

FREE CLINIC NEWS

A quarterly newsletter to help keep you informed!

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Ohio Breathes Easier Project

This year, through grants from the CVS Foundation and the Ohio Department of Health, O AFC is piloting an asthma self-management program with five clinics around the state. Clinics will be provided financial and educational resources to implement the program in their clinics with the intention of providing every patient who presents with asthma an Asthma Action Plan.

Through this program, O AFC will also develop a web-directory meant to link patients with asthma resources in their county. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that 1 in 9 Ohioans have asthma, or about 10.8% of the population (Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, 2014). In Ohio, the highest rates of asthma prevalence occur in the eastern Appalachian counties, as well as counties with large cities such as Franklin County or Lucas County.

The five pilot clinics include: Ohio University Heritage Community Clinic in Athens, CommunityCare Free Clinic in Toledo, Midlothian Free Clinic in Youngstown, Ashland Christian Health Center in Ashland, and Tuscarawas Clinic for the Working Uninsured in Dover.



2016/2017 VISTA Recap

June marks the last month of the service year for nine of our AmeriCorps VISTA Members, who began their service last spring. Our VISTA Members completing a year of service are: Julie Gartland (Chagrin Falls Park Community Center), Qisti Gitosuputro (The Breathing Association), Claire McMahon (CincySmiles), Emily Odle

(Ohio Association of Free Clinics), Michael Paquet (Earth Angel Farm), Andrea Rose (Reach Out of Montgomery County), Brandon Tran (Victory Ministries Center of Hope), Stella Vieweger (Vineyard Free Clinic), and John Walsh (OPEN M Free Clinic).

AmeriCorps VISTA is a National Service program specifically designed to fight poverty by building the capacity of community and civic organizations to provide more services to people in-need. VISTA Members commit to a year of full-time, volunteer service and work directly with staff and volunteers at their host site to develop new programming, leverage additional funding, recruit and train volunteers, and design and implement new systems to increase organizational efficiency.

During their year of service, our VISTA Members have leveraged over \$220,000 in cash and in-kind contributions. These resources include \$55,000 in grant funding obtained by Emily Odle to support an Asthma Action Plan program for decreasing unnecessary Emergency Room visits for patients with asthma. They also include over \$41,000 in sponsorships raised by Qisti Gitosuputro for The Breathing Association's annual Mother's Day Fundraiser. In addition to developing new funding, our VISTA Members have also supported clinics and other health organizations by recruiting 50 new volunteers and managing over 530 existing volunteers. Volunteers recruited and/or managed by our VISTA Members have served a total of over 5,000 hours during the service year.

Of course, many of our VISTA Members' accomplishments cannot be reduced to numbers, and these are only a few of the numerous success stories that all our VISTA Members have achieved during their year of service. Each of our VISTA Members has made enormous contributions to the cause of fighting poverty and increasing health access in Ohio communities – from Cleveland and Columbus, to Dayton and Cincinnati, and beyond.

All of us at the Ohio Association of Free Clinics greatly appreciate the commitment and sacrifices that our VISTA Members have made during their year of service. We wish them all the best as they continue to the next step of their career.

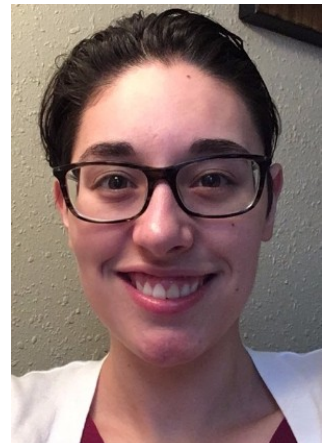
June Meeting Wrap Up

On June 5th, the O AFC hosted a leadership retreat at Mohican State Park. We brought together clinic leaders from across Ohio to focus on how to improve leadership through creating a better work/life balance and implementing your core values to focus your life's work. Balanced lives lead to better leaders! Special thanks to Christine Zusta for your leadership at the event and to everyone in attendance at the event!



Welcome to Beth Collier!

Beth is our new Director of Resource Development with the O AFC. She recently graduated from the Ohio State University where she majored in Social Work with a minor in Substance Abuse and Misuse. Beth was previously a semifinalist for the inaugural President's Prize Competition at Ohio State. Her proposed project was a health insurance literacy program serving low-income populations in Ohio with the intent to teach them about the Affordable Care Act, how to sign up for a plan, and how to use it effectively. Feel free to welcome Beth at bcollier@ohiofreeclinics.org.



Congratulations to Bekah!



