BreathingEasier®

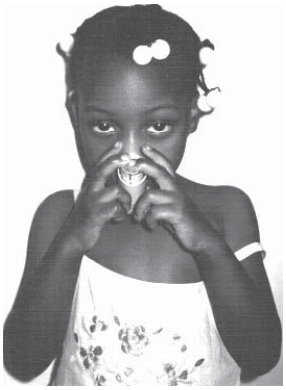
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America®
MARYLAND, GREATER DC CHAPTER

Fall 2007

NEW ADDRESS: 6609 Reisterstown Rd., Suite 204 Baltimore, MD 21215 • PHONE: (410) 484-2054; FAX: (410) 484-2043

AAFA-MD/Greater DC Chapter Helps Family With Asthmatic Kids "Breathe Easier"

This summer marked the beginning of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America Maryland-Greater DC Chapter's campaign to help fight the effects that summer heat and poor air quality can have on families with asthmatic children.



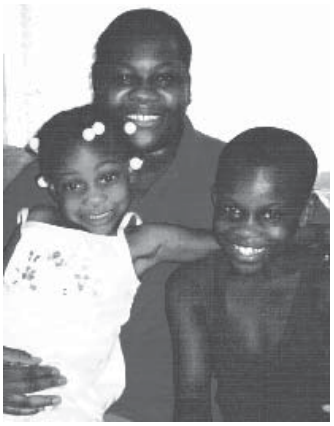
Representatives from the University of Maryland's Breathmobile program made the Chapter aware of a family in need and requested aid in buying an air conditioner for Romaine H., a single mother living in Baltimore City, and her two children who both suffer from chronic asthma.

Daberra, age 4, and Daquan, age 8, had both been to the emergency room multiple times as the heat index rose. Doctors have told the children's mother that both her little boy and girl are at risk for a potentially fatal asthma attack without the proper interventions and medicine.

Unfortunately, the intense summer heat in Romaine's un-air-conditioned city row house made sleeping conditions nearly impossible for the two children and worsened their frequent asthma attacks.

Moved by this family's story, the Chapter decided to take action and facilitate the purchase of an air conditioning unit for the children's bedroom so that they could play and sleep without having their health put at risk again.

Thanks to several generous donors and finances from the Chapter, the air conditioning unit was installed in early July, much to the happiness of Daberra and Daquan.



Daberra, age 4 and Daquan, age 8 (also bottom left), with their mother, Romaine

Dabrerra and Daquan's story inspired the Chapter to continue this philanthropic campaign throughout Maryland, DC and suburban VA.

(Continued, page two)

"There is just no feeling like seeing the gratitude and joy on two young children's faces because they know their symptoms are going to lessen."

Racial Disparities Among Marylanders with Asthma

According to a study recently conducted by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Maryland Asthma Control Program, people from certain racial and/or ethnic groups have greater asthma-related morbidity and mortality and are more negatively affected by asthma-related symptoms than those of Caucasian ethnicity.

According to the study, African Americans have a 3.7 times higher rate of ER visits, a 2.6 times higher rate of hospitalization, and a 2.8 times higher rate of mortality due to asthma than Caucasians. African Americans are also 1.2 times more likely to have asthma than Caucasians. However, this statistic cannot be the sole explanation for this health disparity.

(Continued on page three)

Message from the AAFA-MD/Greater DC President:
On the Occasion of Celebrating 25 Years of Service to the Community

Dalton Tong, Board President

It is an auspicious occasion for any non profit organization to celebrate a 25th anniversary, as our Chapter will this year.

Expansions, down-sizing, fiscal largess, financial challenges, program enhancements—all play a role in the evolution of any organization. It is how each of those factors is handled over the years that insures longevity.

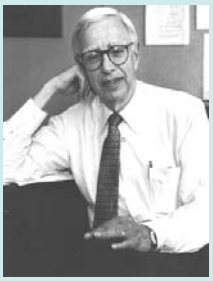
Our Chapter has undergone considerable change in the last several years. I'm pleased to report that these challenges have been met in a manner that allows the AAFA-MD/DC Chapter to continue to provider education, advocacy, information and patient referrals throughout the Maryland/Greater DC area.

Recently we've down-sized both office space and staff to better position us to provide service into the future in the most cost-effective manner possible. New development initiatives are underway , as are expanded education efforts.

New options include the development of fee-for-service models, product kits, and new metro area volunteer Auxiliary Circles, all under the guidance of a new part-time Executive Director.

As we glance backward, while focusing on our future, we owe a debt of gratitude to many volunteers, institutions, and individual staff members who lent their time, talent and support over the last 25 years. I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of one volunteer in particular, whose efforts not only 'gave birth' to our Chapter, but who helped sustain it year after year with supreme dedication.

That individual is Dr. Philip Norman, our Founder. He continues to serve as Chairman Emeritus and is helping to shape the strategies that will sustain the Chapter for the next 25 years. Seldom does a volunteer remain with a nonprofit for so long.



