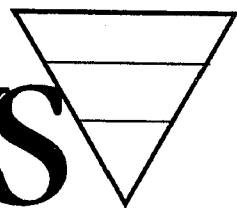


LGBTCPHW News



In official relations with the American Public Health Association

March 2000

HIGHLIGHT ON RESEARCH BY CAUCUS MEMBERS

The Prevention of Hepatitis B

by Leland Yee, MPH & Scott Rhodes, MPH, CHES
The University of Alabama at Birmingham

Leland J. Yee is an epidemiologist at the University of Alabama. His research interests involve the epidemiology and immunology of gastrointestinal and liver diseases. His areas of focus include the epidemiology and immunogenetics of viral hepatitis and HIV. He also has a special interest in the public health prevention of diseases such as viral hepatitis and HIV.

Scott D. Rhodes is a third-year PhD student in the Department of Health Behavior at the University of Alabama. His research interests include risk behavior among MSM and adolescents. He is an adjunct faculty member at the University of Alabama.

Hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection remains a significant health problem in the gay community, despite the availability of an effective vaccine. Due to the prevalence of HBV in the gay community, vaccination is indicated for its members. With the implementation of effective blood donor screening, HBV is predominantly transmitted through sexual activity and the sharing of needles for injecting drug use. While safer sex and needle exchange efforts reduce the incidence of new HBV infections, vaccination remains the best method of prevention. A number of studies indicate that vaccination against HBV among gay men appears to be low.

We recently conducted a study among men who have sex with men (MSM) in bar settings in Birmingham, Alabama, and

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Some staff members of the Harambee Wellness Center of the Harold Brown Health Center, Chicago, IL

Chair's Column

Our Caucus had a very exciting and successful conference in Chicago, and our heartfelt thanks go to Mike Shankle who organized this year's program. We can all be proud of the high caliber of research and clinical work going on across the country around LGBT health issues. Our social at the Howard Brown Health Clinic was crowded, fun, and enlightening, and special thanks go to Dr. Fred Rachman, Ms. Lisa Tuttle, and Ms. Denise Miles for their welcome. At our business meeting, the Caucus voted unanimously to change our name to include the word "Transgender." Our resolution, written by Dr. Emilia Lombardi, supporting better health care for Transgendered people was approved

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Treasurer's Report

As of the beginning of February 2000, and with all invoices paid for the 1999 conference, the ending balance in the Caucus checking account was \$3,921.54. This balance is approximately where the Caucus was last year at this point. We received \$856.00 in donations, and sincerely thank these members for their generosity.

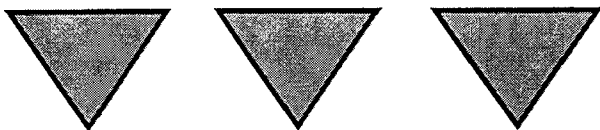
The following is a breakdown of other costs associated with the 1999 APHA annual conference: Booth expenses (set up and rent) 305.93; Social \$714.88; Student Meeting \$73.33 and; miscellaneous expenses of \$188.37. Additional expenses during the year were the xeroxing and mailing of two newsletters and the conference social that was held at the Howard Brown Health Center. The cost of the newsletter was covered by an anonymous donor which totaled over \$500 and the Howard Brown Health Center hosted the event for the Caucus.

With the 25th anniversary of the Caucus being celebrated in Boston and a number of special events being planned, the Caucus will gratefully accept any and all donations.

Please send your check made payable to LGB Caucus to me at the following address:

John Grima
735 Head Street
San Francisco, CA 94132.

If you have any questions or need additional information please feel free to contact me at (415) 586-4151 or by e-mail at JFJTG@aol.com.



Chair's Column

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by APHA at the annual conference in Chicago. We also voted to send a letter, along with the HIV SPIG, to Secretary Shalala asking her to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the non-discrimination clause in Medicaid. Additionally, we voted to send a letter to HRC and to NGLTF informing them about the APHA resolutions supporting LGBT research and transgender health care and ask them to lobby for their implementation. Dr. Tom Scott from the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association attended our business meeting and described the exciting work that GLMA is doing on behalf of gay youth. Our members agreed to support their work and to join them in working for the addition of appropriate questions on the Youth Risk Behavior Survey. We elected a new chair-elect, Dr. Linda Wardlaw, who will assume the role of Chair in November 2000. We also elected Kevin Roe as membership chair-elect and Dr. Emilia Lombardi as program chair-elect.

