



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Post Election follow-up, have we shattered the racial barriers in politics?**
- **Health Care for All, why health care seems more of a privilege rather than a right.**
- **Lobby Day 2009 at the Capital January 12th!**

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YES WE CAN!

Americans have been patiently waiting. The recent economic downturn, large numbers of home foreclosures, historic unemployment rates, two devastating wars and constant budget cuts to vital programs in higher education and health care have deteriorated the faith of the American people. Can a new president and his administration restore the faith of people? On November 4th 2008 the United States of America elected a new president, and at Grant Park in Chicago in the presence of 250,000 people Barack Obama accepted the call to duty.

In his acceptance speech he thanked his supporters, outlined what is to come in the future, and emphasized how far America has come. He highlighted the "Yes we can" attitude that American people have used to accomplish changes in our nation's history. These historic changes have disseminated the racial and gender discriminations that ruled our country in the past. Yes we can, and yes we will were the words of choice for millions of Americans on the eve that brought America a new president. To millions of people, the election of Barack Obama represents an unprecedented step forward in American history, shattering racial barriers and forever altering the political landscape.

What's next? On January 20th, 2009 America's historic decision will bring change to Washington, DC. America will have a new president, but what does that mean for you and me?



Supporters at Grant Park in Chicago on 11/4/08. It was estimated that possibly close to quarter of a million people were present while a record 71 million watched from home

Without a doubt, this election is historic from the extent of support for each of the candidates, voter turnout, and to the election of our nation's first African-American president. It is important to remember, that change does not simply happen, it is accomplished through hard work, dedication and persistence.

Although we may not always agree with politicians, it is important to realize that our personal involvement is crucial in achieving true change. Through service and responsibility, working hard,

helping others and not just ourselves we can take part in changing our nation's future. Let us not forget that we have overcome struggles in the past and from our failures come opportunities to learn and excel to levels we could only have dreamed of. Now is the time to renew our engagement to the success of our nation. Remembering that together we can be the change; we have done in the past and we can certainly achieve it once again.
YES WE CAN!

Written By: Cynthia Mendez

Facts about 2008 Election

- A total of 131,237,603 million people voted on 11/4/08
- President Elect Barack Obama obtained 69,456,897 million of those votes, winning the popular vote at 52.9%
- Voter turnout was the highest in at least 40 years.
- Hundreds of homeless people casted their ballots, many of them for the first time in their lives using the address of a homeless shelter to register.
- One precinct in Pennsylvania had some voters waiting as long as 11 hours to reach the polls.
- According to CNN, President Elect Obama received 2/3 of the 18-29 year old vote which comprised about 18% of the total vote.

To read Obama's election night speech visit:
<http://edition.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/11/04obama.transcript/>



Want Universal Health Care? Don't miss Lobby Day 2009 at the State Capital January 12th

"In a democratic, humane, and technologically advanced nation, all people should benefit from the remarkable advances in medicine that allow for the prevention and treatment of disease"

Why Not Health Care for All?

Is being healthy a right or a privilege? Unfortunately, it has come to this point. The health care system quandary has progressively become one of the major controversial issues in America today. In a 2008 issue of *World Health Statistics*, the World Health Organization stated that health care costs are higher per person in the U.S. than in any other nation in the world. Other well-known healthcare journals, such as the *BMJ* (British Medical Journal), have ranked the U.S. last in regards to various measures in health care compared to 19 other countries. As a result of the inefficiencies and inequities of the U.S. health care system, millions of Americans have been forced to go without health care coverage, which has caused 45% of personal bankruptcies and has even gone so far to cost many their lives. According to the Institute of Medicine the lack of health insurance causes roughly 18,000 unnecessary deaths every year in the U.S. These records show that living healthy in the 21st century has certainly become a privilege.

