

## CHI AIMS TO REDUCE DISPARITY OF CARE AMONG AFRICAN-AMERICANS THROUGH BLACK HISTORY MONTH HEALTHCARE SERIES

Black History Month is a time to look back at past achievements. At Community Health of South Florida, Inc. (CHI) the late Doris Ison helped pave the way for equality among races in healthcare starting in 1971.

“She convinced a group of doctors from her church to volunteer their time and the team worked out of two double-wide trailers,” recalled Brodes Hartley Jr., President and CEO of CHI. “That dream grew into what is now CHI. It just goes to show what dedication, heart and sacrifice can do. We can all learn from Ison. No dream is too big. No barrier should be insurmountable.”

Ison’s legacy continues today with Hartley carrying her torch. This February, Hartley created the first-of-its-kind health care speakers bureau series to address disparities among African-Americans.

“Knowledge is part of the solution,” said Hartley. That’s why we believe in being an educational resource for our community.”

CHI held its lecture series at seven local churches and community organizations.

“We wanted to use this opportunity to address key health care issues,” said Dr. Saint Anthony Amofah, Chief Medical Officer and Senior VP. “We chose to highlight HIV, hypertension, diabetes, high cholesterol, smoking and depression.”



*Dr. Saint Anthony Amofah addresses the congregation at Second Baptist Church.*

Dr. Amofah said his presence serves to remind the community that health care is available and they do not have to go far to obtain it for themselves and their families.

“We need to make sure people are aware of the prevalence of these diseases and how ignoring them can create worse outcomes,” Dr. Amofah said.

According to Dr. Amofah, African-Americans make up 12 percent of the U.S. population, however they account for 43 percent of all new HIV diagnoses. Dr. Amofah encouraged everyone to get tested as soon as possible to get the best care early.

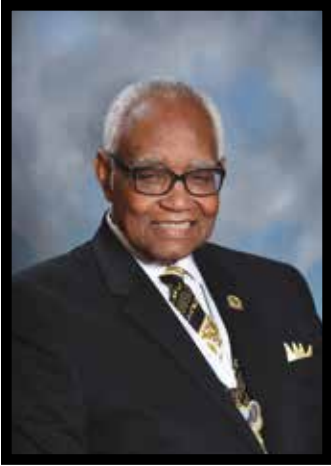
For other conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, high cholesterol, smoking and depression there is a lot

people can do to avoid or improve their symptoms through diet and exercise. For example, if you suffer from hypertension, avoid canned foods, as these tend to be excessively high in salt. If you’re prescribed medication, take it daily and manage your pill count so you don’t run out.

When it comes to diabetes, the stats are also bad. African-American adults are 80 percent more likely than non-Hispanic white adults to be diagnosed with diabetes.

Dr. Amofah encourages people who are at high risk of developing diabetes or currently have it to keep a healthy weight through diet and exercise. Controlling your blood pressure helps alleviate symptoms, and if you smoke, quit.

# A Message from the President



How's your golf swing? It doesn't have to be outstanding to join us at our annual Glen Rice Celebrity Golf Tournament at the Shula's Golf Club in Miami Lakes on April 12th. In fact, some people just like to come and enjoy the food, drinks and the greens. Whether you're golfing or not I hope you will join us for this fun-filled event and pledge a sponsorship. It helps push us closer to our goal of building a Children's Crisis Center for abused children and kids with severe behavioral health issues. The crisis center will be an in-patient 24-hour facility with integrated care for children. Currently we have a crisis unit for adults but it is not suitable for kids. That means when children are baker acted here or brought in by their parents we need to process them and transfer them to another facility miles away. Oftentimes most of the local children's crisis centers are full. These families can't wait any longer for help. We need to be their lifeline and you can help us do that.

March is colorectal cancer awareness month. It is the second leading cause of death from cancers that affects both men and women. If you are 50 years and older you need to get regular screenings. Talk to your doctor here at CHI about getting tested. Six out of 10 deaths from this cancer could have been prevented according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Last, but certainly not least, I want to ask you all to wish your doctor a Happy Doctor's Day on March 30th. CHI is so fortunate to have a talented, knowledgeable, devoted, compassionate team of physicians. Our doctors work beyond the hurdles presented to ensure that everyone has access to high quality healthcare, regardless of economic background, insurance status or ethnicity. They believe in the work that they do and many of them are helping to groom the next generation of doctors by teaching the residents in our Teaching Health Center. I want our doctors to know that we are so grateful for all that they do and sincerely proud of their dedication to our patients.

Yours Truly,

Brodes H. Hartley Jr.  
President and CEO

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# CHI GIVES KIDS A SMILE FOR FREE

Two hundred children received free dental cleanings, fluoride treatment and dental sealants at Community Health of South Florida Inc.'s (CHI) Give Kids A Smile Day on February 1st. The event offered dental services to children ages 3 to 16-years-old in partnership with the American Dental Association Foundation. Christina Colley made sure to bring her 4-year-old son, Johnathan, to the West Perrine Health Center for his cleaning. As they were waiting she asked him about his hygiene routine.