The upcoming APHA annual conference will be in Boston this year and mark the 25th anniversary of our caucus. We hope that you will attend the APHA conference. Your participation and support will enable us to better serve our community. Since APHA uses our list of paid members (only by the member's permission) to determine the number of sessions that we are allotted, it is critical that we maintain a large membership. Therefore, please consider joining our Caucus this year or renewing your membership.

Please feel free to contact me with your questions and ideas at (412) 624-5080 or by email at tony@pitt.edu --Tony Silvestre, PhD

The Prevention of Hepatitis B

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presented some of our results at the annual meeting this past fall in Chicago. Over 50% of respondents reported being unvaccinated for HBV and nearly a third of respondents reported having no information about hepatitis. Health-care providers and professional training were cited as the most common sources of information about hepatitis. Other research also suggests that level of "out-ness" with one's health-care provider predicts HBV vaccination; those MSM who are not "out" to their health-care providers tend to be unvaccinated. Our research identified the level of sexual risk in which respondents are engaging is high; over 74% reported never using condoms during oral sex and nearly 30% reported using condoms less than half of the time during anal sex. Nearly 34% of participants reported more than one sexual partner in the past 30 days. Clearly, MSM are engaging in risk behavior for HBV (and HIV as well). Moreover, levels of knowledge about the vaccine and about hepatitis transmission are low. Many respondents did not have correct knowledge about the transmission of the disease. For example, only 62% affirmed that HBV could be transmitted during sex. Clearly we have not adequately "gotten the message out" in the community.

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While our study concerned a select population in a predominantly rural state, it offers important insight into low HBV vaccination rates among MSM. It appears that the message regarding HBV vaccination has not been sufficiently spread throughout our community. The data underscore the importance of grass-root efforts to educate our community about HBV and to promote vaccination. Further research is needed to understand the barriers to vaccination and to develop effective interventions to lower HBV risk. Perhaps along with campaigns to increase vaccination, programs targeting "safer" sexual practices should be implemented as well to target MSM who do not get vaccinated. We must now translate scientific knowledge to action. Let us take these findings and bring them to the community; action is warranted.

For further information, contact:

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Birmingham, AL 35294-0022
Phone: (205) 934-8963
E-mail: rhodes@uab.edu



Editor's Column

I was not able to attend the APHA convention in Chicago, but am glad that the sessions sponsored by the LGBT Caucus were well-attended, our resolution to APHA supporting the inclusion of transgender health issues in research and clinical practice was passed, and our caucus voted to change its name to LGBT Caucus. Of course, I am very excited that the next annual convention in November 2000 and the 25th anniversary of the LGBT Caucus will be in Boston--which is where I live! I'm particularly glad that we will be celebrating this special anniversary in my city because it is the center of a large number of prestigious teaching hospitals in the country--the fitting setting for the promotion of LGBT health research and health care issues.

So far this year, the surprise victory for our civil rights occurred in Vermont. On December 20, GLAD won the Baker vs. Vermont case with a ruling by the state supreme court that same-sex couples are entitled to the same benefits and protections of marriage as opposite-sex couples. This month, the Vermont House Judiciary Committee passed a bill (10-1) calling for the creation of "civil unions" for gay and lesbian couples in order to comply with the Supreme Court's ruling. The bill will now need to be voted on in the House. You can show support for this measure by contacting Governor Dean Howard by fax at (802) 828-3339 or by mail to 109 State St., Montpelier, VT 05609. Meanwhile, in California, Proposition 22--sponsored by state Senator Pete Knight--states that any same-sex marriage performed elsewhere would not be considered legal in California. Proposition 22 will be on the ballot on Super Tuesday, so the outcome should be known before this newsletter has been printed. I'm hoping progressive voters in California will prevail against

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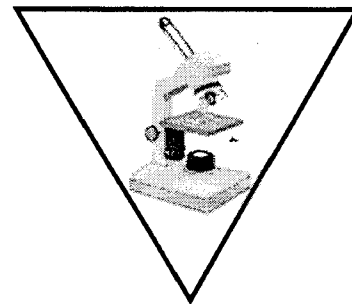
Membership Update

by Kevin Roe

It is with great pleasure that I address you as the new Membership Chair of the LGBT Caucus. With the assistance of Linda Wardlaw, our Chair-elect, and John Grima, Treasurer, we recently completed a transfer of membership information which I am now trying to grasp and put in a more "Kevin-friendly" form. This will be a short piece, therefore, to update you on current membership stats. Since the beginning of the year, Caucus membership has risen 13%!

