only four networks invited to participate in an “Advanced Clinical Training” program designed to provide participants with skills and materials necessary to implement Palliative Care Consult Teams at all VAMCs. The group was led by Dan Hinshaw, M.D., Ann Arbor, and included Michael Wheeler, Detroit; Kim Kelley, M.S.W., Illiana; Carol Jordan, R.N., Indianapolis; and Chaplain Michael Carr, Detroit. The team recently undertook its first site visit at the Detroit VAMC and has plans to assess and work with the remaining VISN 11 facilities.

GEC Service Line Update continued on page 5

Clinical Corner

Pharmacy Benefits Management

In October 1998, the VISN Pharmacy Benefits Management (PBM) Program initiated development of data analysis capabilities with MS ACCESS software and outpatient drug dispensing information for VISN 11. The database has information on every outpatient prescription dispensed from October 1998 through October 2002 and contains in excess of 16 million records. Until the summer of 2002, this data was used primarily for budgeting, workload, drug utilization, and cost containment analyses.

In early Fiscal Year 2002, the PBM began collection diagnosis and laboratory test result information. The PBM also transitioned to a new data cube format using the ProClarity software tool. This enables pharmacist and physician managers to query the data from their desktop. During the summer of 2002, the PBM initiated a process to create a database that links drug use with patient, provider, diagnosis, and clinical outcome measured by laboratory test result. The patient and provider identifications are masked to maintain confidentiality. The first effort examined cholesterol-lowering therapy. In November 2002, the PBM developed a similar data set on diabetes management. In January 2003, the plan is to develop a data set pertaining to anticoagulation. Each data set is updated quarterly.

Based on feedback after presenting this data at a National VA Pharmacy meeting in October 2002, no other VISN has this capability. Some data researchers from the pharmaceutical industry have said there is no organization in the private sector with data sets of this size and complexity. For additional information, contact Thomas Stavenger, VISN 11 pharmacy benefits manager.

Mentoring Towards The Future

(continued from page 1)

Gabriel Perez (Saginaw) and Patricia Gurley (Ann Arbor)
Michael Murphy, Ph.D. (NIHCS) and Edward Dornoff (Detroit)
Paul Scheel (Ann Arbor) and Brenda Cook, R.N. (Indianapolis)
Alan Sooho, M.D. (Battle Creek) and Michael Moravits, Ph.D. (NIHCS)
Michael Wheeler (Detroit) and Ted Commons, R.Ph. (VAIHCS)
Michael Olson (Detroit) and Rudi Rabe, R.N. (Ann Arbor)
Joe Battle (Indianapolis) and Michael Rosloniec (Ann Arbor)
Wilfredo Rodriguez, M.D. (VAIHCS) and Mary Ann Waterman (Indpls.)
Hugh Deery (VISN 11) and Tommy Simpkins (Saginaw)
Tom Mattice (Indianapolis) and Timothy Dolen (Ann Arbor)
Mentoring Program Faculty: Cathi Spivey-Paul, Paul Lapuc, Ph.D.,
Bunny Huller, Joe Hanney, Ph.D., and Mary Jane Marshall



Participants from the VISN 11 Network Mentoring Program Retreat.

GEC Service Line Update

(continued from page 4)

Several new programs have been added to the continuum of care in the Geriatrics and Extended Care (GEC) Service Line over the past year: an Alzheimer's Disease Special Care Ward at Marion; a new Palliative Care Unit at Illiana; and new Geriatric Evaluation and Management Outpatient Programs at Ann Arbor and Saginaw. Saginaw and Ann Arbor have begun offering Adult Day Health Care as well.

JCAHO... Mock Surveys

VISN 11 has scheduled the following JCAHO Mock Surveys. These will be conducted by actual JCAHO surveyors that contract with a vendor to conduct mock surveys. Good Luck!

Detroit

Hospital (HAP)	Jan. 13-14, 2003
Ambulatory Care	Jan. 13-14, 2003
Behavioral Health	Jan. 15-16, 2003
Long Term Care	Jan. 15, 2003
Home Care	Week of Feb. 17, 2003

Indianapolis

Hospital (HAP)	Feb. 10-11, 2003
Ambulatory Care	Feb. 12-13, 2003
Behavioral Health	Feb. 12-13, 2003
Long Term Care	N/A
Home Care	Week of Jan. 27, 2003

NIHCS

Hospital (HAP)	Feb. 24-25, 2003
Ambulatory Care	Feb. 26-28, 2003
Behavioral Health	Feb. 26-27, 2003
Long Term Care	Feb. 26, 2003
Home Care	Week of Jan. 27, 2003

