

## Healthy Aging Symposium Piloted in Lamar

The Betz Family Endowment, Southeastern Colorado Area Health Education Center (SECAHEC), the University of Colorado at Denver Health Science Center, Lamar Community College and other organizations teamed up to offer the first Healthy Aging Symposium in Lamar, Colorado.

The event kicked off Friday, June 18, 2010 with dinner at Lamar Community College. Keynote speaker Wade Buchanan of the Bell Policy Center triggered lively discussion with his presentation on upcoming Colorado legislation. Wade's grandfather is credited with founding Lamar Community College.

Saturday morning started with a healthy breakfast catered by Chez Duvall from Granada, Colorado. Iris Clark, Executive Director of SECAHEC, Lynn Betz-Seybold, and Tom Betz representatives of the Betz Family Endowment gave the morning welcome. The Betz family provided attendees with the philosophy of the Betz Family Endowment and family connections with the Lamar and surrounding communities. The Betz family owned and operated the daily newspaper for many years. Dr. Richard Krugman, Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs for the University of Colorado Denver, was not able to attend, but sent a warm welcome and a some fond memories of role in initiating the AHEC state system with Betz family members. Breakfast concluded with a keynote from Dr. Carl Bartecchi of Pueblo, Colorado. Dr. Bartecchi, internal medicine specialist, has been in practice for over forty years. He has also written a book on *Living Healthier and Longer—What Works, What Doesn't*, which he provided to all attendees.

Attendees could choose from several morning sessions.

The Medicaid session provided excellent information to locals with answers to such questions as who qualifies, how does an individual file, are there penalties, and how long does the process take. Julie Kinter from La Junta Social Services provided general and specific information to all attendees.

Jo Stinchcomb and Lynnzy McIntosh from the Consortium for Older Adult Wellness (COWA) provided information on exercise programs from a regular cardio workout schedule to an exercise program from a sitting position. They also gave addition tips on everyday activities that will help in a daily exercise plan. The team of two acted out a scenario on how to provide a support system to family and/or friends that are struggling with extracurricular activities and a schedule.

Lucinda Bryant captured the attention of her guests with an interactive session on writing one's story. She provided exercises and techniques that sparked discussion and prompted writers to start writing.

Emily Montoya from High Plains Community Health provided an outstanding and energetic presentation on nutrition. She captured her audience with the do's and don'ts of eating. What is healthy and what is just for pleasure? She concluded her session with handouts on how to read nutrition labels, counting calories and portion sizes.

During the lunch hour, Dr. Nancy McMahan filled the room with positive energy discussing the importance of finding the positive in all situation of life. She discussed obstacles that may come in ones way and how not to ask why but to look for the message and positive outcome of the hurdle.

After refueling with a healthy lunch and positive outlook the eager participants continued their final afternoon educational awareness sessions:

Dr. Nancy McMahan continued the discussion on obstacles and provided overviews of various conditions that included how to deal with stress; depression; alcoholism, addictions, and change. She concluded her session with a powerful handout that provided the attendees with 10 steps for resilience.

Sunny Linnebur provided a key message on the importance of talking with one's physician on prescribed medications and the effect of over the counter medications. She stressed the importance discussing with doctors the prolonged usage of both types of medicine.

At this time our event was coming to a close but would not be complete without a closing ceremony with drawings for door prizes and recognition to all our supporting partners who help sponsor the event, to our presenter who helped make this knowledge available to these rural communities, and to the SECAHEC staff who helped organize and facilitate the two day event.

Kristi Harshbarger, SECAHEC's Health Education and Outreach Coordinator, coordinated the event.