Working as a team, John Blake West, our current Program Chair, and I led a tireless recruitment effort (some of those new recruits would say tiring) in the new MPH program at San Francisco State University, and we welcome our new members into the Caucus. We will continue our membership efforts in San Francisco, and beyond, in the goal of increasing Caucus membership even further this year. If you have recruitment ideas, or need a membership application or information about the LGBT Caucus, you are welcome to contact me by phone at (415) 929-8225 or email at ktroe@pacbell.net or by regular mail to:

Kevin Roe
757 Sutter Street, #505
San Francisco, CA 94109



National Public Health Mentorship Program

The following is an announcement from the Student Section of APHA that was received by Basil Vareldzis, MD, MPH, who is the Chair of the HIV/AIDS SPIG:

As you might already know, more than five thousand students belong to APHA, accounting for one-tenth of APHA's total membership; and about one thousand of these student members belong to, and are represented by, PHSC. Membership in PHSC affords students a number of opportunities for developing leadership skills, networking with other students and professionals, participating in several paper and poster sessions at APHA annual meetings, and learning about internship and job opportunities nationwide.

As we begin another year, PHSC continues to expand and develop, aspiring to become an even more vital organization. In order to best meet our goals in the coming year, though, we are writing to solicit your and your organization's help. Here are some suggestions we hope you might consider in order to help further our organizational goals, which we hope align closely with some of your goals.

1) Want to help cultivate the next generation of public health leaders? Help us recruit professionals within your organization for the National Mentoring Program in Public Health, a one-of-a kind mentoring program coordinated by the PHSC. Registration for our next program, scheduled to begin in the fall of 2000, will begin this summer. Mentees (students) have outnumbered mentors (professionals) by 2:1 in the past; thus there is a tremendous need for more professionals willing to share their expertise with interested students. PHSC can provide a short recruitment message if you would be willing to post it in your newsletter and/or on your listserv.

(continued next column)

Please contact one of our Mentoring Co-Chairs, Resa Jones (email: jones_r@epi.umn.edu) or Rishi Dholakia (email: jus2smiley@aol.com) for more information.

2) Are you looking for ways to share job/internship/scholarship announcements? The PHSC listserv currently reaches over 1000 students, students who are always eager to find out about job, internship, and scholarship opportunities! We routinely e-mail opportunities we find out about to our members; if you have some you would like to share, we would be happy to post them on our listserv. Please contact our Secretary, Christina Vo (email: cvo@email.unc.edu) to post a message.

3) Interested in increasing student involvement within your own section? Some students have expressed interest in getting more actively involved in their section, but are unsure how to proceed. We encourage you to consider creating specific roles for students within your organization. For example, some groups have appointed a liaison between their group and ours; others have considered creating a "students corner," to be authored by students, in their newsletter.

Please contact any one of us for more information if you wish to talk about these ideas or others you have in more depth. We understand that many Sections, SPIGs, and Caucuses have begun to find ways to encourage student participation within their organization; we commend you on these efforts! If you have any suggestions for ways we can help you and your organization, please let us know. We are eager to create, as well as sustain, a productive relationship with you and your organization.

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**** Announcements ****

National Lesbians with Cancer Conference

September 21-23, 2000, Washington, D.C.,
sponsored by The Mautner Project for Lesbians
with Cancer. For further information,
call (202) 332-5536

GLMA & the Center for Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Health submit "White Paper"

This report, funded by the US Health Resources
and Services Administration (HRSA), is the first
time gay health issues have been pushed to this
extent at the federal level. For more information,
contact the Gay & Lesbian Medical Association
(GLMA), 459 Fulton Street, Suite 107,
San Francisco, CA 94012, at (415) 255-4547

The LGBT Caucus web-site at
<http://www.stophiv.com/~lgbc>
has been down due to a problem
with our server. We hope to have
this problem fixed in the near
future. Our apologies!

Action Alert!

The Human Rights Campaign urges its 300,000
members to contact the newly merged Exxon-Mobil
Corp to express displeasure about their new policy
ending domestic partner benefits and discontinuing
Mobil's policy banning discrimination based on
sexual orientation. Exxon-Mobil's new policy may
make them the first major U.S. employer ever to roll
back a nondiscrimination policy and the second to

end domestic partner benefits. HRC asks members
to inform the Exxon-Mobil Corp. that their decision
to treat gay and lesbian workers unfairly and
unequally is not acceptable, bad business and a prime
example of corporate irresponsibility.

Contact: L.R. Raymond, CEO, Exxon-Mobil Corp.,
5959 Las Colinas Boulevard, Irving, TX 75039-
2298; Phone: (972) 444-1000; Fax: (972) 444-1348;
E-mail: www.exxon.com/contact/index.html

--HRC Press Release, December 1999



*...and the LGBT Caucus is looking for a
new logo to coincide with our 25th
anniversary in Boston in November
2000.*

Announcing our LOGO CONTEST. We
know that our membership is multi-talented,
so demonstrate your creativity by designing
a logo for our newsletter, letterhead, and
banner (at the annual convention at our
Booth in the exhibit hall).

