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MASSACHUSETTS PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION



Your Voice for Public Health

*Annual Report
October, 2004– September, 2005*



WINNING VICTORIES TODAY BUILDING FOR TOMORROW

Massachusetts Public Health Association (MPHA) members and supporters created brightness among the shadows in 2005. We won important victories - helping Massachusetts residents live healthier, happier lives - and we strengthened our organization, increasing our capacity for the future.

Our far-ranging advocacy efforts took us from the streets of Springfield to the suites of the State House, from union halls to the frontiers of Internet advocacy. We used both time-tested and innovative strategies to mobilize our members and coalitions, create powerful regional voices, and strengthen our clout in the legislature.

AMONG OUR KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS THIS YEAR:

- Leading advocacy to boost Department of Public Health funding by \$18.7 million
- Helping win funding for an important study of safer alternatives to toxic chemicals
- Championing legislation to get soda and junk food out of schools
- Helping advance legislation to ban mercury and to promote community health workers
- Strengthening our community organizing in central and Western Massachusetts
- Boosting public visibility for public health through the media

MPHA STAFF & INTERNS

STAFF

Geoff Wilkinson, Executive Director
Roberta Friedman, Director of Education
Stan Holt, Organizing Consultant
AJ Juarez, Community Organizer
Sara Kanevsky, Community Organizer
Kara Keenan, Membership & Development Coordinator
Maddie Ribble, Administrative Assistant
Wanda Santiago, Business Manager
Eric Weltman, Deputy Director of Policy & Advocacy
Lisa Renee Siciliano, Executive Director MACHW

INTERNS

Dana Bowie, Correctional Health Intern
Patricia Finnerty, Education Intern
Jennie Nathans, Hepatitis C Coalition Intern
Lindsey Tucker, Obesity Prevention Intern
Michael Wake, Hepatitis C Coalition & Advocacy Intern

FORMER STAFF AND INTERNS

Sarah Almer, Deputy Director of Policy & Advocacy
Libby Manly, Membership & Development Coordinator
Guilmo Barrio, Community Organizer
Fred Rosenfeld, Administrative Assistant
Amanda Behrens, Communications Intern
Catherine DeFuria, Child Health Intern
Mary Ann Fitzgerald, Advocacy Intern

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Harold Cox, MSSW- President
- Judith Kurland - President Elect
- Bettye Anderson Frederic, BSN, MSN- Vice President
- Thomas J. Conklin, MD - Vice President of Western Mass
- Ali Noorani, MPH- Secretary
- Ed Marakovitz, MSW - Treasurer

SECTION CHAIRS & DELEGATES

- Myron Allukian, DDS, MPH- Oral Health
- Alba Cruz Davis, PhD, MPH- Minority Health
- Catherine DeLorey, Dr.PH- Women’s Health
- Alfred DeMaria, Jr., MD- Epidemiology & Lab Sciences
- Polly Hoppin, DSci-Environmental & Occupational
- Sam Lipson, MS- Environmental & Occupational
- Donna Lazorik, RN, MS- Public Health Nursing
- Arthur Mazer, MPH- Gerontology
- Vivien Morris, MPH, MS, RD, LDN- Food and Nutrition
- Dorothy Swope, MEd - Health Promotion & Prevention
- Karen van Unen, MBA, Med- Child & Adolescent Health
- Deborah Klein Walker, EdD- Health Planning & Policy

MEMBERS AT LARGE

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| John Auerbach, MBA | Jacqueline Nolan, MPH |
| Ray Considine, MSW | Frank Singleton, MSPH, MPA |
| Judith Gorbach, EdM, MPH | Jean Elizabeth Swinney, PhD, RN |
| Wendy K. Mariner, JD, MPH | |

PUBLIC HEALTH BUDGET ADVOCACY

MPHA crafted a powerful combination of lobbying, coalition mobilization, and grassroots organizing for this year’s budget campaign, resulting in a valuable payoff for public health: the Fiscal Year 2006 state budget contains \$430.8 million for the Department of Public Health (DPH), an increase of \$18.7 million over FY05.

This year, MPHA scored \$4 million more for universal immunizations, gained an additional \$542,000 for the state laboratory, and played significant support roles in funding for school health services, public health hospitals, teen pregnancy prevention, and other programs.

Over the past two years, MPHA and its coalition partners have won over \$80 million more for the DPH budget than proposed by the Romney administration.

The campaign included successful efforts in the legislature to override \$4.7 million that the Governor vetoed from the final conference budget approved by the House and Senate.

On Beacon Hill, we stirred together all of the ingredients of solid legislative advocacy, including compelling and credible information, effective strategy, and persistence. Our efforts included sponsoring several well-attended briefings, testifying at hearings, and numerous meetings with legislative leaders.

