



## Local site visits pilot voluntary accreditation process



*Left to right, Sharon Cook and Debbi Cooper of IDPH and Aimee Devereaux of O'Brien review evidence during a site visit in Hancock County.*

By Lance Larson\*

Six local public health departments will soon receive a final report of their ability to meet the [Iowa Public Health Standards](#). The reports were the result of site visits in June by representatives from the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and local public health subject matter experts. The projects in Scott, Hancock, Johnson, Dallas, Lee, and Tama counties were funded by a competitive grant from IDPH designed to motivate counties to start assessing readiness for an Iowa voluntary accreditation process and to collect examples from applicants to serve as resources for other counties.

"The work of these six counties was an immense undertaking, but will be extremely important as we develop Iowa's voluntary accreditation system," said [Public Health Modernization Initiative](#) Coordinator Joy Harris. "Both state and local public health partners learned valuable lessons about what evidence is, how to collect it, how to present it, and about the site visit process itself."

Prior to each site visit, counties submitted evidence to IDPH electronically. During the visit, local staff discussed evidence from four pre-selected components with approximately four site visitors. After all evidence was presented, the evaluators provided feedback on whether the evidence showed that criteria had been met, highlighted the agency's strengths, and pointed out possible opportunities for improvement. County staff reciprocated by providing feedback to IDPH about the accreditation process itself. Counties will receive in their final report comments regarding all 11 component areas submitted by each county.

"As a local public health agency employee, I see accreditation as a step in the right direction for Iowa," said Betty Mallen, director of Planning at Hancock County Public Health Services and a local participant in one of the site reviews. "The process of gathering evidence was time consuming, but very worthwhile. We were pleasantly surprised to see how many standards we currently are meeting."

Through the county site visits, IDPH noticed a pattern of local partners not giving themselves enough credit regarding whether or not they met the standards. Another observation was that the Iowa Public Health Standards need to be presented more clearly.

In addition to helping counties understand the standards, involvement in the project assisted counties in determining next steps regarding accreditation preparation. "By participating in the self assessment of the Iowa Public Health Standards, counties have gathered baseline data on their ability to meet standards," said [Multi-State Learning Collaborative](#) Coordinator Erin Barkema. "This baseline information will help counties determine gaps, prioritize areas for improvement, and implement quality improvement tools."

Activities align with work to going at the national level to establish a voluntary

accreditation system for public health departments. The national [Public Health Accreditation Board](#) (PHAB) has developed a national public health accreditation program involving 11 domains. According to PHAB, many local health departments across the nation are reporting benefits from accreditation preparation. Those include performance feedback, recognition of quality improvement opportunities, a greater sense of accountability, and increased staff morale and visibility.

Thanks to the pilot project involving these six counties, IDPH can now relay a variety of resources to counties working toward voluntary accreditation, including tools and templates designed to make each county's local accreditation process more efficient. For more information, visit [www.idph.state.ia.us/mphi](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/mphi).

\* Lance Larson was an intern in the IDPH Bureau of Communication and Planning during the summer of 2010.



## Riding as a Change AGENT

The following is IDPH Director Tom Newton's July 30 contribution to a [blog](#) compiled by Shellie Pfohl, executive director of the [President's Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition](#) during her RAGBRAI trip across Iowa.

Today's ride from Waterloo to Manchester held special significance for me. Like Shellie, I also graduated from the University of Northern Iowa, so this leg of RAGBRAI allowed me to reconnect with a landscape I've been fond of for a long time.

As the director of the Iowa Department of Public Health and a former director of our Environmental Health Division, I've visited many of the towns we passed through today... but never on a bicycle. There's nothing quite like it. All of us, myself included, are so used to hopping in our cars to get from point A to point B as quickly as possible, we often miss the appeal of our natural surroundings and the uniqueness of the communities that make Iowa such a great place. Although our team certainly didn't set out to break any speed records, I feel I got in a pretty good workout today. Just as important, though, this ride provided me with a much needed mental health break. Whether you're participating in RAGBRAI or just cycling around your own neighborhood, I hope that more Iowans discover the benefits of cycling as a way to both unwind from the stresses of the day and stay in shape.

