



A quarterly publication featuring news on CHC's **Service Expansions, Innovations, Partnerships and Special Events**



Guests gather for the 40th anniversary dinner.

**"Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have."**

— Margaret Mead  
Cultural Anthropologist



Senator Dodd cuts a cake modeled after the new Community Health Center of Middletown, accompanied by his wife Jackie and Margaret Flinter and Mark Masselli.



Mark Masselli and Margaret Flinter give Gov. Malloy a tour of the new Middletown facility's rooftop garden.



Mark Masselli, Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper (founding member of CHC), Margaret Flinter and Mayor Dan Drew cut the ribbon on the new facility with students from Macdonough elementary school.

## From Middletown Activists, To Health Care Innovators—CHC Celebrates 40 Years

2012 marks 40 years of service for the Community Health Center, Inc., a state-wide primary care center specializing in caring for the underserved and uninsured. CHC kicked off the year of celebration as the host sponsors for Middletown's inaugural Midnight on Main New Year's Eve Festival. On May 1st, CHC celebrated its 40th birthday with its staff, by hosting a preview party of the new Middletown facility that is truly an illustration of 40 years of growth, research and innovation. During the first week of May, CHC hosted a series of galas: one to thank the Middletown business community for helping CHC blossom from its beginnings as a 2nd floor walk up into a world-class organization; one to honor US Senator Christopher Dodd's commitment to improving the health of people and communities around the world; and one for its original founders, to come together and share their stories of the early years.

CHC celebrated the opening of its new Middletown facility, located at 675 Main Street, on May 5th. Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper—one of CHC's original founders—was present to help cut the ribbon along with Mayor Dan Drew and CHC leadership. The new, state-of-the-art facility replaced three outdated clinical buildings spread out on both sides of Main Street, with limited parking, no elevators and minimal handicap-accessibility. The new center, designed to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards, has brought all services under one roof, enabling CHC of Middletown to deliver fully integrated care to 50% more patients. The facility reflects the quality of CHC's providers, the high level of care and technology, and CHC's attention to the patient experience.



The Christopher J. Dodd Primary Care Center

Community Health Center, Inc. originally opened in 1972 as a second floor-walk up in Middletown, but within a few years began to expand throughout Connecticut. As of 2012, CHC has grown to serve more than a 130,000 patients at over 200 locations across the state, including thirteen comprehensive primary care centers and over 150 school-based health centers, and community-based locations. The communities served include Meriden, New Britain, Groton, New London, Danbury, Waterbury, Norwalk, Stamford, Old Saybrook, Bristol, Enfield and Clinton.

"In the early 70's, we were a group of Middletown activists and students from Wesleyan University, and we were inspired by the idea that 'Health Care is a Right, Not a Privilege,'" said Mark Masselli, founder and President/CEO of CHC. "It was a time when social change was sweeping the country, and we were part of that—the fact that we were able to grow from those early years as a free clinic to the CHC of today is due to the tremendous support and encouragement we received from the community."

"At CHC our patients are entitled to the highest standard in primary care, so we focus on three critical components: clinical excellence, research and innovation, and training of the next generation of health care professionals," said CHC's Senior Vice President and Clinical Director Dr. Margaret Flinter. "It's a commitment to improvement—we were the first statewide primary care system to adopt electronic health records. And it's also about putting patients at the center of our actions." CHC's model of care has been recognized by two national accrediting organizations, the Joint Commission and the National Committee on Quality Assurance (NCAA), who awarded the highest level of Patient Centered Medical Home to the agency.

More than 90% of CHC's patients live at or below the poverty level, and many face chronic health conditions such as diabetes, asthma, depression, and cardiovascular disease. To ensure the most up-to-date and data-based care, the Weitzman Center for Innovation, which CHC started in 2005, has forged research partnerships with a wide range of leading organizations such as Dartmouth Institute, General Electric and the University of Connecticut. "We believe that those who are engaged in primary care have a responsibility to improve it," said Dr. Nwando Olayiwola, CHC's Chief Medical Officer. The nation's first residency program for nurse practitioners started at CHC and is now expanding to several new states. The center also offers a residency for post-doc psychologists.

"The community surrounding us is important too—primary care is only one piece of the puzzle," said Masselli. "People can't be healthy if their neighborhood isn't healthy." In its 40 years of operation, CHC has founded a number of community initiatives, such as Vinnie's Jump & Jive, an alcohol-free dance hall in Middletown. Masselli said, "There's a lot that we can do to encourage people to move more—whether it's dancing, exercise, or just getting out in their neighborhood." CHC founded the national Recess Rocks program, which encourages schools to incorporate movement into the classroom learning experience. Teachers use an online toolkit to download lesson plan tie-ins and the theme song recorded by PBS Kids® star SteveSongs®.