After working with the O AFC for the past couple years, Bekah will be leaving to attend law school at The Ohio State University! Having started as an AmeriCorps VISTA, she then transitioned into a permanent staff member, as the Director of Engagement and Communications. Through this role, she has loved helping the O AFC grow and change! Feel free to congratulate Bekah at rtefft@ohiofreeclinics.org.

Federal & State Healthcare Changes

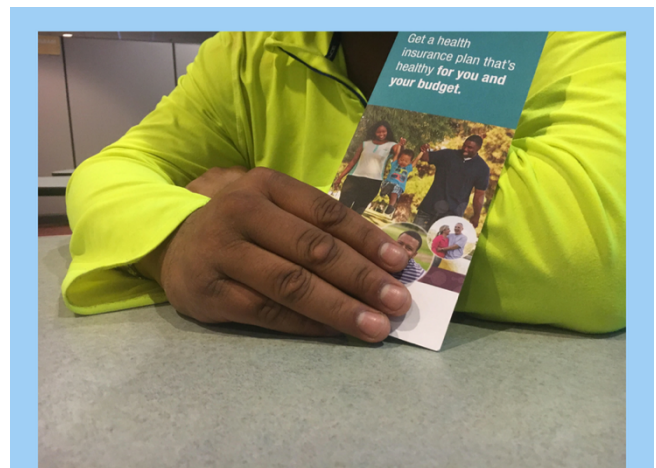
We know there are many changes happening both at the State and Federal levels in today's healthcare landscape. These changes are creating much uncertainty with our population and in our clinics! Right now, there is no official statement of what changes will occur, however, we can all begin to plan for these upcoming changes.

- **Expect that the need for your services are likely to increase:** Older Americans could face larger premiums and Medicaid recipients will likely lose coverage. Folks with pre-existing conditions will not be able to afford their new, higher premiums.
- **Prepare for the sickest and least stable patients:** Free and Charitable clinics are used to seeing folks in crisis - the sickest and the least stable in our society. But for the last several years, many of these people had insurance coverage and were able to see traditional sources of health care. This probably will not be the case moving forward.
- **Expect a need for increased resources:** Now is the time to begin developing new funding sources, recruiting new volunteers and working with your Board of Directors to plan for controlled growth.

We will be working hard to keep you updated as this legislation moves through the governmental levels. We are also looking for ways to help you prepare and plan for inevitable upcoming changes. Contact us for more information, questions or thoughts and ideas at deb@ohiofreeclinics.org

Clinic Voices – Brian's Story

I was referred to the clinic because I hadn't had insurance for a couple years and was unemployed when I had pain for six months and I discovered that I had a hole in my lower wisdom tooth. I signed up last year for health insurance. I couldn't afford it, I have kids that deserve that money, rent to pay.... Pay insurance or pay rent? Pay insurance or eat? It makes common sense to fund places like this. You know, I signed up last year and I couldn't afford it. What is messed up is they will have me pay and still not get premium things like dental or vision. So many are struggling in general paying for insurance just makes it worse. – Brian, Physicians CareConnection



"Pay insurance or pay rent?
Pay insurance or eat?
It makes common sense to fund places like this."
- Brian, Physicians CareConnection

Clinic Supplies from Faithful Servants Care Center

Working with Faithful Servants Care Center, our Board Member Dr. Sue Meyer, and her connection, Otto Orf, the OAFc was able to offer free supplies to clinics around the state! Thanks Dr. Meyer and Otto for connecting us to these supplies. Keep an eye out for future supply offerings!



Story Telling Project

OAFc needs your help! We are collecting stories from clinics across Ohio, just like the story you read on the previous page! We know one of the best advocates for free clinics are our patients and volunteers.

Over the next few months, Katie & Aaron, the OAFc VISTA members, are going to be collecting stories from clinics to compile into one larger story for a great representation of what you all are doing in Ohio!



"I struggled with feeling like I was taking a handout but the attention I receive has saved my life. I should have died, but I didn't thanks to the doctor."
- Joe

We need as much participation as possible! If you're interested in participating, please contact Katie Kisseberth at kkisseberth@ohiofreeclinics.org for more information! Also, check out our website www.ohiofreeclinics.org to see and hear stories already collected!

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Upcoming Calendar of Events

July

- 3 **Uninsured Care Funds Applications Due**
- 4 **Independence Day (OAFc Closed)**
- 28 **OAFc Board Meeting**

September

- 4 **Labor Day (OAFc Closed)**
- 15 **OAFc Annual Meeting**

October

- 1-3 **NAFCC Conference – Denver, Colorado**