

2014-2015 ANNUAL REPORT  
SOLUTIONS FOR A HEALTHY TOMORROW



DELTA  
HEALTH  
ALLIANCE





## DELTA HEALTH ALLIANCE

Solutions for a Healthy Tomorrow



Welcome to our 2014-2015 Annual Report. These past two years have been exciting for Delta Health Alliance and our partners as programs continue to grow and expand and new partners join us in our regional efforts to improve the health and education needs of residents of the Mississippi Delta. As chairman of our Board of Directors, it is my pleasure to share with you this report of our progress.

Since September of last year alone, Delta Health Alliance has received 11 grants totaling more than \$31 million. Most of these grants are multi-year and cover multiple counties in the Delta. We were selected for these grants from large, competitive pools of applicants due to the strength of our partnerships and ability to demonstrate outcomes from our ongoing initiatives and previous programs. A summary of these programs can be found on page two of this report.

With this new funding, Delta Health Alliance will completely renovate our clinic in Leland, upgrade and enlarge the network of physicians and clinics who use our Electronic Health Record systems, implement a new program in ten counties to prevent teen pregnancy, launch a new initiative in three counties to reduce the number of patients who are re-admitted to hospitals, increase the reach of our Imagination Library early reading program, create a new Early Head Start Child Care Partnership in Sunflower County, build new community gardens, and dramatically expand the number of at-risk families to whom our community health care workers can provide services.

Two themes tie together these grants and our work. First, improving health care has to be done on multiple fronts – educating children and adults, expanding access to quality care, and reaching families in clinic settings as well as in their homes and communities. Second, improving health care over the long term means building the capacity for communities and families to take responsibility for healthy lifestyles long after the funding from these grants have been spent.

The success of our work lies not only with the dedication of our staff, but also in the strength of our partners and collaborative efforts. It continues to be a tremendous privilege to work hand-in-hand with local organizations and individual leaders to serve the Mississippi Delta. It is my hope this report conveys to you the progress we are making and the significant opportunities that lie ahead. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Bill Kennedy,  
CHAIRMAN, DHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

# contents

About DHA	3
DHA Programs	4
Highlights from 2014-15	5
Indianola Promise Community	6
How IPC Works	8
IPC Programs	9
Home Visiting Initiative	17
Leland Medical Clinic	18
Electronic Health Records	20
Imagination Library	22
Health Care Initiatives	24
DHA Beacon	26
DHA Board / Staff	28
Mission Statement	Inside Back

# about DHA

Delta Health Alliance is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization that is changing health care and education in the Mississippi Delta by improving access to health services, promoting healthier lifestyles, and expanding educational opportunities.

