

## CEO Memo – February

Happy New Year from Whittier Street Health Center! We had a banner year in 2014, with 27,000 people in the community served through our clinical services and free public health initiatives. In 2015, we are excited to continue offering our best-practices programs, and to introduce new wellness strategies that will help us fulfill our mission of ensuring equitable access to high quality health care for diverse populations.

### *Medical Fitness Center:*

In keeping with our commitment to providing comprehensive, continuous care to our patients, Whittier is constructing a 6,800 square foot Medical Fitness Center on the ground floor of our building. The fitness center will be the site for wellness programming that uses an Integrative Medicine Model to treat major medical and mental health issues among our patient population, including hypertension, diabetes, obesity, and depression. Patients referred to the fitness center will receive a *Prescription for Health* that will address mind, body, and spirit. We will offer activities that are known to improve health and mental health, including aerobics, acupuncture, yoga, dance therapy, and life coaching. Fitness Center staff will support patients' wellness goals, help them remain engaged with services, and keep them linked to their primary care team.

### *Awards:*

Our HIV Services Department's Project Me Team won "Outstanding Outreach Team" for the 2014 Take the Test Boston event, which is a grassroots community mobilization effort that aims to increase HIV testing in communities of color as a response to the National HIV/AIDS Strategy.

### *Collaborations:*

We are working with the JSI Research & Training Institute to build capacity and facilitate systems change that will address and ensure sustainable Immunization Equity by increasing vaccination rates among under-immunized populations. Many of Whittier's adult patients cannot receive complete immunization due to insufficient insurance coverage, leaving them susceptible to HPV, shingles, pneumonia, meningitis, and other viral infections.

### *Events:*

#### **Black History Month and Annual Meeting Thursday, February 5, 2015, 12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.**

Whittier will hold its 2015 Black History Month Celebration together with the 2014 Annual Meeting. The event will include my annual address on the state of Whittier, musical performances, a cooking demonstration in honor of American Heart Month, and guest speaker Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz, who will receive the 2015 Black History Leadership Award for her exemplary leadership within the surrounding community. This event is a wonderful opportunity for our stakeholders to celebrate Black History Month and to hear remarks from civic leaders.

#### **2015 All Star Roast Reunion Thursday, April 9, 2015, 6:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m.**

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Whittier's annual Roast honors our local leaders, raises funds to support Whittier's mission, and spreads laughter. This year, we are reuniting past honorees under the theme, "Whittier's All Star Reunion: Celebrating our Champions of Health Care and Health Equity." A dozen health care and corporate leaders who have supported our vision, mission, and growth since 2003 will be in attendance, including:

- Bill Van Faasen, former Chairman, President, and CEO of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBSMA);
- Dr. Edward J. Benz, Jr., President and CEO of the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute;
- Andrew Dreyfus, President and CEO of BCBSMA;
- Robert L. Beal, President of Related Beal;
- Paul Grogan, President and CEO of The Boston Foundation;
- Robert Mahoney (formerly of Citizens Bank), President and CEO of Belmont Savings Bank;
- Paul La Camera, General Manager of WBUR;
- Tom O'Neill, President and CEO of O'Neill and Associates;
- Ted Kelly, Chairman of the Kelly Family Foundation;
- And many more luminaries from Boston's biggest industries!

Thank you again for supporting Whittier Street Health Center's work to champion health equity. Please visit our website ([www.wshc.org](http://www.wshc.org)) and our Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Pinterest, and YouTube pages for more about our services and community-based initiatives.