What exactly is health care and how do we fix it? The medical dictionary defines health care as "the prevention, treatment and management of illness and the preservation of mental and physical well-being through the services offered by the medical and allied health professions." Unfortunately, the broken health care system in the U.S. alarmingly prevents 4 million people from receiving health care because they are uninsured. Curiously, this number has been said to be equal to the amount of people served at McDonalds on a daily basis. This number was also mentioned to equal the number of people in a total of 24 U.S. states.

So how does one improve their health when all resources are out of reach? This is clearly not preventive medicine.

Various health professionals have united to form advocacy groups in order to help reform the health care system and make it accessible to all in need. Healthcare-Now, American Medical Student Association, and Physicians for a National Health Program, are a few of the non-profit organizations operating in the U.S. A

newer group, California Student Physicians for Healthcare Reform, state their belief that, "in a democratic, humane, and technologically advanced nation, all people should benefit from the remarkable advances in medicine that allow for the prevention and treatment of disease." Along with most of the advocacy groups, they believe in the "single-pay" concept – a

system that consists of one single committee that collects one central health care fund, which then gets redistributed to all received services. This system is said to save everyone time, money, provide choice and freedom, as well as promote economic growth.

These groups and others alike, admit that this may not be a perfect solution, but it is a start to the ever so stagnant system. It seems as though we need to step back and re-evaluate the system so that we can then delve into the fundamentals of health care, to expand and provide unlimited quality healthcare to all groups in need, and most importantly to stop punishing the sick from being uninsured, because we all have a right to be healthy.

Written By: Julissa Gonzalez

For more information please visit:
<http://www.csphr.org/>



**ASHLEY
BUSCHMAN**



Which do you prefer: High salary or job satisfaction?

Job satisfaction. I want to wake up every morning happy to go to work.

Which is your most favorite book ever?

The Holy Bible. It is my guide to life.

What television character do you simply adore?

Tinkerbell, she is feisty and stubborn, but also confident and beautiful.

What is your taste in music?

I like all types of music, but I am a sucker for anything acoustic.

Which is your favorite genre of movies?

I like romantic comedies, (I am such a girl!) and watching Disney movies with my kids.

If you could have a luncheon with any three people (real or fictitious/ from any time period, dead or alive), which three people would you choose and why?

My husband and our two daughters. That may sound like an everyday lunch, but it is so rare that families get to spend quality time together these days, and there is nobody I would rather spend time with than them.

If given a complete freedom to start afresh, what profession would you choose and why?

A Pediatrician. I can't imagine a job more rewarding than helping save the lives of children.

What is your idea of fun? If given a choice to skip work for a day, how would you spend the entire day?

On a beach with my family, building sand castles with my kids and watching the sun set with my husband.

If given a choice, which animal would you want to be? Why?

A bird, who wouldn't want to fly?

What's been your best experience working at your Health Center?

Getting to work on the HIV program, and meeting some of the patients. They are so inspirational. Their living everyday with a burden we couldn't even imagine.

When do you have the most fun at work?

Getting to meet some of the patients, and hearing their stories.

Who do you enjoy working with the most here? What do you like about them?

Chuck Fisher, RN he is fun and easy to work with, and also so committed to his work and patients I know I can learn a lot from him.

Which manager do you admire the most at your health center? What do you admire about that person?

Barbra, our nursing supervisor. She is friendly and helpful to everyone. She will always listen to your ideas and input. I think she is a leader I can learn a lot from.



**ROSALBA
LOPEZ -
RAMIREZ**

Which do you prefer: High salary or job satisfaction?

Job satisfaction

Which is your most favorite book ever?

Woman Who Glows in the Dark by Elena Avery

What television character do you simply adore?

Ralph from the Simpsons

What is your taste in music?

I like listening to all types of music but for the most part listen to Spanish

Which is your favorite genre of movies?

Chick flicks

If you could have a luncheon with any three people (real or fictitious/ from any time period, dead or alive), which three people would you choose and why?

Oprah, Obama and Al Gore but I think I would be too intimidated to even talk.

If given a complete freedom to start afresh, what profession would you choose and why?

Right now I feel like I'm on the right track to doing something that I potentially can do the rest of my life which is helping people.