# CHC Earns Primary Care Medical Home Designation From The Joint Commission



## CHC is the First Health Care Organization in Connecticut and One of the First in the Nation to Receive Dual PCMH Designations

Community Health Center, Inc. has earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval™ for certification as a Primary Care Medical Home (PCMH). The special designation for accredited ambulatory care organizations recognizes CHC's dedication to continuous compliance with The Joint Commission's state-of-the-art standards. This is the second national designation that CHC has received for its work in meeting the high standards of a patient centered primary care organization. In April 2011, CHC was recognized as a Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) with their highest recognition (Level 3) for each of its practices.

**CHC is the first and only health care organization in Connecticut, and one of the first in the country to be designated as a PCMH by both the Joint Commission and the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).**

*"This distinction recognizes the hard work being done across our agency to ensure that every patient receives care that is patient centered, evidence based, and of the highest quality, regardless of social standing or insurance status."*

—Dr. Daren Anderson, Vice President and Chief Quality Officer of CHC.



The PCMH is a system of care that places the patient at the center of the model. Care is coordinated to allow patients to have ready access to a primary care team that uses technology and evidence based guidelines to improve their outcomes. This care model also places emphasis on patient empowerment and education, ensuring that patients have the tools they need to manage their conditions.

"This recognition reflects our ongoing efforts to deliver an advanced level of coordinated care," said Mark Masselli, President and CEO of Community Health Center, Inc. "We have always provided team-based care and built strong relationships with patients. But through improvements and technology-enhanced innovations that enable us to deliver timely, accessible, comprehensive, culturally competent care, we have built a medical home that empowers patients and improves health outcomes."



## The Seventh Annual Weitzman Symposium Transforming Primary Care: The Promise of Disruptive Innovations



In June, the Seventh Annual Weitzman Symposium brought together a strong group of nationally prominent speakers from across the country to speak on this year's topic—*Transforming Primary Care: The Promise of Disruptive Innovations*, which focused on the health care system of the future, explored technology in primary care and the transformative trends that are improving health outcomes and building health communities. The speakers shared their innovations and outcomes from multiple perspectives, including large integrated health systems, national research and outcome data, down to the level of organizing and delivering transformational care both for the medically complex and for the equally challenging social complex populations.

Presenters included **Marcia Nielson**, PhD, MPH, Executive Director, Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative; **Sally Okun**, RN, MMHS, Head of Health Data Integrity, Patient Safety and R&D, PatientLikeMe, Inc.; **Anmol Madan**, PhD, Co-Founder/CEO and Data Scientist of Ginger.io; **Lisa Hartman**, documentary filmmaker and award-winning Producer, Photopia Productions; **Patrice Whistler**, MD, Primary Care Partners, P.C. Grand Junction, CO, recently featured in Hartman's PBS documentary, "U.S. Health Care: The Good News"; and **Tine Han-**

# Community Health Center On The Rise

## Bristol Site Offers Expanded Medical In Addition To Dental Hygiene and Behavioral Health Care

In early April, Community Health Center opened its larger, state-of-the-art Bristol facility, located at 395 North Main Street. As the need for quality primary care services continues to grow in the Bristol area, CHC has responded by nearly doubling the size of this location.

On April 2, CHC hosted an open house event for the community, with Congressman John Larson, Rep. Elizabeth Boukus, and Mayor Arthur Ward. "It's a pleasure to be able to join with Mayor Ward and the City of Bristol today to celebrate the opening of Community Health Center Inc.'s latest facility," Congressman Larson said. "All over the area the work that the men and women of Community Health Center Inc. do is recognized for its high quality and I am confident that this new facility will carry on that tradition."

Patients will now have access to behavioral health, dental hygiene services, nutrition counseling, diabetes education and podiatry services, in addition to expanded primary medical care and an on-site Quest Laboratory. The center also provides assistance with application for public insurance and other support programs.

"The center features new state-of-the-art technology, and more access to ensure community members continue to receive the highest level of health care," said Yvette Highsmith Francis, director for CHC's Hartford and New Haven County sites. "This new site will better reflect the quality of our providers and the innovative technologies we use to improve our patients' experience."

