



# Positive Press

The Official Newsletter of the Southern Colorado Health Network

## July 2023

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### 2023 CHN FESTIVAL FOR LIFE: AIDS WALK & RUN COLORADO IS AUGUST 26

This annual Colorado Health Network (CHN) fundraising event is scheduled for Saturday, August 26, in Denver's Cheesman Park. The festival features a brunch garden, a volleyball tournament, a 5K run/walk, 30+ vendors, AIDS Quilt panels, live entertainment, and more. The volleyball tourney will be managed by the Colorado Gay Volleyball Association (visit [www.cgva.org](http://www.cgva.org) for more info).

If you wish to establish your own fundraising page/campaign, information on how to do so can be found at [www.coloradohealthnetwork.org/events/aids-walk-run-colorado](http://www.coloradohealthnetwork.org/events/aids-walk-run-colorado).

When you raise \$100 or more, you will receive the official commemorative AIDS Walk Colorado t-shirt to wear at the event and afterwards, letting everybody you see know that you made a difference in the lives of people living with, impacted by, and at risk of HIV in our community.



### ANNUAL BAR WARS FUNDRAISER FOR CHN WILL BE JULY 22ND

Bar Wars is a high-energy mixology contest where Denver's top LGBTQ+ bars/bartenders compete over three rounds to see who will emerge victorious for their style, flair, and flavor while raising money for CHN. Each round, patrons can taste beverages from each bar and vote for their favorites with cash or Venmo donations at each bar station.

In addition to being a whole lot of fun, Bar Wars is an important source of funding for Coloradans impacted by HIV. Funds raised through Bar Wars will benefit vital HIV support programs such as healthcare, nutrition, housing, and more.



TRADE Bar, located at 475 Santa Fe Drive in Denver, is the host bar and the event runs from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Entertainment includes live music, local drag queens, and go-go dancers. Registration is open now at [www.coloradohealthnetwork.org/events/bar-wars](http://www.coloradohealthnetwork.org/events/bar-wars).

## **PUEBLO PREVENTION/ACCESS POINT PUEBLO**

Pueblo Prevention has begun providing walk-in HIV/Hepatitis C/Syphilis/Chlamydia/Gonorrhea testing on site.

Our syringe access program had more than 1200 visits in June. The prevention team received a limited amount of test strips for Xylazine, a newer concerning drug cut that is causing a lot of harm. This drug is a veterinary sedative that can cause overdose that will not be reversed with naloxone and has been shown to be difficult to treat. We are holding conversations with participants about Xylazine to promote awareness and education.

Coordinators presented on our services at the Consumer Advisory Council's (CAC) lunch-&-learn, STI Prevention 101 to the Pueblo cohort of the Youth #unfiltered Sexpert School, and hosted a table with Sexperts at Rawlings Library. Staff are also collaboratively organizing a large-scale resource fair in Bessemer Park, Pueblo, on August 9 with a goal of improving awareness of STI Prevention services in Pueblo.

Finally, Prevention staff continue to offer syringe Community Cleanups as well as organizing staff to do smaller cleanups from time to time. Prevention looks forward to the new CHAPP year, starting July 1, and the many future opportunities to consider and strategize for as more local funding through Opioid settlement funds continue to be established.

## **PUEBLO HEALTH HUB UPDATE**

Pueblo's Health Hub program has picked up speed in the last few months with over 30 referrals in June! Many folx are visiting our wound care clinic on Tuesday afternoons, facilitated by Southern Colorado Family Medicine (SCFM) residents. This wound care clinic has led to higher engagement from our clients over the past few months, with individuals now seeking care with SCFM for higher level medical needs. This past month, we started to see traction with individuals requesting support for substance use disorder treatment.

Health Hub staff completed a needs assessment with 25 program participants regarding healthcare utilization, barriers to care, and current health status. Transportation, finances, stable housing, provider stigma, and mental health are the major barriers to engaging in any type of medical care. We learned 4 out of the 25 individuals had been tested for HIV/HCV in the past year. 13 of the 25 have engaged in behavioral health support. 10 of the 25 have engaged in some level of medication-assisted treatment. Survey respondents also indicated they would be interested in accessing medication assisted treatment on-site at Access Point Pueblo. When we asked what medical services folx utilize when they have concerns, we learned emergency department utilization as primary medical services is over 50%.

Thanks to Opioid Settlement Funding, we will soon be launching mobile outreach services! The intent is to provide multi-agency outreach. The team has started to do outreach at some of the camps in Pueblo and are learning needs in different areas.

**(continued on page 4)**

## NEW ROLES AND DUTIES FOR SCHN CASE MANAGERS

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### **Teresa Martinez**

takes on new duties as SCHN Critical Events Case Manager. Teresa will continue to be a Medical Case Manager while assuming the additional role as Critical Events Case Manager. Teresa has been a very valuable member of the Client Services team at SCHN more than six years now. She has developed and maintained collaborative relationships with our community partners in Pueblo and had several years of experience working with CDPHE prior to coming to work for SCHN. We are thrilled to have Teresa take on Critical Events duties along with her regular case management responsibilities.