Speaking of being in shape, I must admit there was a time I wouldn't have considered participating in RAGBRAI. After becoming director of the department in 2007, though, I made a commitment to lose some weight. At the time, I joined Lighten Up Iowa. Now known as [Live Healthy Iowa](#), this team-based physical activity and weight loss challenge allowed me to shed more than 30 pounds. Thanks to the support of my co-workers, family, friends and my IDPH Live Healthy Iowa team (Go Change AGENTS!), I've been able to keep that weight off for three straight years now. And I'm so glad I did it. Believe me, it's tough keeping up with our state and local health partners!

During our stop in Quasqueton, I had the opportunity to introduce some of those partners to Shellie and our riding partners HHS Region VII Administrator Jose Belardo and U. S. Paralympian Susan Katz. Following a "big picture" presentation of Iowa's wellness efforts by the [Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Nutrition](#) in Waterloo the day before, the welcoming party of public health



*Left to right: Pfohl, fellow Iowan Karlin Hayes, Katz, Belardo, and Newton.*

partners in “Quasky” was a great follow-up—a real showcase of the boots-on-the-ground activities that promote and protect the health of the people living in Buchanan County. Among those who welcomed us were representatives from the local public health department, field epidemiologists, environmental health specialists, wellness advocates, food inspectors, emergency medical services, and tobacco use prevention partners.

It’s often said that people don’t realize how much public health touches our lives. It’s in the water we drink and on the sidewalks and bicycle paths we use every day. Public health is in our children’s vaccinations and it’s there for us when emergencies threaten our health. Today’s welcoming party was not only a testament to that reality, but it also made me proud that such a diverse group of public health partners—whose jobs are quite different from one another—feel and act as if they’re part of a family, the whole of which is much greater than the sum of its parts.

During our ride, I was also reminded of the important role all communities have in promoting the health and wellness of their residents. The towns we passed through today were small in comparison to other communities in Iowa. Between Waterloo and Manchester, we rode through Gilbertville (pop. 804), Rowley (283) Quasqueton (540) and Winthrop (728). Each one was similar in size to my native Zearing (588) in central Iowa. Each is also part of the more than 71 percent of Iowa communities with populations of less than 1,000. Regardless of size, however, all communities face similar challenges, especially when it comes to the obesity epidemic in Iowa. Luckily, the strategies for reversing this trend are also quite similar. Shellie’s leadership on the President’s Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition ([www.fitness.gov](http://www.fitness.gov)), as well as with First Lady Michele Obama’s “Let’s Move!” initiative, ([www.letsmove.gov](http://www.letsmove.gov)) is helping to provide communities across the nation with solutions that truly work to reduce obesity.

In addition to visiting the websites above, I encourage readers of this blog to take advantage of a publication released earlier this month by my department. Told in rich language by more than a dozen authors, the free Healthy Communities magazine is the collective story of more than 25 towns, cities, and neighborhoods across Iowa that have taken steps to make their communities healthy places to live, work, and play. With more than 50 photographs taken by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and other contributors, the 68-page publication is a great tool for reaching out to local stakeholders to consider projects that can markedly improve the health of their community. Call 515-281-0917 for free copies of this inspiring publication.

## CDC director visits Iowa

By Amy Thoreson\*

In August, [Scott County Health Department](#) (SCHD) welcomed [CDC Director Thomas Frieden](#) to Iowa. This being Director Frieden’s first trip to the state, outgoing SCHD Director Larry Barker and IDPH Director Tom Newton used the occasion to highlight some of Iowa’s public health successes and challenges.

During their three-hour meeting, the federal, state and county health officials spent much of the time talking about the importance of preventing disease. “Prevention is our best buy in the health sector,” Frieden said.