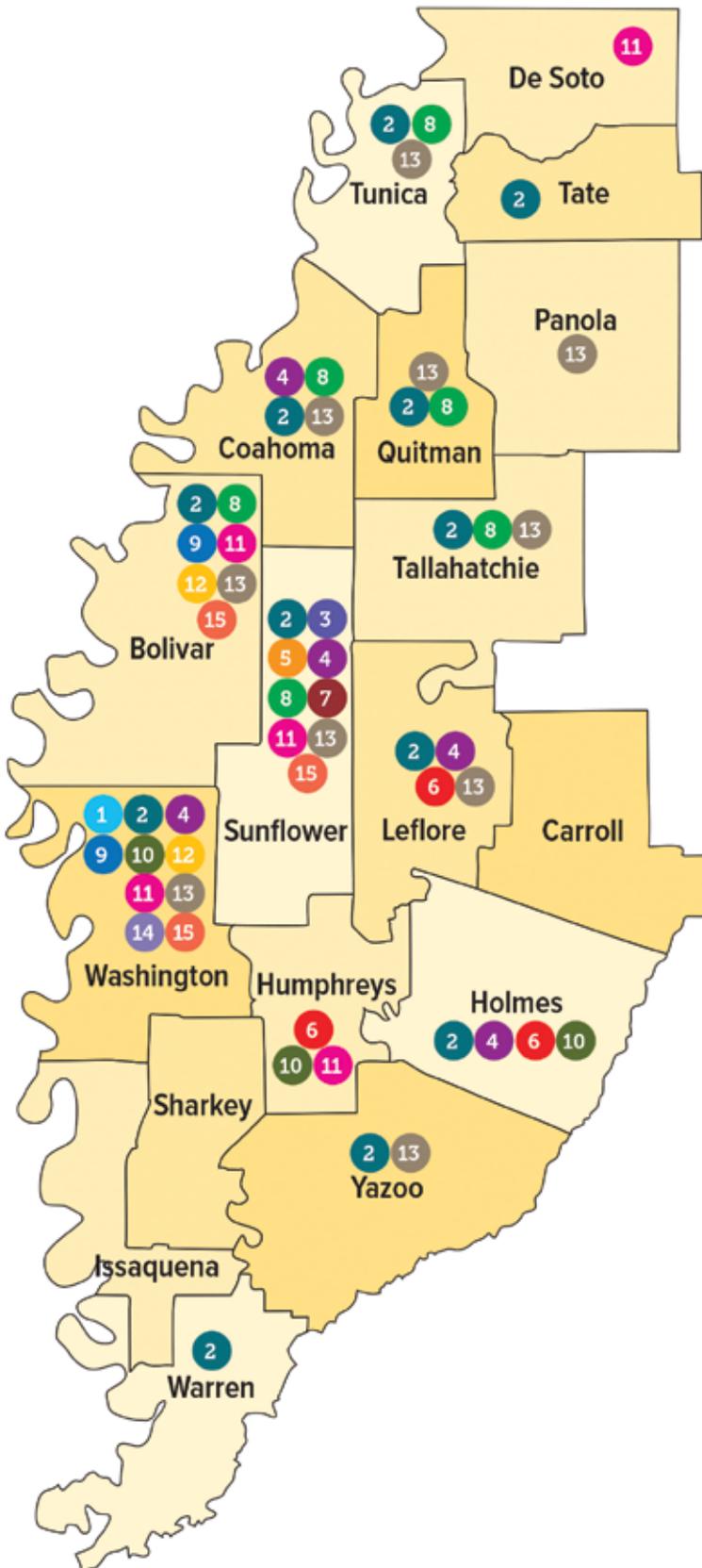
Delta Health Alliance has been a leader in supporting and operating community-based clinics that serve as a medical home for patients; implementing new technologies such as electronic health records, health information exchange networks, and tele-health diagnosis and treatment centers; managing innovative education programs in community settings; and creating robust home visitation programs that address neo-natal and early childhood education challenges.

Two principles guide our work in the Delta: using data to make decisions and building community partners to manage our programs. We seek to understand the fundamental causes of poor health and lack of education opportunity in our region through comprehensive analysis of relevant data and statistics. We fund programs that are built on the latest medical, public health, and education research. We regularly assess the performance of these programs on the basis of objective measures that are produced and recorded as part of these initiatives, and we make changes based on those outcomes. We do our work through community organizations, recognizing that long-lasting change occurs only when it originates in and is supported by the communities they serve.



*We compared assessment scores of all third graders with those who had received books through our Imagination Library program and found that children who received Imagination Library books were more than twice as likely to be kindergarten ready in reading and math than those who did not participate in the program.*

Our major funding partners have included the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Mississippi Department of Health, Mississippi Division of Medicaid, Mississippi Department of Human Services, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, United Healthcare Foundation, Monsanto Corporation, Save the Children, and Delta Regional Authority. Our headquarters in Stoneville, Mississippi often serves as a center for community-based collaborative programs and educational initiatives for partnering agencies and residents of the Delta.



- 1** Leland Medical Clinic - page 18
- 2** Electronic Health Services - page 20
- 3** U.S. Department of Education: Indianola Promise Community - page 6
- 4** Medicaid Health Demonstration Project - page 24
- 5** Sunflower Childcare Coalition Early Head Start - page 22
- 6** U.S. Department of Health & Human Services: Healthy Start Collaborative - page 17
- 7** Save the Children Partnership - page 17
- 8** Tobacco-Free Coalition - page 24
- 9** U.S. Department of Agriculture: Home Visiting Partnership - page 17
- 10** U.S. Department of Agriculture: Electronic Health Records Initiative - page 20
- 11** Imagination Library - page 22
- 12** Monsanto Education Grant - page 22
- 13** Delta Futures Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program - page 25
- 14** Delta Health Information Network - page 21
- 15** Delta Care Transitions - page 25

# Highlights FROM 2014 AND 2015



## INDIANOLA PROMISE COMMUNITY

- Five childcare centers working together and adopting the same evidence-based curriculum and assessment to foster early learning
- 480 K-12 students attended 2015 summer camps featuring reading development, math enrichment, and college readiness
- In two years, the readiness rate of kindergarten students has doubled
- There is no longer a gap between the average state score for third graders on the key standardized math test and the scores for Indianola third graders
- Indianola kindergarteners had the highest May 2015 literacy scores in the Delta

