



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Health District names Public Health Heroes

LAS VEGAS – The Southern Nevada Health District announced its annual Public Health Heroes, recognition given to individuals or organizations whose efforts positively affect the health and well-being of the community. This year's winners were honored at the April 28 Southern Nevada District Board of Health meeting.

The 2011 Public Health Heroes are:

Patrick Fogerty and Michael Schultz

New York New York Hotel & Casino/ARK Restaurant Corporation

Patrick Fogerty and Michael Schultz serve as the liaison between New York New York Hotel and Casino and ARK Restaurant Corporation and the health district. Fogerty and Schultz were named for their diligence regarding health district policies and regulations that impact their permitted establishments - whether they are leased outlets or hotel-owned food facilities. Both work closely with health district staff when they are obtaining new equipment or implementing new property practices to make sure they remain in compliance with health district permits, regulations and policies. Fogerty and Schultz maintain on-the-job training for all staff to ensure food handlers have an in-depth understanding of safe food handling practices. The two developed mock food inspection programs to support ARK Restaurant Corporation and property-owned food safety practices and public health policies, all of which ensure that the public and New York New York's customers are protected.

Pediatric Early Warning Sentinel Surveillance Sites:

Foothills Pediatrics (2 clinics) – Henderson and Maryland Parkway clinics

Fremont Children's Clinic

Lake Mead Pediatrics

Southwest Medical Associates

The Pediatric Early Warning Sentinel Surveillance System (PEWSS) was initiated in response to the 2009 H1N1 influenza outbreak. It was developed to identify and track influenza in the community and in mid-2010, the system was expanded to cover the most common viral respiratory illnesses.

PEWSS has been successful in providing an up-to-date picture of respiratory illness in Southern Nevada, and has provided valuable information to both the medical and public health communities. The success of this system is based on the voluntary participation of the five physician's offices that make up the network, all of whom have maintained their commitment to the system.

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2011 Public Health Heroes – add one

The surveillance system information is reported to the medical community on a weekly basis. Information about the viral activity in the community can aid a physician in assessing the treatment options for patients. Through the hard work and dedication of the surveillance sites, the PEWSS system has provided (and continues to provide) valuable insight into disease patterns in our community.

**Candice Nichols, Executive Director
Gay & Lesbian Center**

Candice Nichols has worked closely with the health district's office of HIV/ AIDS/STDs since 2004. Recently, Candice made the Gay & Lesbian Center available as an outreach site where anyone in the community can access HIV or STD testing. Candice and the Gay & Lesbian Center serve as a critical piece of the health district's HIV/STD testing and counseling program. In addition to testing, at-risk individuals who visit the Center can also receive hepatitis A and B vaccinations. The goal of this outreach is to empower people with knowledge about their own health and disease status, and allows them to take control of their lives.

**Aurora Wong, Coordinator
Hepatitis B Free Las Vegas**

Aurora Wong has created the Hepatitis B Free Las Vegas coalition to address the high rates of chronic hepatitis B infection among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in Southern Nevada, who have higher rates of infection than the general population.

Since September, Wong has put together a coalition of 20 community partners, including the Southern Nevada Health District, and 100 stakeholders to develop an approach to educate and contain infection among the local Asian-American community. Her goal is to prevent new infections, to encourage testing and to help people who are infected with chronic hepatitis B become connected with resources and an appropriate system of care.

This year's awardees have shown tremendous initiative to ensure the conditions necessary to protect the health of Southern Nevada residents and visitors. All are well-deserving recipients of the Public Health Hero Awards.

Public Health Heroes are nominated by health district staff members for their efforts in supporting one or more of the 10 Essential Public Health Services:

1. **Monitor** the health status to identify and solve community health problems.
2. **Diagnose and investigate** health problems and health hazards in the community
3. **Inform, educate and empower** people about health issues.
4. **Mobilize** community partnerships and action to identify and solve health problems.
5. **Develop policies and plans** that support individual and community health efforts.
6. **Enforce laws and regulations** that protect health and ensure safety.
7. **Link** people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.
8. **Assure** competent public and personal health care workforce.
9. **Evaluate** effectiveness, accessibility and quality of personal and population-based health services.
10. **Research** for new insights and innovative solution to health problems.

Updated information about the Southern Nevada Health District can be found on Facebook www.facebook.com/SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict, on YouTube www.youtube.com/SNHealthDistrict or Twitter: www.twitter.com/SNHInfo.