*President’s Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition Executive Director Shellie Pfohl presents IDPH Director Tom Newton with a President’s Challenge Advocate Certificate during their RAGBRAI stop in Quasqueton, Iowa.*

Along those lines, Director Frieden commented on Iowa's recent success in curbing tobacco use, but emphasized that there is still much to do. In particular, he encouraged continued support for Iowa's youth-led tobacco prevention campaign **JEL** (Just Eliminate Lies) to "keep the pressure on" tobacco companies, which spend an estimated \$174 million per year marketing their products in Iowa. In regard to the obesity epidemic in Iowa and the nation, Director Frieden commented on the importance of programs such as first lady Michelle Obama's **Let's Move** campaign, calling physical activity and fitness as a "wonder drug" to fend off illness and promote longer lives.

As outlined in the CDC's **Winnable Battles** campaign, tobacco use and obesity are two public health priorities with large-scale impact on health and known, effective intervention strategies. The other four winnable battles identified in the campaign relate to healthcare-associated infections, HIV, motor vehicle injuries, and teen pregnancy.

Directors Frieden, Newton and Barker also discussed childhood lead poisoning prevention, Iowa's Public Health Modernization Initiatives, the Iowa Public Health Standards and the state's high vaccination rates among health care providers. Last year, more than 90 percent of these important public health partners received an influenza vaccination.

"It was an honor to have Dr. Frieden visit Scott County Health Department during his first visit to Iowa," said Director Barker, who retires in September. "He was gracious, interested, and appreciative of all of the hard work that goes on at the local and state levels and emphasized that the CDC's role was to support those efforts."

\* Amy Thoreson is the SCHD deputy director.



*Left to right, Scott County Health Department Director Larry Barker, IDPH Director Tom Newton, and CDC Director Thomas Frieden.*

## Iowa Food Assistance program wins recognition

By Roger Munns\*

Iowa's **Food Assistance** program has won national recognition for its efforts to improve nutritional health among recipients and for helping low-income children enroll for free lunches at school. The federal Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) said its Excellence in Nutrition Education award was recognition of Iowa's program to inform recipients on how to use food assistance dollars to buy nutritious foods.

The award recognized states that have clear goals and objectives, that target appropriate audiences, and that can document positive behavior changes. The Iowa Department of Human Services, which administers the food assistance program, has a contract with the Iowa Department of Health and ISU Extension to perform **nutrition education**.

The FNS, a division of the US Department of Agriculture, also gave Iowa DHS and the Department of Education the Outstanding Achievement in Direct Certification award. Under an agreement with the Iowa Department of Education, children whose families receive food assistance and who match the Department of Education's database are automatically signed up for free lunches at school.

This award recognized state agencies who worked together to achieve the highest percent of food assistance children directly certified for school lunch. In the 2008-2009 school year, 85 percent of Iowa children receiving food assistance also received free lunches at school, a 14 percent increase from the prior year.

\* Roger Munns is a public information officer at the Iowa Department of Human Services.

## Media partners help educate parents about K2

By Dale Woolery\*

In August, Governor Chet Culver announced the kick off [public service media campaign](#) to help parents understand the dangers of a new type of synthetic marijuana known as K2 or Spice.

“This campaign’s goal is to make Iowa parents aware of a new substance and its potentially harmful effects, and to urge them to talk with their kids to prevent the use of products such as K2,” Culver said. “Emergency action last month by the Pharmacy Board to ban synthetic marijuana sales in Iowa was an important step, but since K2 may still be available through other means, education is required.”

Iowa’s call-to-action public service campaign features the Rozga family of Indianola, talking about the tragic death of their 18-year old son David, following his use of K2 shortly after the new substance appeared in the State. Police say David Rozga fatally shot himself, following a K2-induced panic attack.

“When informed, parents can have a great deal of influence when it comes to youth making healthy choices,” said Tom Newton, director of the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH). “These messages will help parents learn more about K2, so they can add it to the mix when talking with their teenagers about substance abuse.”

IDPH, which served as the lead agency on the project, appreciates the work of all partners who graciously volunteered their time in the production of the campaign. They are:

Iowa Broadcasters Association  
Iowa Cable and Telecommunications Association  
Iowa Governor’s Office of Drug Control Policy  
Iowa Newspaper Association  
KCWI-TV and its general manager Ted Stephens  
KTIV-TV  
Partnership for a Drug-Free Iowa  
Rozga Family of Indianola  
Steve Van Oort of E-Voice Productions  
ZLR-Ignition

All ads are available at [www.iowa.gov/odcp/drug\\_information/spice.html](http://www.iowa.gov/odcp/drug_information/spice.html).