We salute Philip Norman, MD, Chapter Founder.

Continued from page one, "Chapter Helps Family "Breathe Easier"

The Chapter plans to stay in communication with University of Maryland's Breathmobile and other organizations to identify families with asthmatic children in need of air conditioners. Each window unit costs approximately $250, and is crucial to the health of many individuals in the Maryland and greater DC area.

At such a small cost, the AAFA-MD Chapter has set the goal to help purchase 100 window air conditioning units by summer 2008, with a fundraising goal totaling $25,000 in cash or in new units being donated. Throughout the coming year, air conditioning manufacturers will be approached to participate in the campaign.

Susan Sweitzer, newly appointed Executive Director of the Maryland-Greater DC Chapter, served as delivery person for the air conditioning unit. On the block where the family lives, about half of the row houses are boarded up or vacant—one of Baltimore's forgotten neighborhoods.

When she knocked, Susan was met with sincere and enthusiastic hugs and smiles from Daberra, Daquan and their mother. Ms. Sweitzer recounted the experience, saying, "There is just no feeling like seeing the gratitude and joy on two young children's faces because they know their symptoms are going to lessen."

"You have no idea how something as simple as an air conditioning unit can make such a monumental difference in a person's life, especially the life of a child," she said.

This campaign will enable many families with children to breathe easier during the hot, stifling summer months ahead.

Any cash gifts designated to this campaign to assist low-income families with asthmatic children, will ultimately help prevent multiple trips to the emergency room for those children. Ms. Sweitzer added, "It is difficult to place a value on living a healthy life. When it comes to an asthmatic child the value is priceless."

"You have no idea how something as simple as A/C can make such a monumental difference in a child's life."

Donations for this campaign should be designated "A/C Campaign" and sent to:

AAFA-MD/DC Chapter
6609 Reisterstown Rd., Ste. 204
Baltimore, MD 21215

AAFA is a non profit 501(C)3 Organization. Donations are tax deductible under the IRS tax code.

Or call for more information:
(410) 484-2054.

Community Health Charities of Maryland 50th Anniversary Annual Meeting

CHC 50th Anniversary Annual Meeting Dignitaries: (L to R) Peter Beilenson, MD, Howard Co. Health Officer; Audrey Trapp, Director, Career Management Program, JHU; CEO Wayne Horrell, CHC; Joseph Murray, Director of Community Relations, Ascend One.

On June 29th, 2007, Combined Community Health Charities of Maryland (CHC) celebrated their 50th Anniversary Annual Meeting.

The meeting was sponsored by Aflac, Atlantic Financial Federal Credit Union, Naden/Lean LLC, Pfizer and Riggs, Councilman, and Michaels & Downes, Inc.

The keynote of the meeting, given by Howard County Health Officer Dr. Peter Beilenson focused on health disparities in varying communities of the United States.

Much of Dr. Beilenson's talk was centered around his experience moving from his job as Health Commissioner of Baltimore, the 5th poorest city in the nation, to his current post in Howard County, the 3rd richest county in the nation, and his relationship to both communities.

His speech also enumerated the current innovative initiatives implemented in Howard County to encourage prevention health practices.

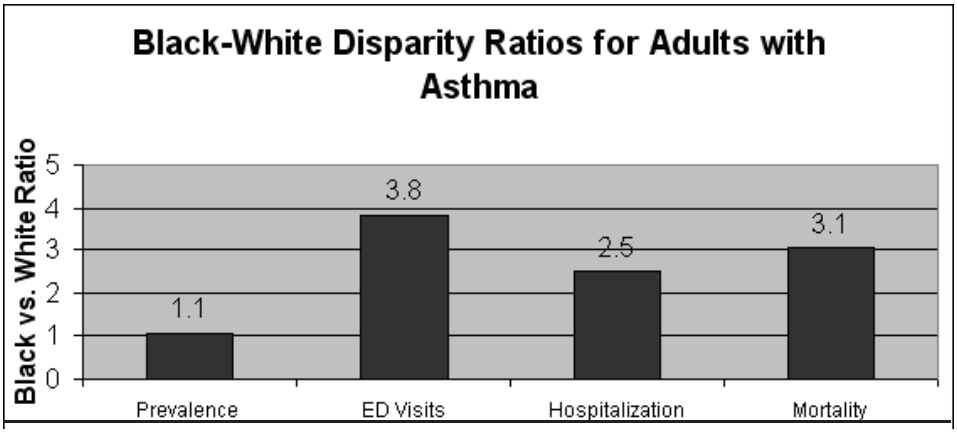
Mr. Horrell also recognized CHC member health agencies for their generous contributions over the last 50 years. Another focus of the CHC annual meeting is to commend individuals who have committed themselves to health and healthcare in Maryland. The individuals acknowledged were CHC Board Members Stephen Keith, MD, outgoing Board Chairman, Tom Lowdermilk, and Audrey Trapp. Additionally, Donald P. McPherson, III was awarded the Joseph Forni award, given annually to "the individual who best exemplifies the values and principles of CHC through his or her volunteerism."