## Community Health Center, Inc. Opens School-Based Health Center at Vinal Technical High School in Middletown

On April 24, CHC opened a school-based health center at Vinal Technical High School to bring on-site medical care to more than 600 high school students. The center, located at 60 Daniels Street, is the fifth that Community Health Center has opened in Middletown and is the newest on the growing list of school-based health service locations throughout the state.

At a ribbon cutting ceremony Senator Len Suzio, Rep. Mark Lesser, and Middletown Mayor Dan Drew all remarked about the importance of this new partnership between CHC and Vinal Technical School, stating that having school-based services available to students is critical to their success. Rep. Lesser presented a proclamation, which was issued by the CT General Assembly on behalf of Senator Suzio, Senator Paul Doyle, and Representative Joseph Serra, recognizing the innovative relationship that will improve health outcomes and build healthy communities.

Mayor Dan Drew remarked on the union of two of Middletown's most vibrant organizations "Vinal Tech's mission is focused on advancing society, and that is also what Community Health Center does on a daily basis. The joining of these two organizations will benefit both the students and the community. On behalf of the citizens of Middletown, I congratulate you on your grand opening."

The school-based health center provides comprehensive primary care, including immunizations, complete physical examinations, medication management, intervention for acute chronic illnesses and long-term chronic care—with little interruption from the school day. Students without health insurance receive free services and are provided assistance in determining their eligibility for a public health insurance program, such as HUSKY. The center is currently staffed by a nurse practitioner and medical assistant.

In addition to medical care, the center will provide access to regular mobile dental visits. During these visits, a dental hygienist will provide cleanings and oral health education and take X-rays. If follow-up is required, the student is referred to a dentist at Community Health Center of Middletown.

Although the grand opening of our new facility in Middletown was undoubtedly one of the most highly anticipated grand openings of the year, CHC also celebrated the grand opening of an expanded, state-of-the-art facility in Bristol, where additional services are now available to our patients.



In addition, CHC opened its newest School-Based Health Center (SBHC) at Vinal Technical High School in Middletown, which is also the first SBHC CHC has established within a technical school.



## Community Health Center, Inc.

Community Health Center, Inc. is a private, non-profit agency. Since 1972, we have been building a world-class primary health care system, that is committed to caring for special populations, and that is focused on improving health outcomes for our patients as well as building healthy communities.



**Community  
Health Center, Inc.**

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## Healthy Change

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SUMMER 2012

## CHC's Americorps Members Make A Splash During Their Week Of Service In Waterbury, CT



Community HealthCorps is a national AmeriCorps program that promotes health care for America's underserved while developing tomorrow's healthcare workforce. The group of members this year dedicated the week of April 8th, 2012 as their week of service in Waterbury, CT. The group of members that have been serving from 2011–2012 is made up of 13 individuals who have demonstrated their commitment to Connecticut in a variety of ways; this specific week showcased their pledge to national service and marked the final months as members at CHC. Here is a recap of the week's events in Waterbury:

**Monday, April 9 & Tuesday, April 10.** Members began the major component of their week by painting blacktops at five different Waterbury elementary schools. They added interactive, brightly colored activities to recess time by painting hopscotch, four square, kick ball fields, activity circles, alphabet letters, and a giant map of the U.S. They also included paintings of the different school's mascots. Many of the schools said that the mascot was their favorite part of the project, boosting school spirit among the children.

**Wednesday, April 11.** On the third day of *Splashes of Service Week*, half of the members painted three additional playgrounds in Waterbury; the remaining members chaperoned a trip with 35 local Waterbury students on spring break to a New Britain Rock Cats game hosted by the Police Activities league (PAL).

**Thursday, April 12.** The HealthCorps group took a break from painting on Thursday and traveled to Camp Mataucha, in Watertown, CT, operated by The Greater Waterbury YMCA. They spent their time raking and transporting leaves, painting and staining fences and buildings, and spreading mulch in preparation for the camp's opening.

**Friday, April 13.** The final three of eleven elementary schools the group visited throughout the week were completed.

**Saturday, April 14.** The week was brought to an end on Saturday, where members hosted a Community Meal on the Waterbury Green. The town Green, located right in the heart of downtown Waterbury, was the perfect place to bring the free, fun and family-friendly event. The group cooked and served meals to over two hundred people. Members also set up demonstration booths where people could learn about embracing healthy living.

"It was a great opportunity to help promote healthy lifestyles in the Waterbury community by encouraging physical activity and showing families that eating healthy can be easy and DELICIOUS! Our bilingual, healthy recipe cards were extremely popular," said Corazon Irizarry, AmeriCorps member serving within the Women's Center at CHC's Meriden site.



Healthy Change

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