\* Dale Woolery is a public information officer in the Iowa Governor’s Office of Drug Control Policy

### “Within an hour of smoking K2 our son David was dead.”

- Rozga family, Indianola



A week after his high school graduation, David Rozga smoked a substance called K2, also known as Spice. Sold as incense, K2 can cause panic attacks and seizures. It’s so dangerous, it only takes one time to take your child’s life. Parents, get the facts by calling 866-242-4111. Or visit our website at [DrugfreeInfo.org](http://DrugfreeInfo.org). Talk to your kids. They need to hear it from you.



## IDPH works with Fusion Center to protect Iowans

By Roxann M. Ryan\*

The Iowa Division of Intelligence and Fusion Center is one of 72 officially designated fusion centers around the nation. Each state has at least one fusion center, and states with major metropolitan areas (New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, etc.) have multiple fusion centers.

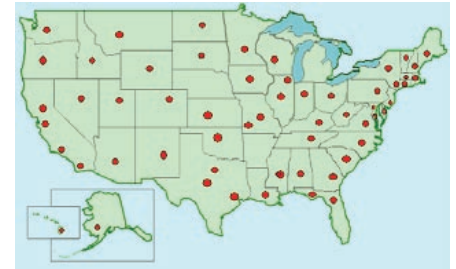
The goal of each designated fusion center is to connect information provided by federal, state and local agencies that can help to prevent, detect and deter threats to the United States. Each fusion center is expected to be able to process federally classified information, and to assist in the coordination of resources and information that can “connect the dots” before an attack.

The Iowa Department of Public Health has partnered with the Division of Intelligence and Fusion Center in several ways. IDPH plays a significant role on the Fusion Advisory Committee, which provides guidance to the state Fusion Center, as well as to regional offices established by the Law Enforcement Intelligence Network and other agencies that participate in the Fusion process. A formal memorandum of agreement between IDPH and the Iowa Department of Public Safety sets out a protocol for addressing joint law enforcement/public health investigations. Analysts at the Fusion Center often confer with epidemiologists and others at IDPH to assist in sharing information with law enforcement, first responder and emergency management personnel. The information-sharing process has included a special “Fusion School” that included training about information sharing principles and legal issues, and concluded with a tabletop exercise about a multi-disciplinary response to potential terrorist threats.

The partnership with IDPH is only one part of the work of the state’s Fusion Center. In Iowa, the Division of Intelligence and Fusion Center serves law enforcement and homeland security agencies across the state, and coordinates with many public sector and private sector agencies and individuals, and has developed strong working relationships with law enforcement agencies at the federal, state, and local levels, and with fusion centers across the country.

Much of the work of the Iowa Division of Intelligence and Fusion Center addresses strictly law enforcement issues, but the Fusion Center also addresses terrorism, critical-infrastructure and other homeland security issues. Iowa’s Safeguard Iowa Partnership (SIP), a statewide private sector group modeled on the national Business Executives for National Security (BENS), helps to connect private sector partners to government agencies with shared interests in infrastructure and protection of critical assets.

Within the Division of Intelligence and Fusion Center are both sworn personnel (special agents and troopers) and non-sworn personnel (analysts). In addition, FBI and US Department of Homeland Security have co-located analysts/agents, and civilians from the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division also are co-located within the state fusion center. The Division of Intelligence has developed both formal and informal associations with several federal law enforcement agencies, including the United States Marshals Service; Transportation Security Administration; United States Secret Service; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; Immigrations and Customs Enforcement; and United States Postal Inspection Service.



