

# **The Winter 2003 "CMS Voice" Newsletter**

## **Chicago Regional Administrator Retires**

*By Michelle Arnaudy, Chicago RO*

After 35 years of public service, Dorothy Burk Collins retired from her position as Regional Administrator (RA) of the Chicago Regional Office (RO) in February 2003. As RA of CMS's largest RO, Dorothy provided executive leadership in administering the Medicare and Medicaid programs on behalf of more than 14 million beneficiaries in the Midwest States of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Dorothy began her career with the Federal government in 1968 as a summer intern for NASA in Washington, DC. After receiving her graduate degree from the University of Chicago, School of Social Service Administration, she joined the Chicago RO of the U.S. Public Health Service, Bureau of Quality Assurance. In 1979, Dorothy joined the Health Care Financing Administration (now CMS) as a Special Assistant to the Regional Administrator (RA), Chicago RO. Before her appointment as the RA in 1996, Dorothy served as the Deputy RA and also held other management positions in the Chicago RO. She has been recognized by the CMS Administrator for her outstanding career, as well as for her commitment to the Agency's programs, beneficiaries and health care community partners.

In celebration of Dorothy's retirement, the RO staff hosted a party for her. Department of Health & Human Services Regional Director Corey Hoze presented Dorothy with a letter from Secretary Tommy Thompson in recognition of her many years of service. In addition, Dorothy was presented with a plaque from CMS Administrator Tom Scully to commemorate her leadership and service to the Agency. On behalf of the RO staff, Deputy RA David DuPre presented Dorothy with a clock. Dorothy expressed her gratitude for the recognition by stating, "You're a terrific staff and I was very honored and proud to be your Regional Administrator. I'll definitely miss the daily interaction with my CMS colleagues."

During her retirement, Dorothy intends to spend time with her family and to camp, fish, and volunteer her time to various causes.

## **FWPAC Sponsors "Donate a Winter Coat" Drive**

*By Lynn Strange, OEOCR*

In November 2002, the Federal Women's Program Advisory Committee (FWPAC) sponsored a "Donate a Winter Coat" Drive to assist the Lutheran Mission Society in downtown Baltimore. CMS Central Office employees donated more than 50 coats to help keep people warm during this extremely cold winter.

The Lutheran Mission Society is a Compassion Care Program designed for single mothers trying to rebuild their lives. The Society has fully equipped shelters in Baltimore and Annapolis, Maryland, and York, Pennsylvania. The shelters also provide classes for mothers on nutrition, as well as classes on computer and office skills to prepare them for the workplace.

After receiving CMS's donations, Richard L. Alms, Executive Director of the Lutheran Society, said, "CMS's gift of a vanload of coats continues to provide the resources that make it possible to bring joy and hope into the lives of those who are suffering and in great need. Your compassion and kindness is a great blessing! Thank you."

FWPAC will sponsor another coat drive in October 2003. Information concerning the drive will be posted on the CMS Water Cooler some time in mid-September. The FWPAC, at that time, will let you know where to bring your women's and children's coats for donation to the Lutheran Mission Society. They cannot accept any men's coats, or women's or children's coats that need repair or need to be cleaned.

## **CMS Establishes Core Values**

*By Mark Gilbert, Denver Regional Office, and Bruce Miller, OIS*

Core values are an important feature of an organization's commitment to excellence. When organizations publicly declare their core values, members' behavior is more likely to be consistent with those values. Visionary organizations with a long-term record of excellence take active steps to make their values pervasive throughout their organization.

Fourteen CMS managers, participating as a team in the FY 2001 Excellence in Government program, identified a set of core values for the Agency using a structured approach that included historical research on the values that brought HCFA/CMS to life, external benchmarking of visionary organizations, and internal interviews of

CMS senior staff. The result of this effort was the identification of five core values—**Public Service, Integrity, Accountability, Excellence, and Respect**—and the behaviors associated with those values.

CMS just formally adopted its core values in late 2002, and Agency staff are applying them. For example, Sophia Hinojosa, in the Denver Regional Office, was faced with the challenge of calling a beneficiary who was verbally abusive. While responding to a congressional inquiry, she contacted the beneficiary to obtain information on her case. After introducing herself, she was met with an abrupt and startling retort, followed quickly by only a dial tone!