Equally important was our work outside the State House. We engaged our members and coalition partners at every stage of the budget process, with timely budget analyses and compelling action alerts. We worked with dozens of allies through several coalitions for which we provide staff support, including United We Stand for Public Health, the Coalition for Local Public Health, and the Hepatitis C Coalition, issuing regular budget updates and coordinating advocacy efforts. We secured a *Boston Globe* endorsement of increased immunization funding, received coverage of public health advocacy in regional papers across the state, and published letters to the editor in scores of newspapers. *(continue)*

Our advocacy was boosted by organizing at the community level. In coffee shops and public libraries, on the phone and face-to-face, we engaged in the hard work of building a mobilized grassroots constituency for public health. We sponsored forums in Worcester and Springfield, arranged meetings between legislators and constituents, and spoke at numerous community events.

MPHA also continues to be a steady, articulate voice for increasing state revenue. We are an active member of the Stop the Cuts Campaign, a coalition of labor unions and health and human services organizations. In 2005, MPHA testified at hearings and issued calls to action to our members in support of closing corporate tax loopholes.

CAMPAIGN FOR HEALTHY KIDS

MPHA is supersizing its campaign to get soda and junk food out of schools. Nearly 10 percent of Massachusetts high school students are obese or overweight, leading to higher risk of diabetes, asthma, and other health problems.



MPHA is spearheading advocacy for H. 1457, "An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition," legislation that replaces soda with healthier drinks and establishes healthy standards for snacks in schools.

This year, MPHA ramped up its media profile for the bill, garnering two *Boston Globe* editorials, as well as articles, editorials, and letters-to-the-editor in countless other newspapers. We increased our outreach efforts, winning support for the bill from over 100 organizations and public officials, from the Boston Teachers Union to the Massachusetts PTA. On Beacon Hill, we held a well-attended legislative briefing and have coordinated strategy with our legislative allies.

MPHA has also been generating support at the grassroots level. In June, we organized a Family Food & Fitness Carnival in Holyoke to provide education about proper nutrition and exercise for children's health.

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MPHA FUNDERS

GRANT & CONTRACT SUPPORT

Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow
Common Stream Foundation
Estate of John T. O'Connor
Ellis & Rapacki, LLP
Jessie B. Cox Charitable Trust

Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health
Roache Pharmaceuticals
Partners Health Care
Tufts University School of Medicine

ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS

Abt Associates
AIDS Action Committee
Asthma & Allergy Foundation /NE Chapter
Boston Univ. School of Dental Medicine
Boston Univ. School of Public Health
Boston Univ. School of Social Work
Children's Hospital Boston, Public Affairs Dept.
Children's Hospital Boston, Office of Child Advocacy
Community Catalyst
Division of Public Health Practice
Friends of Brookline Public Health
Grafton Board of Health
Greater Springfield Senior Services
Harvard School of Public Health
Health Care of S.E. Mass, Inc.
Health Law Advocates
Hebrew Rehabilitation Center for Aged
Highland Valley Elder Services
Institute for the Advancement of Minority & Multicultural Medicine
MA Coalition of School-Based Health Centers, Inc.
MA Association of Community Health

MA Coalition of Community Hospitals
Massachusetts Health Data Consortium
Massachusetts Community Health Worker Network
Massachusetts Dental Hygienists Association
Massachusetts Health Council, Inc.
Massachusetts Nurses Association
Massachusetts School Nurse Organization
Matritech
Northeast Center for Healthy Communities
Nutrition and Health Partnership
Organization for a New Equality
Partners for a Healthier Community
Philip W. Johnston Associates
Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts
Policy Studies, Inc.
Span, Inc.
Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital
The Medical Foundation
United Group
University Health Services - UMass Boston
Western MA Ctr. for Healthy Communities
WesternMass Elder Care
Wyeth-Ayerst Labs, a Div of American Home Products

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Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation
The Health Foundation of Central Mass

Karp Family Foundation / New England Development
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Partners HealthCare System, Inc.
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State Street Corporation
Trust for America's Health
Tufts School of Medicine
UMASS Medical Center
UMASS Medical School
William A. Berry and Son, Inc.
Winn Development and Cassin Group

MPHA has long been recognized as a leading voice for public health, as a convener and leader of coalitions, and as the state’s “umbrella group” for public health. We are the “go to” organization for the media, legislators, and organizations seeking, credible information, illuminating insights and strategic advice.



This year, MPHA also celebrates its achievements at the grassroots level, in communities across Massachusetts. MPHA’s community organizers have established strong networks in western and central Massachusetts. These are networks of parents and professionals, scientists and students, people willing to do the hard work of advancing a public health agenda.

Our organizers have built relationships with local groups, agencies, and public officials. They have sponsored and organized numerous public forums, media events, and legislative meetings. They have succeeded in advancing MPHA’s own policy priorities, helping promote coalition member concerns, and identifying new regional-specific priorities.

Perhaps most importantly, they have begun establishing an independent regional voice for MPHA and public health. They have created a solid, sustainable base on which to build.

ADDITIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS INCLUDE:

- Our annual meeting last fall featured Shelley Hearne, Executive Director of the Trust for America’s Health, and Virginia Caine, President of the American Public Health Association, attracting over 200 people.
- Over 350 people attended our third annual fundraiser this spring, where Boston Mayor Tom Menino presented Deborah Prothrow-Stith with the Paul Revere Award, and House Speaker Sal DiMasi presented Christie Hager with the Frechette Award.
- We welcomed several new staff members this year: Sara Kanevesky, Central Massachusetts Organizer; Kara Keenan, Membership & Development Coordinator; Maddie Ribble, Administrative Assistant; and Eric Weltman, Policy & Advocacy Deputy Director.

Held in conjunction with a local farmers market, we enlisted the involvement of over 25 community organizations, as well as the mayor, and attracted more than 400 families. In Worcester, we organized a well-attended media event, and won endorsements of the bill from both the city council and school committee.

All of this came together in October at the bill’s public hearing. A media event outside the State House attracted every television news station in Boston. MPHA arranged several powerful panels of nurses, nutritionists, doctors, parents, and children to testify in favor of the bill. We anticipate a favorable report from the Public Health Committee.



Our Director of Education, Roberta Friedman, continues to be a highly visible leader in the fight against childhood obesity. She authored a well-received guide, *Community Action to Change School Food Policy: An Organizing Kit*. She serves on several coalitions and advisory committees, and is widely sought after for conferences and by community groups and agencies to provide advice on local wellness policies.

Environmental Health

MPHA is a leading member of the Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow (AHT), a groundbreaking coalition that brings together an unprecedented range of consumer groups, unions, faith communities, environmental groups, and health organizations. AHT’s mission is to prevent exposure to dangerous toxins in the home, workplace, and environment by promoting safer alternatives to chemicals often found in everyday products, such as toys, household cleaners, and cosmetics.

This year, we scored a key victory, overcoming opposition from industry and a budget veto by Governor Romney to win funding for a study of safer alternatives to five dangerous toxic chemicals, to be conducted through the Toxics Use Reduction Institute at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell. Currently, AHT is *(cont.)*

focusing on three pieces of legislation: to ban mercury, require safer cleaning products in schools, hospitals, and other public buildings, and promote the substitution, where feasible, of the most dangerous chemicals.

MPHA is a member of AHT’s steering committee, and is helping coordinate its advocacy, media, and organizing strategy. MPHA has helped AHT make headlines across the Commonwealth and marshal its forces at the State House. In addition, MPHA plays a key role in organizing constituent meetings with legislators in central and western Massachusetts. The mercury ban legislation has been approved by the Environment Committee.

Reducing Health Disparities

The need to reduce health disparities is gaining increased attention in media and policy circles, but the issue has long been woven into all of MPHA’s policy, organizing, and advocacy work.



MPHA has strengthened its collaboration with the Massachusetts Community Health Worker Network (MACHW), an organization that brings together people who are on the front lines of improving access to health care for vulnerable populations. MPHA worked with MACHW to craft legislation to close the knowledge gap about CHWs and is helping coordinate advocacy efforts to stabilize and increase funding for CHW services. MPHA is also serving as an important resource for MACHW, providing technical assistance on fundraising and finance.

IN ADDITION:

- MPHA has three board members on the Special Commission to Eliminate Health Disparities that was created by the legislature last year.
- We maintained a strong collaborative role in the Health Career Opportunities Project, a project at Tufts Medical School that recruits high school age youth of color for mentoring and intern experiences in an array of health-related fields.
- MPHA continues to lead efforts to improve health care in the correction system, advocating for legislation and playing a key role in several advisory committees.

Promoting Universal Health Care

There has been a tremendous amount of media attention to proposals to increase access to health insurance in Massachusetts. MPHA has played a role in several of these efforts:

- We have a board member on the steering committee of the Affordable Care Today! coalition organized by Health Care for All.
- We endorsed MassCare’s single payer bill, and we testified and recruited members for the bill’s public hearing this year.
- We endorsed the state constitutional amendment campaign, and have agreed to help with organizing for a necessary legislative clarification to the amendment.

Strengthening the State and Local Public Health Infrastructure

The need to strengthen the Commonwealth’s public health infrastructure is a constant theme in MPHA’s policy and budget work. Among our accomplishments was boosting funding for the state’s public health hospitals, laboratory, and immunization program.

We assisted with the Massachusetts release of “Ready or Not”, a report by Trust for America’s Health that called public attention to the need for improved emergency preparedness. And we have watchdogged the state laboratory’s continued funding needs, for Tuberculosis and other critical services.

Our budget priorities strengthen state and local capacity to prevent what we can and prepare for what we can’t.

MPHA provides staffing support for the Coalition for Local Public Health, which includes MPHA and associations representing the state’s health boards, health officers, environmental health officials, and public health nurses. This year, the coalition has focused on monitoring and improving the state’s new regional structure for managing emergency preparedness funds. We have also advanced the establishment of a new, local public health education and training institute, helping select an agency to operate it under DPH contract and sitting on an advisory board to oversee its development.