



**SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:**

- **March: Cesar Chavez and Women in History Month of Observance**
- **CVHN members serving their communities in tough economic times**
- **Cost-effective and sustainable methods of living are possible in the Central Valley**

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Time of Struggle, A Man of Honor

Cesar E. Chavez once said, "Being of service is not enough. You must become a servant of the people. When you do, you can demand their commitment in return." It took charisma and hard work to earn the trust and support he needed to start a movement that would change history forever. Success throughout the years did not come easy for Chavez as he struggled to lead the many farm workers who were discriminated against and violently mistreated by the growers. Yet, his vision and passion for human rights enabled him to endure the struggle and encourage others to join in his path. Dolores Huerta and Chavez co-founded the United Farm Workers (UFW) on March 31, 1962. The union continues to be active in 10 states and has achieved historic gains for the farm workers of America. Their mission is to provide farm

workers and other working people the inspiration and tools to share in society's bounty. The UFW continues to extend many efforts in en-



Cesar Chavez at his best.

couraging more to learn about Cesar and continuing his legacy. Some say he led the Chicano movement, others say he led the non-violent move-

ment, but despite all given titles, Cesar Chavez lead and inspired millions to commit themselves to social, economic, and civil rights activism.

Sen. Robert F. Kennedy once said, "Cesar is one of the heroic figures of our time." His influence encompasses various demographics throughout the country and he will continue to be a role model for generations to come. The celebration of Cesar Chavez Day is a symbol of remembrance and gratitude for the struggle as well as the success afforded from his commitment to the people. The observance of this day is also

intended to promote service to the community in honor of his life and work. It is a state holiday in California, which is observed on March 31, Chavez's birthday, and the push for a National holiday continues.

Written By: Julissa Gonzalez

Women's Battle Against History

Few people are aware that March is Women's History month, and the lack of recognition is notable. Before March became the month to celebrate Women's History in 1987, it was observed on the single day of March 8th as the International Women's working day. The tradition dates back to the early 19th century with the first U.S. Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848. This was the initial emergence of the women's suffrage movement, and the beginning of the political battle between women and "history." The demand to be politically active, educated, and respected rapidly spread, and over time more women became involved. In the midst of all the many barriers women were experiencing, two of the most significant historical events may have slowed their progression to the liberty they so rightly longed for. The

civil war and the abolition of slavery overshadowed their efforts, and women were side-stepped once again. As a result in 1866, a group of women



formed the American Equal Rights Association (AERA) to further their efforts and overcome their defeat. Yet, it was not until the following century when women's groups reformed, and their perseverance for change was finally heard. In 1920, the

19th amendment was ratified, which prohibited each of the states and the federal government from denying any citizen the right to vote because of that citizen's sex. In that same year, the Equal Rights Amendment was proposed, but still to this day it has failed to gain ratification. As the significance of women's rights continues to be challenged, women such as Lucretia Mott, Frida Khalo, Condoleezza Rice, Hillary Clinton, and many other strong-minded women must never be forgotten, for those are the historical icons that have paved the path and lived the dream. Therefore during March, Women's History month we re-examine the political and social awareness of the struggles of women worldwide and we honor the generations of women who have made significant accomplishments and contributions while redefining their roles in society.

Written By: Julissa Gonzalez

Budget woes don't spare Community Health Centers



State Budget troubles may affect Community Health Centers.

"We must come to embrace the idea that living in high density housing in the same way we feel about driving a hybrid: economical, environmental and efficient."

"Do More with Less" This seems to be the theme running through community health centers (CHCs) these days. Last fall the failure of the legislature to pass a budget led to a historic 85-day impasse in which many state programs that funnel funds to CHCs were deeply cut or completely halted. Health care providers such as members of the Central Valley Health Network (CVHN) had to endure nearly 8 weeks of Medi-Cal checkwrite delays, which may have affected their capabilities to provide health care services to the medically underserved communities of the Central Valley. On February 20th 2009 the 2009-10 budget was signed

106 days after the special session began to address the 40 billion plus deficit. As the dust settles during a tumultuous time at the state's capital it will be CHCs, patients and communities at large who will suffer the consequences of such cuts. CVHN members serve some of the poorest and rural areas of California and by doing so help prevent costly and inefficient emergency room visits which in the long run save millions to the state and reduce ER overcrowding. In the loom of an impending 15 billion in program cuts it is imperative that the state legislature fine-tune their selection of which and by how much programs will be cut.