Sophia says, "I then thought about CMS's core values and how they applied here. Although I was offended, I know that we, as an agency, value public service and respect for people." Sophia redialed and discovered that the beneficiary, an elderly individual, was hearing-impaired, had not heard her well the first time, and concluded that it was a prank call deserving a rude response. After handling the issue by employing CMS's core values of public service, excellence and respect, Sophia addressed the misunderstanding and was responsive to the beneficiary.

Hopefully, every CMS employee has had an opportunity to learn about CMS's core values and thought about how to apply them in their work.

## **Core Values Come Alive in Seattle**

*By Shawn Hanson, Seattle RO*

The CMS Core values played center stage at a recent all-hands meeting in the Seattle Regional Office (RO). The RO staff brought the five core values to life through skits, an interactive slide show, and personal testimony that showed how we all use the core values in our daily work.

Managers Karen O'Connor and Michelle Sawtell described each of the core values and illustrated them with quotes and "live" visits from famous figures, complete with costumes: Thomas Jefferson represented **Integrity**; Uncle Sam and Martin Luther King, Jr. reminded us of **Public Service**; Time Magazine's 2002 Persons of the Year (Sherron Watkins of Enron, Cynthia Cooper of WorldCom, and Colleen Rowley of the FBI) aptly illustrated **Accountability**; Aristotle signified **Excellence**; and Eleanor Roosevelt exemplified **Respect**. The RO staff had a great time impersonating their heros.

*DRAGNET, Episode 4: Core Values in Kidney Land* was a humorous presentation by Dave Rokosky and Allyson Leavitt of the Beneficiary Services Branch. The two featured a recent case (only the names had been changed to protect the innocent and comply with the Privacy Act) in which they were able to help a beneficiary regain his Part B coverage in time to get a kidney transplant.

The Medicaid and Children's Services Branch staged a skit entitled, *CMS's Core Values: What They Think vs. What We Do*. Act I depicted a representative from "The State" worried about his upcoming meeting with the RO. Acting very unprofessional, and unhelpful, RO employees filed into the meeting room during Act II. Each wore a sign with one of the core values while acting contrary to that value. The State was horrified that all of his worst nightmares had come true! Act III brought us back to reality. This time the meeting showed a very professional, cooperative staff going the extra mile to be helpful to our partner by incorporating the core values into their work. Medicaid staff Janice Price, Jo Winfield, Lydia Skeen, Jan Mertel, Linda Miles, Carol Crimi, Joe Fico, Randy Poulsen, and Liz Trias starred in the production.

Barbara Riley of the Program Integrity Branch shared an experience working with a provider association where, even when the answer *wasn't* a positive one, she was able to employ the core values. The provider had questioned a coding decision. Riley sought further clarification from Central Office, seeing the request through the various stages to completion, rather than passing it off to another area for remedy. The provider was very appreciative of Riley's willingness to go the extra mile to assist them with this issue. Throughout the process, Riley was able to demonstrate how well core values can serve us in maintaining a trusting relationship with partners.

John Knighten, Medicare Managed Care Branch, pointed out that the core values don't stop with beneficiaries and external partners. He shared a personal experience of how a colleague demonstrated some of the core values. On a particularly rainy day, Medicaid's Mo Lynch saw Knighten soaked to the skin, and inquired as to where his umbrella was. Knighten pointed out that it was difficult for him to hold an umbrella while maneuvering his wheelchair. With Knighten's permission, Lynch created a special device from PVC pipe that snaps on to the wheelchair and holds the umbrella. Knighten demonstrated how he now stays dry in the rain with the help of Lynch's umbrella holder and how he can carry his coffee back to the office with the new cup holder Lynch also made.

This lively staff meeting provided an excellent example of how the staff in the Seattle RO is committed to integrity, public service, accountability, excellence, and respect in the performance of their daily work.

## **CMS's Heroes**

*By Marcia Levin, OICS*

Nearly 250 Maryland National Guardsmen were deployed since January 2003 to serve their country in the war against terrorism right here in the State of Maryland. Among the several CMS employees who were called to duty were Central Office's Major Michael Kristian and Captain James Cratty attached to the 1st Battalion, 175th Infantry, based in Dundalk, Maryland.