The winner will receive a one-year free
membership in the Caucus and a free ticket
to attend our dinner in Boston (11/00) or
Atlanta (11/01)--and our undying gratitude!

Mail your logo design (any size) to:

Tony Silvestre
University of Pittsburgh
PO Box 7319
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

The following petition was sent to the LGBT Caucus Executive Committee by the Asian/Pacific Islanders Caucus and is being reprinted in support of their efforts:

Statement of Protest Against Tobacco Industry Campaign Targeting Ethnic Minorities and Women

November 9, 1999

Whereas, we, the undersigned, concerned organizations serving the needs of ethnic minority communities, know that the tobacco industry has been targeting our communities for many years; that ethnic minority groups and subgroups have some of the highest prevalence of smoking and tobacco use in the U.S.; that women, youth and developing countries have also been targeted because they represent the greatest potential for new smokers; that among many of these groups, we have witnessed dramatically rising rates of tobacco use;

Whereas, Philip Morris has launched their \$40 million Virginia Slims campaign to target Asian American, African American and Hispanic/Latina women and in addition, have developed Marlboro Milds targeted at blacks and Hispanics in both Atlanta and Pittsburgh;

Whereas, despite the fact that that Philip Morris has finally admitted that cigarettes cause cancer, at the same time, they have launched a new multi-million dollar campaign to give their corporate image a more human and compassionate face; that this campaign to create a "new corporate image" is a way of buying legitimacy from the American public; that this has included giving monies to ethnic minority community organizations and events and to groups addressing domestic violence and homelessness; that even after the settlement between the states attorneys general and the tobacco industry, business for the tobacco industry continues as usual- for them the bottom line is sales.

Whereas tobacco is still the only substance that when used as intended is harmful to one's health; tobacco

represents a real threat to the health of all of our communities; slick marketing campaigns are the way that the tobacco companies recruit new smokers especially young people, women and ethnic minorities;

We protest against the tobacco industry continual targeting of our ethnic minority communities, women, youth and developing countries by the tobacco industry.

We demand that the tobacco industry end its targeted marketing of ethnic minority communities and women and end its advertising campaign for Virginia Slims and Marlboro Milds.

We strongly urge that People, Glamour, Marie Claire, Ladies Home Journal, Essence, Vibe, Latina and other magazines remove these tobacco ads blatantly targeting ethnic minorities and women from future issues. We appeal to the magazine industry to show leadership by not being an accomplice in tobacco's duplicitous corporate makeover and by refusing to run these tobacco ads.

We urge state and national tobacco control organizations to recognize the need for and allocate additional resources to combat the tobacco industry and support tobacco control programs in ethnic minority communities.

We also call upon our own national and local community organizations that receive tobacco monies to recognize the duplicity and true intent of the tobacco industry and give up their tobacco sponsorship. We ask other community organizations to make a pledge not to receive tobacco industry monies in the future.

We ask these things for the health and betterment of our Asian American and Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino, African American and Native American communities, and other medically-underserved communities.

Sincerely,

National Public Health Mentorship Program

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By working together, we hope to facilitate some kind of collaboration that will be beneficial for both of our organizations and can flourish in subsequent years.

You can find out more about PHSC at www.phsc.org. We look forward to hearing from you soon. Best wishes!

France Nguyen,
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(310) 845-0412

Melissa Stigler,
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(612) 626-7894

Stuart Usdan,
Immediate Past-President
susdan@bmu.dopm.uab.edu
(205) 969-1404

Editor's Column

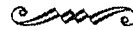
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this homophobic proposition and defeat it. But, we need to maintain a high level of political activism to ensure that we don't lose our civil rights gains at the ballot box. And, speaking of political activism, both Republican presidential candidates have made statements in support of this measure. Because this is an

(continued next column)

election year, I thought that this was important to mention here (though I'm already fatigued by the extensive print and mass media coverage of the campaigns for both parties' nominations).

On a positive note, I'm looking forward to attending the march in Washington, DC on April 30th. I was at the last gay and lesbian march in Washington, DC in 1993, and am excited about returning. Stay tuned to my travelog in the next issue...



How to reach us...

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EHOC Representative
Linda Wardlaw, DrPH
(see information under Chair-Elect)

The deadline for submissions for the next issue of the newsletter is **September 1, 2000**. Please address all correspondence and submission of articles to the Editor at the address listed above.