

Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Caucus of Public Health Workers

In Official Relations with The American Public Health Association

Spring 1994

Chair's Column

by Denice Dennis, MPH

What a fabulous scientific and social program the Caucus sponsored in San Francisco! I am sure you share the pride I have in our recent accomplishments:

- nine sessions were sponsored at the Annual Meeting, many with over 50 attendees - several had close to 100 attendees.

- over 120 people attended the Annual Banquet (our largest banquet yet) and many had to be turned away at the door because of limited seating.

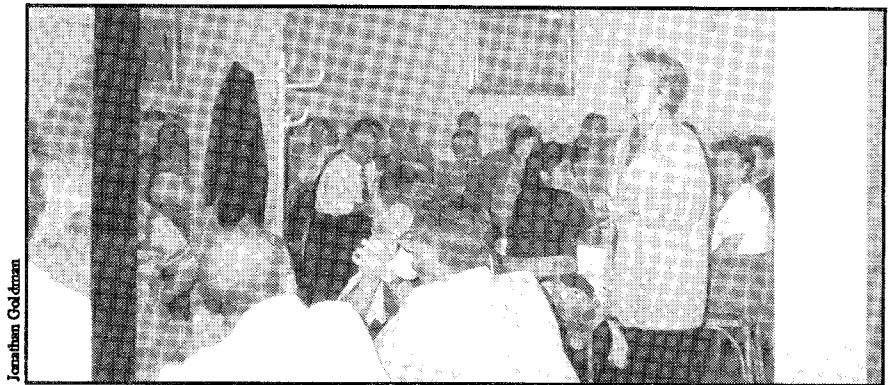
- the Caucus membership list submitted for continued "official relations" with APHA showed a 23 percent increase in membership; from 79 members in 1993 to 97 in 1994. (I believe it is possible to increase our membership, and therefore our voice, in 1995 as well.)

- the Caucus was represented at a meeting for caucus leadership at the Annual Meeting sponsored by the Equal Health Opportunity Committee (EHOC) of APHA. The purpose of the meeting was to begin a dialogue to improve the organization's responsiveness to caucus' concerns.

- thirty-four abstracts were received for review for the upcoming 1994 Annual Meeting in Washington, DC.

- as a result of a letter signed by the chairs of the EHOC, the Caucus on Disability, and the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Caucus, changes have been made in the letter that goes out annually to APHA Section Nominations Committee Chairpersons. The changes state APHA's

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Jonathan Goldstein
Caucus Chair Denice Dennis addresses her minions at the Caucus Banquet, San Francisco, 1993.



Linda Wardlow
(L to R) (back) Caucus Treasurer Bruce Reeves, Immediate Past Chair Josh Lipsman, (front) Jim Soos and John Grima at the Caucus Exhibit Hall Booth, San Francisco, 1993.

Attention Caucus Members and Friends:

Bored in DC?
Wearied in Maryland?
Palled in Virginia?

Want some excitement?

Then join your fellow Caucus members and help plan the (great!) social events for this year's Annual Meeting in Washington, DC.

Volunteers are needed.

Call Gregg Pappas at (202) 362-6574 for more information!

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT.....**... on Don Gabard, Ph.D.**

Health care and systems of health care delivery have been an integral part of my life for the past twenty years. I began my career in health care after receiving my masters degree in Physical Therapy followed immediately by a two-year program in pediatrics at the University of Southern California. From there I worked in the state hospital with profoundly and severely disabled children, followed by several years with California Children's Services in the Gardena, Compton and Watts area of Los Angeles. In the years that followed I opened a private practice in Beverly Hills, worked in a small private non-profit center, and became a program administrator at Children's Hospital in Los Angeles.

While pursuing my doctorate in Public Administration at USC, I made the decision to remain in the university setting professionally. I am currently an Associate Professor in the Division of Physical Therapy at Chapman University, and a Assistant Clinical Professor of Pediatrics at the USC Medical School. I teach courses in Bioethics and Health Care Administration, with an occasional course in Pediatrics, and, in addition to the traditional university committee work, have served as an advisor to the Gay and Lesbian student organization for a number of years.

A great advantage to working in the university system is the opportunity to do research. My research projects have included studies of AIDS Service Organizations (ASO) from the perspective of volunteerism and systems of health care delivery. Over my years at APHA, I have presented papers resulting from my research on ASOs, and on Lesbian contribution to ASOs. At other conferences I have presented on the subject of homophobia in health care delivery and on college campuses. This month I will be presenting a paper entitled "Policy, Ethics, Sexual Orientation and the Human Genome Project" at the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Along with my university responsibilities, I also stay active in direct patient care by working with pediatric AIDS patient in one of the few pediatric hospice programs in the country, "Caring For Babies With AIDS". I am also founder and current co-president of the Lambda Alumni Association (LAA) at USC.

The LAA recently received its charter and now enjoys full university recognition. The LAA also sponsors a role model scholarship based on academic merit and leadership in the Gay and Lesbian communities. In addition, the LAA offers an emergency fund for gay,

lesbian and bisexual students to cover tuition and living expenses in the event the student's family learn of their sexual orientation and cut off financial support. The LAA also sponsors multi-disciplinary research grants to cover the costs of original research for dissertations or master's theses related to topics of relevancy to the gay, lesbian and bisexual communities.