What is your idea of fun? If given a choice to skip work for a day, how would you spend the entire day?

I would spend the day reading and playing board games with my family.

If given a choice, which animal would you want to be? Why?

A bird, this way I can fly see the world without polluting it.

What's been your best experience working at your Health Center?

My best experience was working at the health fairs and distributing books to many children.

When do you have the most fun at work?

Looking at all the books that I have and imagining how much a child will enjoy it.

Who do you enjoy working with the most here? What do you like about them?

I enjoy working with all of my co-workers but in particular those that go to work with a mission of trying there best to help those that need it the most.

Which manager do you admire the most at your health center? What do you admire about that person?

Haven't had the chance to really meet many of them but I have met a few admirable people who really love there jobs and try to make a difference every day.



Central Valley Health Network

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Caring For California's Heartland

Incorporated in 1998, the Central Valley Health Network (CVHN) is a consortium of 12 Federally Qualified Health Center corporations that provide comprehensive preventive primary care services and advocate on behalf of low-income and medically underserved families throughout the northern, Central Valley and Inland Empire areas of California. In most Central Valley communities, CVHN members are the only safety net provider.

CVHN's mission is to facilitate community health centers' strength in the marketplace and to support member community health centers' effective delivery of high quality accessible health care to residents of their respective communities with special focus on advocacy for attaining optimal health for the medically underserved. CVHN staff support members through: advocacy, technical assistance, program development and administration, and training.

The AmeriCorps Informer is a monthly publication written, edited and reviewed by current AmeriCorps members throughout CVHN. Its purpose is to provide insightful and informative news and current events to our members. The newsletter also serves as a means to stay informed about events or changes happening within the organization. It also introduces all AmeriCorps members to the entire network therefore encouraging networking and collaboration opportunities.

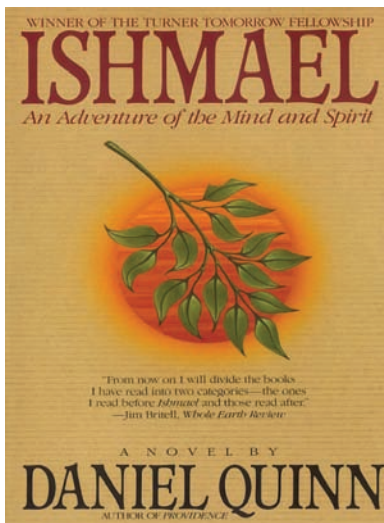


What are *You* Reading?

In the interest of cultivating more and more readers, this section is dedicated to introducing and highlighting an interesting book read by our AmeriCorps Members.

Ishmael: An Adventure of the Mind and Spirit
By: Daniel Quinn

The narrator of this extraordinary tale is a man in search for truth. He answers an ad in a local newspaper from a teacher looking for serious pupils, only to find himself alone in an abandoned office with a full-grown gorilla who is nibbling delicately on a slender branch. "You are the teacher?" he asks incredulously. "I am the teacher," the gorilla replies. Ishmael is a creature of immense wisdom and he has a story to tell, one that no other human being has ever heard. It is a story that extends backward and forward over the lifespan of the earth from the birth of time to a future there is still time save. Like all great teachers, Ishmael refuses to make the lesson easy; he demands the final illumination to come from within ourselves. Is it man's destiny to rule the world? Or is it a higher destiny possible for him-- one more wonderful than he has ever imagined?



Editorial Board

Cynthia Mendez - CVHN Editor
Julissa Gonzalez - GVHC Editor

Note from the Editors



January 19th 2009 is Martin Luther King Jr Day. A national holiday on which we honor the memory of a man who spent his lifetime attempting to end racial segregation, racial discrimination, poverty and war. Dr. King was a man of the people who loyally served as a public servant. In celebration of his life, millions of people across America dedicate this day to public service of any kind. We welcome all our readers to do the same, on this day take part of what MLK Jr did throughout his life. A day of service in honor of a man with a vision to create equality, justice and peace for all.