Ann Arbor

Hospital (HAP)	March 3-4, 2003
Ambulatory Care	March 3-4, 2003
Behavioral Health	March 5, 2003
Long Term Care	March 5, 2003
Home Care	Week of Feb. 17, 2003

Illiana

Hospital (HAP)	March 24-25, 2003
Ambulatory Care	March 24-25, 2003
Behavioral Health	March 26, 2003
Long Term Care	March 26-27, 2003
Home Care	Week of Jan. 27, 2003

Battle Creek

Hospital (HAP)	March 31-April 1, 2003
Ambulatory Care	March 31-April 1, 2003
Behavioral Health	Feb. 2-3, 2003
Long Term Care	April 2, 2003
Home Care	Week of Feb. 17, 2003

Saginaw

Hospital (HAP)	April 28-29, 2003
Ambulatory Care	April 28-29, 2003
Behavioral Health	N/A
Long Term Care	April 30, 2003
Home Care	Week of Feb. 17, 2003



VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System

■ In recognition of his outstanding contributions in advancing the professional and science of psychology, **Dr. Kenneth Adams**, chief, psychology service, was honored as the 2002-2003 Distinguished Psychologist by the Michigan Psychological Association. The Association noted Dr. Adams' many substantial contributions to the field of psychology in Michigan and on the national and international level.

Battle Creek VAMC

■ **Suzanne Thorne-Odem, R.N.**, and **Margaret Trunick** were nominees for the Battle Creek Chamber of Commerce Athena Award, an annual award that recognizes business and professional women in the community who demonstrate leadership and high achievement. Thorne-Odem is the associate chief nursing service, clinical operations/ambulatory care/medicine and Trunick is the chief, community and volunteer service.

■ Several staff participated in a community-wide Health Careers Summit in November to introduce middle and high school students, counselors, and parents to various health care career fields. The two-day program addressed specific health care workforce needs in the area and included speakers, displays, and tours of local hospitals and nursing homes.

■ Veterans Day took on a different meaning for one Dowagiac couple and a veteran from Cassopolis, Mich. It was the idea of Elmer Vollmer, an 82-year-old World War II veteran, and his wife Thera, to collect 100 winter coats for patients at the medical center after seeing a poster in the Community and Volunteer Service office asking for donations. The Vollmers shared their idea with Tim Bennett, communications director for the Cass County Council on Aging (COA) Center and a Navy veteran, who worked with the Vollmers to initiate a Veterans Day Coat Challenge. Bennett issued the challenge to stand outside the COA Center in the cold

This & That continued on page 7

This & That

(continued from page 6)

on Veterans Day without a coat for 12 hours. By day's end, Bennett, the Vollmers, and other volunteers had brought in 450 coats which were donated to the Veterans Clothing Room at the medical center. A coat giveaway day was held Nov. 21 for inpatients and outpatients.

■ The *Battle Creek Enquirer's* 49th annual Remember-A-Vet Campaign, surpassed their \$20,000 goal by raising over \$24,000 from the community for the medical center. The monies donated will be used to purchase Canteen books for veterans on Christmas, during National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans week, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Veterans Day.

VA Illiana Health Care System, Danville

■ Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs, **Leo S. Mackay, Jr., Ph.D.**, visited the VA Illiana Health Care System on October 5, 2002. He, along with U.S. Representative Tim Johnson, led a town meeting to hear veterans' questions and comments. Afterwards, Dr. Mackay visited with patients and staff on the wards.

■ The Federal Women's Program invited Theresa Grentz, University of Illinois women's basketball coach, to speak at the medical center and then presented her with a contribution for the U of I women's basketball scholarship fund.

■ The 6th Annual Festival of Trees, "A Magical Adventure", was held at the community center in November 2002. **Susan Bowers**, medical center director, was a sponsor this year and purchased a tree which was displayed in the Parade of Trees. The Federal Women's Program Committee decorated the tree in a military theme, "In Service to Our Country; In Service to Our Veterans." The Festival of Trees supports the community outreach programs of Provena United Samaritans Medical Center Foundation.

John D. Dingell VAMC, Detroit

■ **Michael Carr**, chief, chaplain service at the John D. Dingell VA Medical Center and the Ann Arbor Healthcare System was named the recipient of the Secretary's Award for Excellence in Chaplain Service, Supervisory Chaplain. Chaplain Carr is responsible for a full range of spiritual services including patient

assessment, counseling and treatment, as well as the more traditional service such as conducting worship services, and providing sacramental ministry. He is the primary chaplain for the intensive care units, provides crisis intervention, "end of life" or palliative care, grief and bereavement, and advance directive counseling. He is a Board Certified Chaplain for the National Association of VA Chaplains and an active member of the Military Chaplains Association. He is also a certified addiction counselor and an adjunct professor at Madonna University. As a supervisor, he has utilized his outstanding team building skills to create an atmosphere of open communication and collaboration among the chaplain staff, increasing their value as part of the care team. Under Chaplain Carr's leadership, the John D. Dingell VA Medical Center was the first VA medical center to achieve national accreditation by the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Pastoral Services. Also, in September 2001, he instructed local clergy about stress management and coping with grief in New York City/Ground Zero.