"I brush my teeth," beamed Johnathan.

"Yes, and how do we get in between our teeth?" asked the mom.

"We use our nails," the toddler jokingly responded as the waiting room erupted in laughter.

"No we use floss," she said, unable to contain her smile after his response.

Seven of CHI's dental locations from the Keys and through Miami-Dade offered the free services on that day and all were packed with families eager to take advantage of the promotion.

Ibeli Cauribe, an unemployed mom, brought her 13-year-old daughter.

"These are very expensive services so it's a great idea to have it for free," said Cauribe. "It gives us an opportunity to have at least part of the work done."

"CHI was founded on the premise that everyone should have access to high quality healthcare regardless of economic or insurance status," said Brodes H. Hartley Jr., President and CEO of CHI. "We do these events to reach out to those in need and to show that CHI is here for them year-round. We offer a sliding fee scale for the uninsured so that even when we are not having Give Kids a Smile Day, everyone has the ability to care for their oral health."

Back at the Doris Ison Health Center, Dr. Sheri Watson-Hamilton, DMD was busy working with her team to care for the nearly 40 children who showed up for dental care at that site. Dr. Watson-Hamilton is the Director of Dental Services and outfitted her team in brightly colored shirts with the Give Kids a Smile Day logo.

"Many of us worked through lunch and into the evening that day but we did so



*(L-R) Kaylany Moll, Dental Assistant, Norma Subadan, Oral Health Educator, Natasha Ford, Dental Hygienist take a pic after a busy day at the West Kendall Health Center.*

happily," said Dr. Watson-Hamilton. "It makes it all worthwhile to know that children who need dental care are receiving the services they need to stay healthy. A child who doesn't have dental care can't concentrate in school, can't enjoy a meal, and suffers with his or her overall health."

Lynelle Clarke brought her three girls ages 13, 7 and 5 to the Doris Ison Health Center. For the two youngest ones it was their first time at the dentist.

"It does make it easier on parents to get what they need done for their kids," said Clarke.

Her girls also got to pose for a photo with Ratoncito Perez, a giant cartoonish rat sponsored by Delta Dental also known as the Spanish counterpart to the tooth fairy.

Five-year-old Eden announced, "I think they're going to make our teeth nice and shiny and clean!"

True to the day's name, every child left with a smile on their face, even those who were initially a bit apprehensive about visiting the dentist.



*(L-R) Danielle Clarke, 7, Eden Clarke, 5, and Dr. Sheri Watson Hamilton DMD Director of Dental Services at CHI, take a photo with the Delta Dental Mascot at the Doris Ison Health Center.*



*Johnathan Colley, 4, gets a high five from Dr. Millied Lopez De Victoria DDS at the West Perrine Health Center.*



*Dr. Angella Chin-Thompson DMD cleans 4-year-old Lourdes Pereie's teeth at the West Kendall Health Center.*

# ACTION HERO AWARD GIVEN FOR GENEROSITY AND CARING

Merlys Garcia and Ester Gomez, Hedis Compliance Technicians, do not typically make house calls. But recently they ventured out of their offices at the Doris Ison Health Center to bring two new pairs of shoes to a patient. Typically, Garcia and Gomez connect with Community Health of South Florida Inc. (CHI) patients over the phone when they are due for appointments. The ladies ensure that some of the most challenging patients with barriers to care, don't fall through the cracks. So, when the team called a patient after he didn't show up for a specialist appointment they were moved by the reason for his absence.

"He said I'm not gonna lie to you," recalls Gomez. "I don't have any shoes."

He told her he had been hospitalized and someone stole his shoes.

They asked him what size he wears, and both Garcia and Gomez put their own money together to buy two new pairs for him.

The patient suffers from heart related issues that also interfere with his memory. After his recent hospital discharge they wanted to be sure he was doing well. So, they brought a nurse from CHI along with them to the patient's home. The nurse checked his vitals and overall condition and the three presented him with his new shoes.

"He was very grateful for the shoes and he started talking to us about his medical history," said Gomez. "He suffered several strokes and he has been trying to improve himself."

It's a moment in time that Garcia said she will cherish. "He was so grateful. He even had tears in his eyes," remembered Garcia. "Just getting from beyond the desk and being with him, it means the world. We even prayed with him because he is a very religious person."

The ladies were able to bring down his blood pressure at that moment and schedule a follow-up appointment for him to see the doctor. Now with his new shoes, he was confident he could make his next appointment.

"I told him that he is an inspiration to me because my father is a stroke patient," said Gomez. "He keeps going, he wants to better himself, he has a disability, but he can improve."

The news spread quickly back at CHI and both Gomez and Garcia were awarded with CHI's ACTION Hero Award for their generous and caring response to a patient's needs.



*(L-R) Brodes H. Hartley Jr., President/CEO presents ACTION Hero awards to Merlys Garcia and Ester Gomez, Hedis Compliance Technicians. Their supervisor, Yvette Casas, Director of Managed Care, commends them for a job well done.*

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