Mike is CMS's Physical Security Officer, in the Office of Internal Customer Support (OICS), Administrative Services Group (ASG). He has restructured the Security & Safety Staff into a more effective and cohesive team with his diverse pool of knowledge and skill.

After the 9/11 attacks, Mike's troops were stationed at Baltimore-Washington International Airport until the Federal Marshall's program got into full swing. He is a battalion commander at Andrews Air Force Base, home to Air Force One. Mike served in Desert Storm from November 1990 to November 1991 with the 1st Infantry Division, a part of the 7th Corp., where he fought on the western flank. His wife, Diona, also works at CMS, and they both enjoy their twin boys, Alex and Andy, who will be 2 years old in October.

Jim recently began his career at CMS in OICS/ASG, as the Health & Safety Officer. He comes with a wealth of knowledge and experience, including emergency response, and domestic preparedness, to complement the Security & Safety Staff. As a former Baltimore County Police Officer he was instrumental in the development of disaster and evacuation plans for county schools.

Jim commands the troops at Warfield Air National Guard Base in Middle River, Maryland. Jim's wife, Kim, and their son, Timmy, age 4, eagerly await his return.

## **HIGLAS Update**

*By Gina Perantoni, OFM*

The Healthcare Integrated General Ledger Accounting System (HIGLAS) project has entered 2003 well positioned to achieve several goals critical to its overall mission to modernize Medicare accounting.

The HIGLAS project team recently experienced ownership changes at its system integrator, when IBM Global Services purchased PwC Consulting. As such, CMS spent time toward the end of 2002 working with IBM in a constructive effort to review and refine plans for implementing HIGLAS using a phased-in release approach.

The planning review is producing results. In January 2003, there was a "decisions workshop" designed to validate the HIGLAS baseline solution and confirm the system's delivery approach. In February 2003, the HIGLAS project team completed the fifth Conference Room Pilot (CRP). CRPs allow key personnel to examine requirements that HIGLAS must meet and ensure that design decisions made to date will ultimately produce a system that meets CMS needs. This most recent CRP focused on reviewing requirements for accounts receivable, accounts payable, cash management, and general ledger activities.

The first major project milestone is expected in October 2003. At that milestone, IBM will deliver the capability to execute the claims payment processing cycle including the inbound claim (837), payment generation with AR/AP Netting, and the outbound notification (835). This capability will effectively demonstrate the business flow in the Pilot Contractor setting. Additionally, achieving this milestone will effectively provide the technical and functional foundation on which to add business functionality and scalability during the subsequent second major milestone.

The second major project milestone is expected in April 2004. At this milestone, IBM will add the balance of functionality needed to complete the full business cycle of the claims payment process. Additionally, stress testing associated with this milestone will demonstrate the volumes, flows, and scalability commensurate with eventually expanding to all contractors.

The third major project milestone, expected in September 2004, will add history capability as well as deliver functionality for system and accounting auditability and summary/detail document level history.

CMS expects to substantially implement HIGLAS in the Medicare contractor community by the end of FY 2005 and to use HIGLAS as the official book of record by the end of FY 2007.

## **The Eighth Annual Holocaust Memorial Program**

*By David Greenberg, CMSO*

CMS's eighth annual Holocaust Memorial Program will be held on Wednesday, April 30, at 1:30 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) in the Central Office Grand Auditorium. This program and similar ones at other Federal agencies are presented in response to Public Law 96-388, which calls for an annual, national, civic commemoration of the Holocaust.

The keynote speaker for this year's program is Herman Taube, a Holocaust survivor whose son, Bernie Taube, works in the Office of Information Services, and whose granddaughter, Angela Wise, works in the Center for Medicaid and State Operations.

Orphaned as a small child and raised by a grandfather later killed in Lodz, Poland, Mr. Taube knew too well the cruelties of loss and death. As a soldier in the Polish Army and as a Red Cross medic in Poland during World War II, he witnessed and felt the fear, pain, and suffering of his fellow Jews. A poet and author, Mr. Taube has attempted to communicate the incomprehensible savagery of the Holocaust through his writings. His poems, including those from his latest book, Looking Back, Going Forward, chronicle the stories of a decimated culture and people, bearing witness to a tragic and horrific period in modern history and seeking to make the world remember.