Chaplain Carr

Richard L. Roudebush VAMC, Indianapolis

■ In partnership with the Indianapolis Simon malls and the local organizing committee of the annual Veterans Day celebration, the Indianapolis VAMC was proud to host the Ordinary Heroes exhibit for one week. The exhibit was a multi-faceted photographic tribute to the extraordinary accomplishments of Congressional Medal of Honor recipients. The book Ordinary Heroes by Tom Casalini, which contains inspirational commentary and stunning photography, features 48 of these recipients – two of whom are Hoosiers.

■ From Brownsburg, Ind., the Delaware Trail Elementary's third graders and the Indianapolis University Place Conference Center and Hotel, Doubletree, participated in the *Great Community Cookie Giveaway - Teaching Kids to Care* Program. The students were asked: "If you had 2,002 chocolate chip cookies to give to a special group of people in your community, who would you give them to and why?" The children voted the veterans at Indianapolis VAMC as the people they care about the most for protecting them and keeping them safe.

This & That continued on page 8

This & That

(continued from page 7)

■ The National Council of State Boards of Nursing Inc., headquartered in Chicago, selected **Diana Graham**, M.S.N., R.N.C., to participate as a National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) item writer in a NCLEX item development panel session. As an item writer, Graham created questions, or items, that are used as part of the National Council Licensure Examination. Graham was one of 12 nurses from across the nation to be selected for this prestigious assignment.



Graham

Aleda E. Lutz VAMC, Saginaw

■ On her way into work on November 22, **Linda Andrews**, R.N., care coordinator, was the first medical trained individual at the scene of a multicar accident. Andrews, a Major in the U.S. Army Reserve trained as a triage nurse, took control of the situation first checking for injured and then providing instructions to individuals who had stopped to help. She stayed at the scene until police and medical assistance arrived.

■ Congratulations to **Emily Houle** and **Corrina Greer** who completed the national certification as certified provider credentialing specialists – a first for VISN 11. This credentialing recognizes an individual's skills and knowledge as a medical staff services professional. The National Association of Medical Staff Services governs this credentialing.

VA Northern Indiana Health Care System

■ Muchas Gracias to guest speaker **Gabriel Perez**, director, Saginaw VAMC, who spoke at the Hispanic Heritage Month celebration.

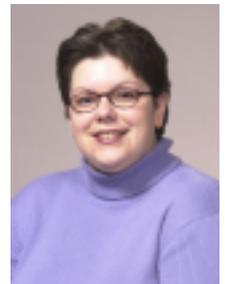
■ Congratulations to **Lori Collins**, patient care support, Fort Wayne campus, and **Donna Garvey**, manager, performance improvement, Marion campus, recipients of the Customer Service Champion Award for exhibiting exceptional customer service. Both were nominated by a staff member who witnessed them displaying above and beyond customer service skills.

■ Congratulations to **Laura Gage**, IRM, Ft. Wayne campus, and **Vickie Burke**, PCS, Marion campus, for winning the Infection Control contest.

VISN 11 Network Office, Ann Arbor

■ GEC Service Line Director **Kenneth Shay, D.D.S.**, was recently asked to chair a work group for the Health Systems Committee of the National Leadership Board charged with developing recommendations for improving VHA's practices of contracted nursing home oversight. The report includes provisions to significantly improve the degree to which VHA assures that nursing home care purchased by the VA for veterans is of a comparable quality.

■ During National Acquisition and Materiel Management Week, November 4-8, the Office of Acquisition and Materiel Management announced their 2002 winners of the 2nd Annual Supply Processing Distribution (SPD)/Materiel Managers' Manager and Technician of the Year Awards. Congratulations to **Elizabeth Smith**, Ann Arbor, and **David Rogers**, Indianapolis, who were this year's award recipients. Out of six categories, Smith was recognized for the Technician of the Year in Preparation and Decontamination. Rogers was recognized as the Technician of the Year in SPD Traditional.



Smith

Smith and Rogers traveled to Washington, D.C., in November to receive their awards. There they were honored for their leadership and initiative on the job – as well as demonstrating support of core values in their duty performance.



Rogers

Happy
New Year!