

Delving into Diversity

Continuum Holds Month-Long Calendar of Events to Heighten Awareness

Lectures, training sessions, cultural fairs and more. Such were the highlights of Continuum Health Partners' first Diversity Awareness Month celebration, held during October 2009. The systemwide observance was jam-packed with events, scheduled throughout the month at different Continuum hospitals and sites. All the offerings focused on a culture of inclusion and respect, and some welcomed prominent diversity experts, including Dr. Harry Gibbs from MD Anderson Cancer Center in Texas and Philip Berry of Philip Berry Associates.

"There was a lot of interesting and engaging conversation, and people really seemed to enjoy themselves," remarks **Amy Chiang**, Continuum's Diversity Program Manager/Projects Coordinator and Consultant. "I think that staff have felt the *Destination Diversity* 'presence' much more since then."

"The various events provided an opportunity to celebrate the true diversity of our workforce," adds **Pamela Abner**, Continuum's Chief Cultural Diversity Officer. "It also was a chance to educate ourselves as to how we can use our diversity as a positive force of change to better meet our patients' needs and advance our staff's growth and development."

"We look forward to working more on inclusion and respect throughout the organization and continuing the diversity dialogue through learning events and educational forums. And we thank everyone who helped make all of the Cultural Diversity Awareness Month events possible."

In this special edition of the *Destination Diversity* newsletter, we take a look back in pictures of the many moments that made the month so memorable and worthwhile.

The Site Diversity Council at Long Island College Hospital of Brooklyn hosted a cultural fair that featured booths and displays representing a variety of countries and cultures. 1 Site Diversity Council Co-chair Herb Perry, RN, mans the LGBT table as Doris Palazzo, ER Administration, looks on. 2 From left: Cassandra McKay and Sandra Ozaeta, Patient Care Services; Darianne Elliott, MD, Emergency Department; and Doris Palazzo, ER Administration, display the Panamanian flag.

3 Dr. Harry Gibbs, a renowned diversity advocate, was the keynote speaker at a luncheon about diversity in health care and shared strategies used by his institution, MD Anderson Cancer Center. Many senior leaders attended the event.





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1 A better understanding of religious differences resulted from the panel discussion "Religion and the Impact of Diverse Thoughts and Practices in the Workplace." Participants included, from left: Imam Yusuf Hasan, BCC, board certified Muslim chaplain; Rev. Florine Thompson, LMSW, MDIV, Pastoral Care and Education, SLR; Dr. Marsha J. Tyson Darling, African American & Ethnic Studies Program, Adelphi University; Donna Walker-Kuhne, Soka Gakki International-USA; and Rabbi Sheldon D. Goldsmith, Pastoral Care and Education, BIMC.

Cultural Expression and Exhibits Day, sponsored by the 555 West 57th St. Site Diversity Council, offered a diversity-themed book swap, a cultural art exhibit, and dance and music. Employees dressed in native garb and decorated their cubicles to express their ethnicity. 2 Lorraine Figueroa, right, Real Estate Services, represents African culture and celebrates the day with, from left, Professional Finance Services' Shamdai Naraine and Tippy Chutakate.

3 Fredalyn Vargas, Real Estate Services, "expresses" Thailand's culture in her work station.

4 Keynote speaker Philip Berry, right, of Philip Berry Associates, poses with Marvin Russell, Continuum's Senior Vice President for Human Resources. Mr. Berry enlightened the audience on increasing cultural intelligence and enhancing cross-cultural diversity, and provided tips on improving communication and listening skills.

5 Josy Gallagher, far right, of the FutureWork Institute, addresses the crowd at a training session held at Beth Israel-Kings Highway Division. 6 More than 50 attendees engaged in a dialogue about understanding cultural differences in the health care environment.



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Hispanic cultures and countries were the focus of Roosevelt Hospital's cultural fair. **1** Professional dancers perform a few salsa moves for attendees. **2** Roosevelt Hospital Associates peruse the literature and posters on a display table.

Members of Professional Billing and the Methadone Maintenance Treatment Program at Water Street participated in a special training session on recognizing and respecting cultural differences.

3 Professional Billing's Martin Cahill and Beatriz Candelario, front, and Brian Son and MMTP's Marcelle LeDoux, back, discuss diversity in the workplace. **4** From left: MMTP's Miriam Headley and Professional Billing's Aurette Warner, Chantel Mulligan, Jean Hamilton and Shabina Mohammed collaborate on a quiz that required them to think through different cultural scenarios.

At its Diversity Awareness Month reception, the Beth Israel-Petrie Division Site Diversity Council welcomed nearly 100 people. Clinicians, administrators and all levels of staff mingled at the Bernstein Pavilion.

5 Celebrating with a toast are, from left, Annie Nussbaum and Lisa Sanchez, The AIDS Center; Svetlana Matayev, MD, Department of Medicine Hospitalist Program; Dae Yoo, Tea Gallery; Stacy A. Williams, hospitalist; and Winnie Wong, Tea Gallery. (The Tea Gallery provided samples of tea and helped support the Asian Services Center's presence at the event.)

6 Mentor Fran Silverman, LCSW, Social Work and Home Care Services, Beth Israel, and her protégé John R. Lopez, MMTP, are all smiles at the Mentoring Program's "graduation ceremony." The occasion marked the end of the first round of the program, which will continue in 2010, and afforded mentors the opportunity to publicly applaud their protégés' contributions to the organization.

As part of its community outreach effort, Continuum has partnered with the All-Stars Project, Inc. (ASP) to give high-school students a bird's-eye view of the health care environment. ASP is a nonprofit organization "dedicated to promoting human development through the use of an innovative performance-based model." ❶ Donna Mendes, MD, left, Vascular Surgery, SLR, explains to ASP visitors how operating room tools are used. ❷ Representing SLR's HIV Center for Comprehensive Care, Theresa Mack, MD, second from left, leads a roundtable discussion about HIV/AIDS at an ASP facility.



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