I am extremely proud of the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Caucus of Public Health Workers, and am looking forward to serving as Chair next year. I currently serve on the executive committee as Chair-elect. The challenges before the Caucus are exciting, and I hope we can continue to grow in size and influence. I also hope we can continue our commitment to the concept of diversity within our Caucus, and hope we can accelerate our outreach to members in communities of color, and to students in public health.

This newsletter is published biannually by the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Caucus of Public Health Workers. Forward all correspondence, submissions, address changes and membership inquiries to: LG/BCPHW, 1345 North Hayworth #310, Los Angeles, California, 90046.

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Public Health Students and the Caucus
by Elisabeth Gruskin

Attending conferences as a lesbian student can be particularly intimidating and overwhelming. However, the vast array of badges proudly displaying the pink triangle, having a "home base" at the Caucus booth, and the extensive programs addressing gay/lesbian/bisexual issues sponsored by the Caucus made for an extremely educational and empowering experience. And, of course, the parties, dancing and dinners were a lot of fun!

As we (the student members of the Caucus) expressed our interest in and became active in the Caucus events and meetings, it became clear that student representation and increased visibility of students in the Caucus is important. Our involvement was appreciated and supported, and several of us worked with the Caucus Executive Committee to plan for continued student involvement in the future.

The culmination of our efforts goes something like this...

Tentative plans for student involvement at the 1994 Annual Meeting include:

- a Caucus-sponsored student breakfast,
- a Caucus-sponsored round-table discussion on lesbian/gay/bisexual student issues, and
- a Caucus-sponsored poster session on student research.

PLUS ...

- articles written by students and/or addressing student issues will appear in the Caucus Newsletter,
- an E-Mail network will be organized (possibly a Newsgroup if there is sufficient interest) for lesbian/gay/bisexual students in Public Health (and other interested parties), and
- we will continue our communications with the Caucus Executive Committee.

Please contact me via E-Mail (Internet) at EGRUSKIN@UCLINK.BERKELEY.EDU, or phone (415) 759-8719 if you would be interested in planning and/or participating in any of the above activities. We would appreciate your support and look forward to future involvement in the Caucus.



Linda Wardlaw

Past Caucus Program Chair Cheri Pies (93) and Caucus Treasurer Bruce Reeves in the Exhibit Hall, San Francisco, 1993.

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1993-1994**

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Caucus Joins Public Health Support of Single-Payer Health Care Reform by Walter J. Lear

The Caucus, at its Annual Business Meeting in San Francisco, discussed the fundamental issues involved in national health care reform and then voted unanimously to endorse the "single-payer" approach, which position APHA's Governing Council reaffirmed a day later. In Congressional terms this is HR1200 sponsored by Jim McDermott, John Conyers and 91 other members of the House of Representatives, and S491 sponsored by Paul Wellstone and four other Senators.

"Single-payer" is short hand for a plan that is universal, comprehensive in benefits, allows freedom of choice of provider, gear's the patient's financial contributions to income, and imposes effective cost controls as well as a "single-payer;" that is, a unified public entity that receives and distributes all the money involved. The key difference between this approach and the Clinton plan (and the hottest political issue in the current debate) is the exclusion of the health insurance companies — their exorbitant administrative costs and profits, and their imposition of market place values and priorities on health care.

Congressional committees are holding hearings on the various legislative proposals, and some Washington experts anticipate that final action may be taken by the Congress prior to next fall's election. Now, then, is the time for enthusiastic and widespread grass-roots support of the single-payer approach. Accordingly, major single-payer advocates launched a nationwide petition campaign in April which culminated with "Health Care for People Week," featuring national media events, single-payer educational programs across the nation, and presentation of the petitions to members of Congress. Additional information may be obtained through Barbara Otto at Single Payer Across the Nation (SPAN), 2800 Euclid #520, Cleveland, Ohio, 44115, or call (216) 241-8422 or fax (216) 241-8423.

As readers of The Nation's Health know (see, for example, the January issue, page 5), APHA is also urging immediate contact with members of Congress emphasizing that single-payer is the best way (perhaps the only way) to finance appropriate health care services for everyone. Another recent and surprising endorser of the single-payer approach is the American College of Surgeons.

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force has issued an analysis of the Clinton plan: "There is no provision in the plan that would bar discrimination against lesbians, gay men and bisexuals, either as patients or physicians attempting to contract with a health plan, and the family provision excludes lesbians and gay men and their children." NGLTF is, therefore, urging Congress to include complete non-discrimination language in health care reform legislation. For its analysis and other information write to Marj Plum, Health Policy Director, NGLTF, 1734 14th Street NW, Washington, DC, 20009, or call (202) 332-6483 extension 3310.

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commitment "to encouraging visible leadership in the Association by people with disabilities, and lesbian, gay and bisexual people" and asks sections to "keep the Association's commitment to encouraging these constituencies in mind" as sections develop their slate of candidates. (APHA has explicit affirmative action goals for women and racial/ethnic minorities.) A grateful thank you to EHOOC and Caucus member David Jernigan for leading the efforts in this change.

At out annual business meeting, membership voted to actively support the single-payer national healthcare reform proposals. (see related article by Walter Lear, above.) Membership also voted to change the name of the Caucus to include "bisexuals." Student participation in Caucus activities this year was great, and Liz Gruskin, a student at UC Berkeley, is taking the lead to keep this momentum going. An article on student issues is included in this newsletter, and we hope this will be the beginning of student activism in the caucus.

Hope this newsletter finds you and yours healthy!