### **Jennifer Bailey**

shifts to a new role as SCHN Medical Case Manager-Healthy Aging. Jennifer has been a Medical Case Manager at SCHN for nearly four years where she used her expertise and personable nature to intentionally support older clients. She has been pivotal to expanding Healthy Aging Services at SCHN and advocating for aging clients in this region. On top of her case management experience, she has experience working with people living with disabilities which will add important insights and perspectives to this new role. Jennifer will be an important part of piloting CHN's new iCHANGE (Integrative Care for Healthy Aging and Navigation of Geriatric Effects) program. We are thrilled to have Jennifer join the CHN Healthy Aging team in this new collaborative role with Colorado Springs Client Services.

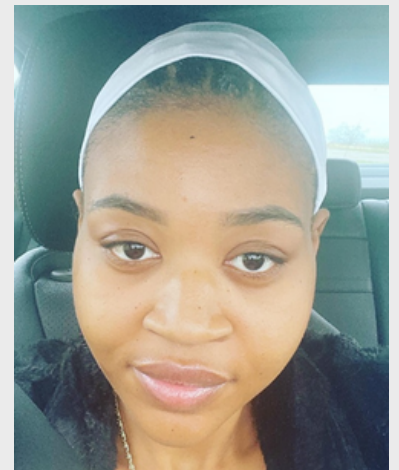


### **Manuel Melendez- new Bilingual Prevention Services Coordinator at Hey 719**

"I've been in Colorado for 16 years and moved from Kansas. I have worked in communications and medical fields. I recently moved to Manitou Springs in 2022 from Denver to expand in my medical career. I love the outdoors, learning of new ways to take care of plants, and spending time with my partner Anthony and our dog Rocky (west highlander known as westy)."

### **LORITHA SULEMAN—NEWEST SCHN CASE MANAGER IN COLORADO SPRINGS**

"Hello Beautiful People. My name is Loritha Suleman, the new Medical Case Manager here in Colorado Springs and I am beyond thrilled to be a part of the SCHN team. I have lived in The Springs for a little over 2 years. I love traveling, spending time with my family, and trying out new things. I am a Southern (born in Tennessee and raised in Alabama) gal at heart. I currently have my BSW (Bachelor's in Social Work) which I obtained from the University of South Alabama back in 2017. I am someone who would consider themselves friendly and open to meeting new people, so if you see me around please do not hesitate to speak. I look forward to seeing and speaking to everyone within the Colorado Health Network community."





<https://www.facebook.com/SouthernCHN>

## JULY 21ST IS ZERO HIV STIGMA AWARENESS DAY

Last year, July 21st was chosen as global Zero HIV Stigma Awareness Day to honor and commemorate the birthday of late South African AIDS activist Prudence Mabele, the first black South African woman to publicly share her HIV status.

A consortium of four community, medical, and urban health organizations created this new international awareness day in 2022 with the intent of calling attention to the persistent levels of stigma experienced by people living with and affected by HIV.

HIV stigma is a social justice issue and everyone has a part to play in eliminating HIV stigma—be it talking about it, challenging biases, testing for HIV, or advocacy—if societal attitudes to HIV are to be transformed. Find out more at [www.zerohivstigmaday.org](http://www.zerohivstigmaday.org).



#ZEROHIVSTIGMADAY

## PUEBLO HEALTH HUB UPDATE (continued from page 2)

Thanks to Opioid Settlement Funding, we will soon be launching mobile outreach services! The intent is to provide multi-agency outreach. The team has started to do outreach at some of the camps in Pueblo and are learning needs in different areas.

As an aside, 4 prevention staff attended Sonic Bloom, an annual music festival in Rye, CO. Staff passed out Narcan, Fentanyl Test Strips, provided education, and even participated in some trip-sitting. It was a great experience for all involved.

Finally, we have had some very positive conversations with community partners in the Southeastern Counties, particularly in Otero, Baca, and Prowers counties. Harm Reduction is still tenuous, but we have provided more education around harm reduction's role in the spectrum of recovery. There are strong advocates who want to officially partner to support community engagement, expansion harm reduction, and support health hub resources.

## HOWARD DENTAL CENTER

Howard Dental Center will be opening its latest location in our Pueblo CHN office soon!

Howard Dental Center (HDC) is an oral health care facility reaching a broad range of individuals including those living with HIV and other health conditions.

Limited available services include: Diagnostic & Preventative Services, Root Canals, Oral Cancer Screenings, Emergency Evaluations, Restorative Work, Specialist Referrals, Dental Cleanings, Exams, & X-rays, Extractions, Prosthetics (Dentures, Partials).

## Access Point Pueblo

Free, sterile supplies available for those who need them.

Tuesday & Thursday,  
10:00am-12:00pm  
&  
1:30pm-4:00pm



## Sign Up for Our E-Newsletter!

Are you interested in receiving the Positive Press through e-mail? If so, please contact your Case Manager to be added to our e-mail list! You'll get the newest Positive Press at the moment its published!



**SCHN CS:** 1301 S. 8th St. Colorado Springs, CO 80905  
**SCHN Pueblo:** 807 North Greenwood St., Suite 200, Pueblo, CO 81003  
[www.coloradohealthnetwork.org](http://www.coloradohealthnetwork.org)

**Phone:** 719.578.9092  
**Phone:** 719.621.1105