The program will also feature a short film, produced by Diane Hall of the CMS Division of Graphics Services, which profiles the life of Mr. Taube and provides background for our keynote speaker's remarks.

Rabbi Elan Adler of Moses Montefiore Anshe Emunah Hebrew Congregation will return to deliver the invocation for this year's program. The children's choir from the Krieger Schechter Day School will once again conclude the program with songs of hope.

All CMS staff are invited to attend this moving program about courage and survival. Regional Office staff can view a live broadcast of the program via PicTel.

## **Leadership Development and Recognition Board Welcomes New Members**

*By Erin Pressley, CBC*

The Leadership Development and Recognition Board (LDRB) welcomed four newly elected members at a kickoff retreat held at Central Office, on January 30-31. The new members, elected by their fellow managers, are Cynthia Graunke, Erin Pressley, Jimmy Sigmund, and Cynthia Tudor. During the meeting the 2002 chairperson, Larry Pratt, thanked the outgoing board members and welcomed Mark Gilbert as the year 2003 chair. The board members also elected Cynthia Graunke to serve as Vice-Chair.

On March 7, the LDRB welcomed their ninth member to the Board—Anna Barton-Thomas, OICS.

The Board has been serving CMS's approximately 400 non-SES managers since December 1995. It serves as a sounding board to senior management for non-SES managers on matters affecting leadership development, awards and recognition, communications and general management.

In 2003, the Board plans to continue to work on these issues and to support managers during a number of critical changes to our working environment. These changes include implementing a new performance appraisal system for managers, the rollout of a new Master Labor Agreement, and the transition of human resource services to "One HHS [Health and Human Services]." The LDRB also will continue to provide assistance with leadership development activities and the manager awards program, including the annual selection for the Excellence in Management awards. For more information, the LDRB maintains a Web page on the *Human Resources Manager* site. Non-SES managers are encouraged to assist the Board by responding to periodic E-mail surveys, and by providing feedback and voicing concerns to their LDRB liaisons:

Anna Barton-Thomas (OICS)

Bob Daly (Midwest Consortium, Boston and New York ROs)

Mark Gilbert, Chair (Western Consortium)

Cynthia Graunke, Vice-Chair (CMSO, OCSQ, OSORA)

Larry Pratt (HIGLAS, OIS)

Erin Pressley (CMM, OEOCR, OICS, OOM)

Jimmy Sigmund (Southern Consortium and Philadelphia RO)

Cynthia Tudor (CBC, OL, PAO)

Lisa Vriezen (OACT, OFM, ORDI)

## **Medicare Secondary Payer Activity**

*By Kevin Berna, Philadelphia RO*

Recently, Region III has been educating the community on Medicare Secondary Payer (MSP) workers' compensation rules and regulations, working with CMS colleagues to address the direction of MSP, and implementing procedural changes to effectively handle the evolving workload of this area.

In October 2002, Region III tackled the challenges of the MSP workload by moving the workers' compensation component of MSP from the Financial Management Branch to the Program Integrity Branch, where a team of four Fraud Analysts assumed this workload in addition to their regular duties. Since then, the team has successfully met the goal of issuing a substantive response for cases within 30 days.

Region III conducted a national training workshop in January 2003, via Pic-Tel to CMS Central Office and other Regional Offices, on its internal procedures for handling workers' compensation cases. Following this workshop, other Regional Offices revised their internal procedures for processing workers' compensation cases and modeled them after those implemented by Region III.

In February 2003, Region III staff hosted meetings with CMS Central Office staff and members of the Pennsylvania Bar Association to discuss procedures, address questions about workers' compensation cases, and explain the region's role in these cases. Similar outreach efforts have been conducted over recent months and have included presentations and meetings with other bar association members and groups representing Region III's States.

Staff will continue to actively promote a better understanding of MSP for all affiliated partners by participating on national workgroups and educating the community and CMS colleagues.

For more information, please contact Kevin Berna, via E-mail: KBerna.