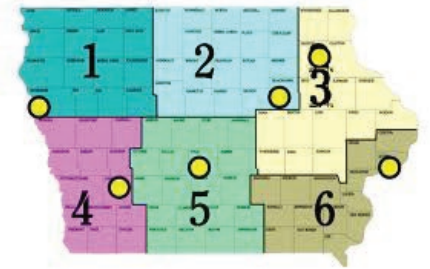
*There are 72 officially designated fusion centers throughout the U.S.*

Information from many sources can be processed and analyzed on-site, including law enforcement-sensitive information and secret level federally classified information. The Division of Intelligence and Fusion Center also partners with other agencies to facilitate information sharing more effectively, and to identify potential threats that Iowans may face.

The Division of Intelligence and Fusion Center works closely with local law enforcement agencies directly and via the Regional Fusion Offices that are part of the Law Enforcement Intelligence Network (LEIN). The Iowa LEIN program pioneered multi-jurisdictional information sharing when it began in 1984, and has been replicated in many other states. For decades, the LEIN program has facilitated high quality, secure information sharing among state and local agencies. The Regional Fusion Offices also serve as a conduit for information from local agencies to the state Fusion Center, so that all levels of government can be better informed. In recent years, other state fusion centers have adopted Terrorism Liaison Officer Programs, using Iowa's LEIN program as a model.

The mission of the Division of Intelligence and Fusion Center is to "lead and coordinate intelligence and homeland security efforts that protect Iowa, while upholding the Constitution." In that effort, Fusion Center personnel monitor possible criminal or terrorist threats, and also work with law enforcement and non-law-enforcement agencies at all levels of government, as well as the private sector partners, in order to keep Iowans safe.

\* Roxann M. Ryan is a Senior Criminal Intelligence Analyst in the Iowa Division of Intelligence and Fusion Center.



Iowa has 6 Regional Fusion Offices around the state.

## HIV awareness advocates hold events in DSM

Darren Whitfield

June 27 was the 15th annual [National HIV Testing Day](#). To mark the observance the HIV Awareness Coalition collaborated with faith communities across the Des Moines Metro area to conduct education and awareness activities regarding the impact of HIV on communities of color.

With members from the [Polk County Health Department](#), the [AIDS Project of Central Iowa](#), [Planned Parenthood of the Heartland](#), and [Family Planning Council of Iowa](#), the Coalition held presentations at churches in heavily populated African American communities. The presentations discussed the etymology of HIV/AIDS, facts about transmission of the disease, and prevention methods. Congregation members were encouraged to schedule HIV tests at their local testing location and know their individual HIV statuses.

According to [data](#) collected by the Iowa Department of Public Health, African Americans, Hispanics, and foreign-born blacks continue to be over-represented among persons with HIV diagnoses in Iowa. In fact in 2009, Non-Hispanic black persons were 7.6 times more likely to be diagnosed with HIV in 2009 than were non-Hispanic white persons in Iowa. Hispanic persons were 1.7 more times likely to be infected with HIV than non-Hispanic white persons.

Nationally, someone in the United States is infected with HIV/AIDS every nine and a half minutes. While there is no cure for HIV, the first step in preventing HIV from spreading is knowing one's own HIV status.



Created by the National Association of People Living with AIDS, National HIV Testing Day promotes national and local mobilization efforts around individuals being tested for HIV/AIDS. Each year, communities across the nation host events and hold awareness campaigns geared at motivating individuals to know their HIV status by being tested for the disease.

The HIV Awareness Coalition meets on a monthly basis to plan activities around major HIV-related awareness days including National Black HIV Awareness Day, National Latino HIV Awareness Day, Women and Girls HIV Awareness Day, National HIV Testing Day, World AIDS Day, and other events throughout the year to promote education, awareness and testing for HIV.

\* Darren Whitfield is a prevention service supervisor with the AIDS Project of Central Iowa.

## Business community helps respond to flooding

Bret Voorhees\*

When the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) expanded operations in August in response to severe weather, a stronger presence from the business community had a seat at the table. When activated, SEOC acts as a central point to support local responders, prioritize safety missions, and coordinate resources for those missions. This time, trained partners from the [Safeguard Iowa Partnership \(SIP\)](#) played a more active role at SEOC.