Jan Thompson received the Volunteer of the Year Award.

Also honored were Ron Chambless, CHC campaign services director and Joseph Murray on behalf of Ascend One, recipient of a Legacy Leader Award for the company's commitment to health and support of CHC.

(Disparities, continued from page one)

The study posits that higher asthma severity, poorer asthma control, and/or more limited access to health care for African Americans may further explain these differences.



Courtesy of DHMH; More info at www.MarylandAsthmaControl.org

The Maryland Asthma Control Program is trying to address the disparities found in their study through a number of strategies. Their first is to increase the awareness of these health disparities among health care providers, stakeholders, and the public.

The next strategy is prioritizing interventions that serve persons within these high-risk populations. Another effort is to partner with community-based organizations representing highly impacted communities. AAFA MD/DC Chapter is one of those organizations.

The efforts of the Maryland Asthma Control Program through raising awareness and organizing solutions, works toward eliminating the statistical disparity that exists as a stark reality for so many individuals in Maryland.

Campaign Season Begins with Optimism

In 2006 U.S. Sets Record in Overall Charitable Giving

That time of year has arrived, when workplace giving campaign representatives begin to solicit employees for payroll deductions that directly assist agencies in helping those in need within each community.

According to Giving USA, the U.S. is twice as generous as any other country, giving nearly $300 billion to charitable causes last year, setting a record by exceeding 2005 totals by 1%. Over 75% of the total was given by individuals, and almost $97 billion went to religious organizations, followed by almost $41 billion to education. The surge in aid to victims of hurricanes accounted for part of the 1% increase.

Giving is an indicator of overall economic health. Almost 65% of households with incomes under $100,000 give to charity. Willingness to give cuts across income levels. Americans give twice as much as the next most charitable country, Great Britain.

AAFA ASKS THAT YOU DESIGNATE YOUR CAMPAIGN GIFT to the Asthma & Allergy Foundation, Maryland/Greater DC Chapter.

USE THESE CODES to designate your donation:
Allegany County #33
Cecil County #33
Eastern Shore #33
Frederick Private #33
Frederick County/City $0506
Southern Maryland #33
Washington County #33
United Way of Central Maryland #019
United Way of National Capitol Area #1734

Thank you for your Continued Support!

Available Soon: "Asthma in the Older Adult: Tools for Better Health"

This summer, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH), Maternal and Child Health, under a Center for Disease Control grant, contracted with AAFA-MD/DC Chapter to conceptualize, research, author and produce a 'toolkit' aimed at helping caregivers and health professionals deal more effectively with older patients who suffer from asthma.

The 'toolkit' outlines asthma basics and strategies for chronic disease management in older adults—a population that often exhibits multiple symptoms and diagnoses that can result in treatment challenges (like those that can arise from mild dementia and from taking—of forgetting to take– multiple medications).

Some strategies covered in the toolkit, for use by nurses, health educators, and health care professionals, are as follows:

- Be on the lookout– Asthma is the most under-diagnosed disease in the U.S. especially in seniors, many of whom develop it much later in life;
- Look at the home or facility– Allergens can trigger asthma. Many can be easily eliminated. The 'toolkit' tells you how;
- Spirometry testing– is the 'gold' standard, yet only 25% of elderly patients with symptoms will be prescribed this useful test;
- "DLCO" Testing– measures carbon dioxide diffusing capacity in the lung and signals if something more than asthma is present, like emphysema;
- Drug Optimization– is essential in older adults. Many have arthritis or other conditions that impede their use of metered-dose inhalers or peak flow meters. Use of spacers or nebulized medications may improve drug delivery to lower airways and reduce symptoms more effectively;
- Involve the older adult in care strategies– not doing so may result in patient resistance to case and treatment;
- Taking care of the Caregiver– is an essential aspect of caring for an older asthmatic adult;
- Caregivers: Avoid the "3-F's"- Fatigued; Frustrated; Furious Caregivers should give themselves a 'time out' if coping with the "3-F's." Time out to call a friend. Time out to have a moment alone. Time out to do something they used to love to do (but haven't had time for it in awhile).

The 'toolkit' will soon be available on the DHMH website. Requests for binder kits can be faxed to DHMH Attention: Ms. Hess-Mutinda FAX 410-333-5233.

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America®
MARYLAND, GREATER DC CHAPTER

Helping People Breathe Easier

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, Maryland/Greater DC Chapter is a local, non-profit, voluntary health organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for asthma and allergy sufferers and committed to eradicating these diseases.

The foundation provides education, support and referrals to assist patients, their families and health care providers in the control and management of these chronic diseases.

AAFA-MD/DC Chapter
6609 Reisterstown Rd., Ste. 204
Baltimore, MD 21215
E-mail: AAFAMD@rcn.com
Phone: (410) 484-2054