## **The War in Iraq. . . How you can help!**

*By Rita Reinsel, OFM*

As you know, the war in Iraq is going strong. Even if you're not a member of the military, there are still many ways you, as an individual, can help. One of those ways is to give blood. Blood supplies are at critically low levels simply because not enough people donate.

This year, the need for blood is even greater as severe winter storms across the country have crippled blood collection efforts, which caused a strain on supplies across the United States. Especially now, with the war on, the need for blood is very critical.

On a national average, it's estimated that less than 5 percent of eligible donors give blood. Here at CMS, that average is even less. During the last blood drive in Central Office (CO) on February 26, only 115 donors were scheduled--of this number, only 89 actually gave. This equates to only about 3 percent of the total employees here in CO.

The next blood drive in Central Office is April 30. To give blood you must be healthy, be at least 17 years old, and weigh at least 110 pounds. Further, you can't have donated blood in the last 56 days or donated double red cells in the last 112 days. There is no age cap.

Donating blood is safe and easy. Please sign up today to donate. It takes only an hour of your time, and it could save someone's life.

### Facts to consider:

- Every two seconds someone needs blood;
- A premature newborn may need 1-4 units of red blood cells while in intensive care;
- You may save up to three lives with every blood donation;
- Some people are simply afraid to donate; and
- Donating blood once a year, or once in a lifetime, is not enough.

**[Some information was provided by the American Red Cross. For more information, please click here <http://www.redcross.org>.]**

## **Consistency and Collaboration in Motion**

*By Kellie Condon, Karen Fuller and Caroline Krewson, San Francisco RO*

On January 22-23, the State Survey Agencies in the San Francisco Regional Office (RO) gathered for their annual conference hosted by the RO. This forum is a valuable opportunity for the agencies to discuss issues that impact their relationship with CMS and their ability to fulfill their contracts. In addition, the State Agencies use this conference to support each other in finding solutions to common challenges and sharing "best practices."

The new CMS Western Consortium structure and management team was unveiled. The reorganization serves to provide better service to beneficiaries and improve national consistency in the implementation of regulations and surveys.

As a result of the productive outcomes in working to find solutions and support, participants in the conference agreed to bi-annual State Agency conferences. This agreement will provide consistency with the Denver RO and the Seattle RO, which already meet biannually. The State Agencies requested an annual State Agency conference be established where all State Agencies in the Western Consortium are present.

## **Federal Surveyors Lauded**

*By Pat Wood, Chicago RO*

The Chicago Regional Office's (RO) Division of Survey and Certification (DSC) works with States to ensure that providers, suppliers, and laboratories participating in the Medicare and/or Medicaid programs uphold Federal quality standards. This division administers the agreements CMS has with State Survey Agencies to carry out the Medicare and Medicaid survey and certification program as authorized by Section 1864 of the Social Security Act. It also oversees the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act program. DSC grants initial approval or denial of Medicare participation, is the custodian of Medicare provider agreements, and oversees certain administrative aspects of provider agreement compliance. DSC also imposes remedies, including termination, on providers who fail to meet CMS requirements.

The RO works with its six States, overseeing almost 42,000 providers/suppliers. CMS surveyors conduct oversight, look-behind, and validation surveys to ensure appropriate certification of Medicare and Medicaid providers. For example, there are 3,666 nursing homes within the region. Each year, our long-term care surveyor staff

conducts on-site surveys, lasting about 5 days, in 183 of these nursing homes.

CMS surveyors spend approximately 50 percent of their time away from home and family, often traveling in extreme weather conditions, to team up with State Agency surveyors at specific nursing homes. They endure frequent flight delays and cancellations, rental car breakdowns, and unpleasant motel conditions. Surveyors live out of suitcases and spend evenings organizing their papers and tasks for the next day. Back at the office, they must complete travel vouchers, write their reports, respond to phone calls and e-mail, catch up on tasks assigned while they were away, and coordinate the next week's survey.

Having been a surveyor for 10 years, I would like to recognize all survey employees for their dedication, diplomacy, organizational abilities, and productivity.

## **Employees**

### **New Employees**

CBC—Tarnya Adams; George Brown II; Subash Duggirala; Amy Elizondo; Jori Frahler; Alex Kim; Tracey McCutcheon; Serrick McNeill; SháRon Milligan; Duc Nguyen; Clarence Randall; Ann Marie Reimer; and Henry Thomas.