“The Safeguard Iowa Partnership was developed to ensure close coordination between public and private sector partners before, during and after emergencies,” explained Jami Haberl, executive director of the Partnership. “Having a seat at SEOC is one way we can accomplish that goal, while also sharing accurate information with our partners,” she added.

SIP aided the severe weather response by helping provide water and hand sanitizers from the Ankeny Wal-Mart store to the Ames Mary Greeley Medical Center. The Partnership also helped in the donation and delivery of bottled water from Crystal Clear and Casey’s General Stores to Ames strategic distribution points. In addition, SIP helped provide a water pump from Des Moines Water Works to the Oskaloosa hospital.

“We’ve been a member of the Partnership since it was created,” said David Miller, administrator of the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division. “We clearly recognize the need to ensure public and private partners work together and we welcome them to SEOC.”

The Safeguard Iowa Partnership was formed in 2007. It is a nonprofit organization with a mission of strengthening the capacity of Iowa to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters through public-private collaboration. For more information, visit [www.safeguardiowa.org](http://www.safeguardiowa.org).

\* Bret Voorhees is a volunteer with the Safeguard Iowa Partnership.



**SAFEGUARD**  
IOWA  
PARTNERSHIP™

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual  
Safeguard Iowa Partnership Meeting  
November 3, 2010  
5:15 – 7:00 p.m.  
Sheraton West Des Moines Hotel  
1800 50<sup>th</sup> Street, West Des Moines, Iowa

The Safeguard Iowa Partnership Annual Meeting is being held immediately following the Governor’s Homeland Security Conference. There is no cost to attend the Safeguard Iowa Annual Meeting, and you may attend the meeting even if you do not attend the conference.



## Agencies partner for pregnant women's oral health

By Shaela Meister\*

Car seats. Baby gates. Childproof locks. For expectant mothers, many preparations must be made before the new baby arrives to ensure their safety and good health. However, one of the most important preparations—regular dental visits for the pregnant mother—is often overlooked. Pregnant women are at an increased risk for periodontal disease due to hormonal changes during pregnancy, which has been associated with maternal diabetes and preterm births. Although dental care treatments are safe to receive during pregnancy, many women still do not seek care.

In response to the low number of pregnant women on Medicaid who receive dental care in Iowa, the [Iowa Medicaid Enterprise](#) has partnered with the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) [Oral Health Bureau](#) to reinstate coverage for adult periodontal and endodontic services in Iowa. Since 2008, Medicaid provides reimbursement to providers for adult dental services, and pregnant women can receive preventive dental education and care coordination through the 28 Title V Maternal Health Centers throughout the state.

The impact from the reinstatement of Medicaid coverage and increased preventive dental education has been significant. The number of pregnant Medicaid recipients who received root scaling increased from 10 in 2005 to 111 in 2009. In turn, the number of pregnant Medicaid recipients who received a full debridement increased from 12 in 2005 to 123 in 2009. The proportion of Medicaid recipients who received preventive dental care during pregnancy increased from 9.4 percent in 2005 to 21.2 percent in 2008.

Dental care access for pregnant women has been identified as a top priority in the Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant needs assessment, and further work to increase the awareness of dental care during pregnancy will be emphasized. For more information on oral health care for pregnant women, please contact the IDPH Oral Health Bureau at 1-866-528-4020.

IDPH acknowledges the Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Program, Applied Sciences Branch, Division of Reproductive Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Public Health Promotion, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for analytic support and preparation of this information.

\* Shaela Meister is a program planner in the IDPH Office of Oral Health.



## New system rates snack choices

By Carol Voss\*

Worksite wellness is a hot topic. More employers are providing incentives for healthy living by creating team-based physical activity challenges. Others are introducing simple solutions such as encouraging employees to take the stairs instead of the elevator. Some offices are even allowing staff to raise their desks to create standing workstations or use core-strengthening balls as chairs.

Another aspect of healthy workplace is the nutrition environment. Employers have started filling snack bowls with fruits and vegetables and adding calorie information to cafeteria menus. But what about vending machines? Should employers help ensure self service environments are stocked with healthy options?

Absolutely!