As the trend continues CVHN members maintain their efforts in providing high quality and comprehensive primary care services to those who need it the most and who if given an opportunity would express their dissatisfaction in our state legislature's decision making. Perhaps there is a light at the end of the tunnel; funds from the Federal Economic Stimulus package can be expected to find their way to CHCs across the nation and hopefully to CVHN members across northern, Central Valley and Inland Empire areas of California where the need is the greatest.

Written By:
Cynthia Mendez

Smart growth can happen

It is no surprise that the American economy is in recession. What is surprising is how fast the housing bubble burst. Just two years ago new housing developments began to spring up almost overnight. In the Central Valley, the need was fulfilled by paving over rich agricultural farmland, thereby creating sprawl in which places of residence, recreation, and school were at a distance by imposing longer commutes. While many farmers were losing their land, many others easily became first time homeowners through the sub-prime housing lending strategy. As people rushed to buy homes and banks freely gave away money, the lessons taught in Economics class clearly were not learned.

Now more than ever different forms of housing must be considered. In the San Joaquin Valley, the Blueprint process is currently under way for residents to vote on the most cost-effective and sustainable way of living to reduce urban sprawl and preserve agricultural lands. Many of these alternative

housing models offer attractive and comfortable designs for a wide range of consumers by having places of work, recreation, and schools within walking distance. These so-called high-density housing units can house as many as 31 people per acre or about 10 homes per acre. Bike paths and buses can also be easily accessible.



With many people losing their homes and the economy in need of a stimulus, it is time to develop a better way of housing families. It doesn't mean that we have to tear down the houses or build new developments on agricultural lands because that would only exacerbate the problem of air pollution and land depletion. Instead, city planners and stakeholders must look at their city to see if existing neighborhoods can be developed for high-density housing, such as downtown. Most importantly, we must come to embrace the idea that living in high-density housing in the same way we feel about driving a hybrid: economical, environmental, and efficient..

Written By: Christel Tee Sy

**Maria
Melgoza**



Which do you prefer: High salary or job satisfaction?

To me both matter!

Which is your most favorite book ever?

The Giver!

What television character do you simply adore?

Sponge bob Square pants!

What is your taste in music?

Anything!

Which is your favorite genre of movies?

Comedy/Romance/ Horror

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

I would go into Human Services like an eligibility worker because they help others get what they need. And also because they mainly work with low income families. They help the community!

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 my day shopping!

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

Why?

I would be an eagle because they could fly

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

I love the whole idea of working at a clinic because I get to help others in need, also because I feel that I provide them with things they didn't even know about. I feel like am doing something to change their lives!

When do you have the most fun at work?

When I am helping others in getting what they need, also when I answer questions they were not sure of.

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

I love working with all my co-workers, they are awesome, they have been a big help for me.

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

For this question I would have to say Ana (My supervisor) because I think she does an excellent job managing the Medi-cal and food stamps program, she is very responsible and very dedicated to her work. I think she sets a good example because she spends her time in trying to see what she can do to improve her program.

**Monica
Melgoza**



Which do you prefer: High salary or job satisfaction?

Job satisfaction

Which is your most favorite book ever?

Escape from Alcatraz

What television character do you simply adore?

I really don't watch TV.

What is your taste in music?

I love listening to Spanish music, and hip hop.

Which is your favorite genre of movies?

Comedy and romance

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

I would choose my grandmother and my grandfather, I was two years old when they passed away and I don't really remember them. The third would be my cousin; I have not seen her in twelve years.