CMM—Stacey Baughman; Linda Blakely; James Bowman; Melissa Dehn; Steven Felsenberg; Stacy Flannery; Ellen Gay; Emily Grove; E.L. Hambrick; Carla Hodge; James Hoyt; Lisa James; Barbara Kunkel; Karen Pardue; Winifred Pizzano; Karen Roane; Shellie Rogers; Michael Satrom; Nechelle Shaw; Susan Tudor; Eugene Wang; and Daisy Wheatley.

CMSO—Laurie Battaglia; Jean Close; Barbara Collins; Mary Farkas; Larry Fluette; Olivia Gardiner; Sheri Gaskins; Karen Jackson; Sona Stepp; John Thompson; Virginia Wanamaker; Keith Wiley; and Camile Williams.

HIGLAS—Jennifer Althoff.

OA—John Voorhees.

OACT—Mollie Knight.

OCSQ—Allen Davis; Stanley Pazinski; and James Sorace.

OFM—Jonathan Blonar; Lauren Block; Dorothy Braunsar; Scott Brown; Joseph Delfavero; Peg Homan; Hazel Johnson; Pamela Kidd; Edward Lavino; Gwendolyn Lennon; Lisa Ogilvie; Susan Oken; Michael Rich; Tara Ross; Ilya Rovinskiy; and Olivia White.

OHS—Julie Agris; Cady Bell; Michael Phillips; and Rosali Suris-Fernandez.

OICS—Evelyn Dixon; Rebecca Donnay; Jessica Fuller; Sherry Green; Charles Hirsch; Karen Lisle; Takeia Martin; Sharon McKinney; Kevin Pope; Nicole Santana; Cheryl Taylor; and Robin Williams.

OIS—Denise Benjamin; Patricia Bosley; Julia Fultz; Diane Guilford; Jerry Higdon; Rosanne Hodge; Mark Hogle; Marcus Koenig; Shari Kosko; George Linares; Robert Moore; Towana Poe; and Regina Shock.

OL—Matthew Brown and Darryl Drevna.

OOM—Stacey Keller

ORDI—James Beyer; Al Deal; Stefie Gold; Julio González; Linda Magno; Frank Nagy, Jr.; Linda Radey; Charlette Sampson; and Carl Taylor.

PAO—Christina Battisti and Kirsten Knutson.

OSORA—Suresh Abreu; Lisa Allen; Jesse Bushman; Sembene McFarland; and Deanna Miller.

Region III (Philadelphia)—Phyllis Greco; Cynthia McWilliams; David Santana; and Maria Stewart.

Region IV (Atlanta)—Sally Brown; Joyce Jones; Teresa Kries; and Patritia Santos.

Region VIII (Denver)—Trina Boyce.

**Retirees:**

CBC—Linda Mosedale.

CMM—Robert Christy, Jr.; Thomas Hoyer; Joseph Logue; Gregory Reed; Barbara Strickland; and Leslie Warren.

CMSO—Medford Campbell, Jr.

OCSQ—Frank Doyle and Susan Smith.

OEOCR—Nancy Lafferty.

OFM—Robert Buddemeier and Rose LaVerghetta.

OICS—Michael Odachowski.

OIS—Max Buffington; Dennis Dolan; and Arnold Rottman.

OL—Letty Carpenter.

OOM—Nancy Miller and Cynthia Soltes.

OSORA—Shirley Davis.

Region III (Philadelphia)—Peter Goodman.

Region V (Chicago)—Jane McNally.

Region VI (Dallas)—Magda Flores.

Region VIII (Denver)—R. Annette Brauchler and A.W. Schnellbacher, Jr.

Region IX (San Francisco)—Elizabeth Abbott.

**The "CMS Voice" Newsletter**

The "CMS Voice" newsletter is published quarterly by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to provide timely information to its employees.

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The Board of Directors and Editorial Team of the "CMS Voice" Newsletter would like to thank outgoing Board Member Michael Odachowki, OICS, and Editor Janet Ruck, OICS, for their many contributions over the years in making this newsletter one of the most read and highly acclaimed publications in CMS.