Using funds from a [Wellmark Foundation](#) grant, the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and [Iowa State University Extension](#) have recently developed a tool for evaluating food and beverage choices in vending machines. The new Nutrition Environment Measures Survey-Vending (NEMS-V) tool allows employers to clearly identify healthy food and beverage choices in the machines on their premises. Food and beverage standards for NEMS-V are based on recommendations from the [Institute of Medicine](#) and Iowa's [Healthy Kids Act](#).

Here's how it works. Let's say you're the worksite wellness coordinator in your office. Visit [www.nems-v.com](http://www.nems-v.com) and click on the NEMS-V button to download the materials needed for the assessment. This includes the Food and Beverage Recording Sheet, which is a simple form for writing down the type, brand, and size of the items available in each vending machine at your worksite.

Next, use the Healthy Choices Calculator to enter the nutrition information for each product in the vending machine. (By the way, this online tool works for all kinds of foods and beverages, not just those you'll find in vending machines.) After entering in the required information, the calculator will rate that food or beverage as "green" (go for it!) "yellow" (take caution...) or "red" (get ready to stop.)

Finally, the Worksite Vending Report Card section of the website will provide the you with a certificate to post on the outside of the vending machine based on the number of healthy items available in that machine. The recognition levels include Bronze (30 percent of choices are yellow or green); Silver (40 percent are yellow or green); Gold (50 are yellow or green and no red foods are advertised). This section of the NEMS-V website also provides organizations with guidance on how to increase the number of healthy choices in the vending machines they're responsible for.

Organizations with multiple vending machines on their premises may find it helpful to take a team-based approach. If you have a worksite wellness committee, for example, volunteers could work in teams. Some could evaluate snack machines while others would just concentrate on beverages. For more tips and information about the NEMS-V tool, call 515-242-5566 or visit [www.nems-v.com](http://www.nems-v.com).

\* Carol Voss is the nutrition coordinator for the lowans Fit for Life program at the Iowa Department of Public Health.



A sample NEMS-V vending machine certificate.

## CDC launches health communication resource

In August, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) launched a new website called [The Gateway to Health Communication and Social Marketing Practice](#). The site has a wealth of information from CDC and other public and private resources that can help public health partners build social marketing or health communication campaigns and programs. Whether you are looking for tips to help analyze and segment an audience, choose appropriate channels and tools, or evaluate the success of your messages or campaigns, the Gateway can help you find what you need to achieve your program or campaign goals.

Information on the Gateway is organized into six categories: Audience, Campaigns, Research/Evaluation, Channels, Tools & Templates, and Risk Communication. Under a separate section called Health Communication and Social Marketing Essentials, you can find step-by-step advice on developing a health communication or social marketing campaign. For example, the Health Communication Basics resource provides information geared toward professionals new to the field, while CDCynergy Lite is intended for those with more experience in social marketing.

One of the major goals for the Gateway is to provide a place for public health partners to collaborate with other professionals in the field. To help facilitate this, there are two interactive sections. First is the Gateway Blog, through which CDC will address a new social marketing or health communication question every month, and where professionals can engage in discussions on a wide range of topics. There is also a Success Stories section, where you can share what has worked well for you in the past, and learn from others' experiences in the field.

Check out the new website at [www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication](http://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication). Questions? Please contact Curt Shannon at [cbq9@cdc.gov](mailto:cbq9@cdc.gov), or at 404-498-6696.

## Iowa youth invited to fight childhood obesity

By Nancy Lind\*

Children and youth across Iowa have the opportunity to become "Health Heroes" by learning about childhood obesity, designing programs to address it and implementing the programs in their communities.

[UnitedHealth HEROES](#) is a service-learning, health literacy initiative designed to encourage young people, working with educators and youth leaders, to create and implement local hands-on programs to fight childhood obesity. As childhood obesity rates are increasing, [UnitedHealth Group](#) is taking the fight to Iowa and offering UnitedHealth HEROES grants to schools and youth-focused, community center-based programs.