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

I would choose to be a doctor, because doctors have the ability to help people.

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

My idea of fun is spending time with my family, maybe having a BBQ.

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

Why?

I would choose to be a bird, I think it would be a great experience to fly.

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

My best experience would have to be getting to know that I help people, and seeing them happy.

When do you have the most fun at work?

I have the most fun at work when I am checking on the application statuses and most of them are granted, because that means that my clients will be resaving their aid.

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

I enjoy working with my co-worker whose name is Sorayda.

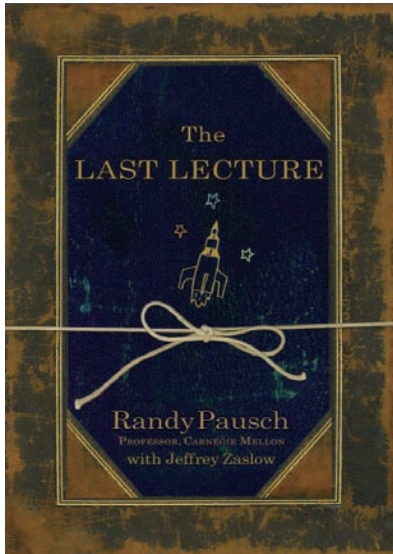
What I like about her is she corrects me when I am wrong.

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

I admire Ana Velasquez, because she does a great job managing Medi-cal Outreach program.

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.



The Last Lecture

By: Randy Pausch

A lot of professors give talks titled "The Last Lecture." Professors are asked to consider their demise and to ruminate on what matters most to them. And while they speak, audiences can't help but mull the same question: What wisdom would we impart to the world if we knew it was our last chance? If we had to vanish tomorrow, what would we want as our legacy?

When Randy Pausch, a computer science professor at Carnegie Mellon, was asked to give such a lecture, he didn't have to imagine it as his last, since he had recently been diagnosed with terminal cancer. But the lecture he gave—"Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams"—wasn't about dying. It was about the importance of overcoming obstacles, of enabling the dreams of others, of seizing every moment (because "time is all you have...and you may find one day that you have less than you think"). It was a summation of everything Randy had come to believe. It was about living.

"We cannot change the cards we are dealt, just how we play the hand." —Randy Pausch

What's going on in March?

Habitat for Humanity Fresno Chapter:

Get ready AmeriCorps members and put on your construction hat! In honor of Cesar Chavez Day, we will be donating our services to help build a home for a much needed Hmong Family in Clovis, CA. For those of you that think wearing a construction hat might not fit into your fashion that day, you can chose to volunteer at the Restore Store of Habitat for Humanity. You will be helping out with store organization, management, and providing customer service.

www.habitatfresno.org

Multiple Sclerosis Walk:

This walk is technically in April but because its early in the month we want to inform you about it in March so that you may begin planning to participate if possible. What better way to save lives and get healthy than by walking the Multiple Sclerosis Walk o April 4th 2009 in Woodward Park in Fresno, CA. Dust out those old walking shoes and let's go!!

www.librarysupport.net/librarylovers/

Fiesta Health Fair March 6th:

Fresno Barrios Unidos, in partnership with Fresno READS, will host a Friday Night Fiesta for children and their families at Wolters Elementary School, 5174 N. First St., from 4 to 6:30 p.m. March 6. About 400 people are expected to attend. The fiesta will offer free food, over 30 informational booths, entertainment, a cake walk, face painting, the science and fitness mobiles from the city of Fresno Parks and Recreation Department (sponsored by City Council member Henry T. Perea) and other activities <http://www.fresnostatenews.com/2009/02/fiestahealthfair.htm>



Central Valley Health Network

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.

2000 O Street, Site 100

Sacramento, CA 95811

Phone: 916.552.2846

Caring For California's Heartland

Editorial Board

Cynthia Mendez - CVHN Editor
Julissa Gonzalez - GVHC Editor
Christel Tee Sy - UHC Editor