Grants of up to \$1,000 will be awarded to programs that demonstrate a clear understanding of the health risks associated with childhood obesity; propose creative solutions to fighting obesity in their schools and communities; and can be easily implemented, scaled and measured. In addition, each grant also engages



*Children participate in a UnitedHealth HEROES program designed by educators and youth leaders to fight childhood obesity. (Photo courtesy of UnitedHealthcare.)*

participating youth in service-learning, an effective teaching and learning strategy that supports student academic achievement, and helps students develop their workplace readiness skills.

UnitedHealth Group is partnering with [Youth Service America](http://www.ysa.org) (YSA) to launch the third year of the UnitedHealth HEROES program. To date, 361 grants have been awarded to schools and community organizations across the country. A list of previous grant winners is available at [www.ysa.org](http://www.ysa.org).

UnitedHealth HEROES grant recipients will have the opportunity to showcase their projects on YSA's 22nd Annual Global Youth Service Day (GYSD), April 15-17, 2011. GYSD provides an opportunity for students to include their projects in a larger, global youth service movement that seeks to improve communities in all 50 states and more than 100 countries.

For an application, visit [www.YSA.org/HEROES](http://www.YSA.org/HEROES). The website also contains more information about the program as well a step-by-step manual that helps youth, parents, teachers and other volunteers deploy YSA service-learning models to fight childhood obesity in their communities. Applications must be submitted on-line before midnight, Oct. 22, 2010. Grant recipients will be notified in December and January.

\* Nancy Lind is the chief operating officer at UnitedHealth Group.



**SUPER-POWER  
SUMMIT**   
**YOUTH WELLNESS INITIATIVE**

Back by popular demand, **FOUR** regional **Super Power Summits** will be held this fall to unleash the super powers of middle school students across Iowa! These events will help youth discover the **SUPER-POWERS** inside them by promoting nutritious eating and physical activity. They bring together middle school students and adult advisors for a day full of fun activities and networking opportunities.

**REGISTER NOW!**

Register for one of the **Super Power Summits** listed below, by visiting [www.actionforhealthykids.org/iowa](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/iowa).

<b>Tuesday, October 5<sup>th</sup>:</b>	Boulders Conference Center, Denison
<b>Friday, October 15<sup>th</sup>:</b>	University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls
<b>Tuesday, October 19<sup>th</sup>:</b>	Bridgeview Center, Ottumwa
<b>Tuesday, October 26<sup>th</sup>:</b>	Courtyard by Marriott, Ankeny

Deadline to register for Denison and Cedar Falls Summits: 9/10/2010  
Deadline to register for Ottumwa and Ankeny Summits: 9/24/2010

**For more information, contact:**  
Patti Delger, Team Nutrition Director at [pdelger@iowa.gov](mailto:pdelger@iowa.gov)  
Melissa Young, Midwest Dairy Council Director at [myoung@midwestdairy.com](mailto:myoung@midwestdairy.com)  
Kala Shipley, Iowa Department of Public Health at [kshipley@idph.state.ia.us](mailto:kshipley@idph.state.ia.us)

SAVE THE DATE

## Building a Healthier Workforce and a Healthy Iowa

*For people committed to employee and community health*



**Tuesday, November 30, 2010**

**9:00 – 4:00 pm**

**Des Moines Marriott Downtown  
700 Grand Ave., Des Moines, IA**

---

**Register online at [www.medicine.uiowa.edu/cme](http://www.medicine.uiowa.edu/cme)  
and click on Upcoming Conferences**

Sponsored by The University of Iowa College of Public Health  
Healthier Workforce Center for Excellence, State Public Policy  
Group, Inc. and David P. Lind and Associates

### **Iowa Department of Public Health**

Lucas State Office Building  
321 E. 12th Street  
Des Moines, IA 50319-0075  
Phone: 515-281-7689  
[www.idph.state.ia.us](http://www.idph.state.ia.us)

Questions or comments? Contact  
[focus.editor@idph.state.ia.us](mailto:focus.editor@idph.state.ia.us).

“To subscribe to Iowa Health Focus, please send a blank e-mail to [join-iahealthfocus@lists.ia.gov](mailto:join-iahealthfocus@lists.ia.gov).”