## LELAND MEDICAL CLINIC

- Treating more than 2,700 patients
- Fully certified as a Patient Centered Medical Home Model clinic
- \$1.2 million renovation underway
- Number of patients controlling their diabetes has increased from 3% to 39%

## ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS

- Serving 178,000 patients
- Connecting patients to 74 health care providers in 32 locations
- Generated \$6.2 million in additional funds for Delta providers
- Part of Mississippi's Health Information Network

## IMAGINATION LIBRARY

- Providing free books to more than 1,700 children
- Covering Bolivar, Sunflower, DeSoto & Washington Counties
- A participating child is twice as likely to be kindergarten ready in reading and two and a half times as likely to be kindergarten ready in math

## DELTA HOME VISITATION

- Parent educators are meeting with more than 700 individuals in five counties
- 91% of infants in participating families in Sunflower and Leflore Counties are born at full birth weight, compared to an average of 84% for all Delta counties.
- In less than a year among participating families, close to three-quarters of the children at ages two, six, and twelve months had been assessed with having no developmental concerns

## About the INDIANOLA Promise Community (IPC)

A community coming together to provide its children and their families with opportunities to succeed – that’s what the Indianola Promise Community is. Sponsored by Delta Health Alliance, IPC consists of nearly 30 programs and initiatives that work together to expand the health care and educational opportunities for Indianola children and families.

Created in 2009 and modeled on the successful Harlem Children’s Zone in New York City, the initiative received a huge boost in 2013 when DHA was awarded a five-year, \$30 million federal grant to dramatically expand IPC’s footprint in Indianola. The Indianola promise community grant is one of only two awarded to rural areas in the country.

IPC unites health care, education, government, community, and faith-based services to develop a “pipeline” of academic, family, and community resources, from prenatal care through high school graduation, creating a path for students to gain meaningful careers and earn financial independence.

We want to ensure Indianola children are ready for school, that students who need help get help quickly, and that young people stay in school through graduation and transition to post-secondary education. IPC offers a collective approach, with agencies and services complementing each other and working together in a coordinated fashion. Each program is rigorously assessed against objective criteria in order to ensure its success. Ultimately, these coordinated interventions can break the cycle of poverty.

When kindergarten students took the May 2015 STAR early literacy test, IPC students recorded the highest result in the Delta and scored 12 points above the state average.



IPC is governed by a local Steering Committee and makes use of a broad number of task forces and committees that bring together a number of different community organizations to collaborate on goals and objectives. Our major partners include Sunflower County Consolidated School District, Children's Defense Fund, Save the Children, AmeriCorps\*VISTA, B.B. King Museum, Teach for America, City of Indianola, Delta State University, Sunflower County Childcare Association, Sunflower County Ministerial Alliance, Mississippi Center for Justice, On Track CDC, and Mississippi Low Income Childcare Initiative.

*In two years, the readiness rate of kindergarten students has doubled from 25% to 52%*

At the core of IPC is a disciplined commitment to analyzing each and every program, using data generated by the programs and compared against previously agreed upon performance measures. We constantly monitor and evaluate the work of each program, making changes where needed based on the outcomes.

Over the last two years, childcare centers in Indianola have come together to ensure that all children are ready for kindergarten. IPC facilitated adoption by the centers of a standard, evidence-based curriculum and measurement tool to ensure a coordinated plan of early learning with the school district. Through home visiting, Imagination Library, and quality early care and education, IPC has doubled rates of kindergarten readiness. And these gains provide the foundation for continuing academic achievement. At the end of Kindergarten, Indianola students had the highest literacy scores in the delta. This past summer, IPC hosted the largest and most engaged collection of summer camps ever, supporting reading development, math enrichment, and college and career readiness. Mixing learning with fun works – 70% of summer camp participants lost no ground in reading over the summer – a nationwide problem for low-income kids.

*Since implementation of IPC, the gap between the average state scores for third graders on key standardized tests and the scores for Indianola third graders has been narrowed significantly.*



# HOW IPC Works IN THE DELTA



- Special classes geared toward helping students excel academically and develop individual pathways to college, including academic tutoring and ACT prep courses.
- Professional development initiatives for teachers in the classrooms.
- Books provided free on a monthly basis to children and their parents, for ages birth to age five.
- Summer enrichment camps to prevent “summer learning loss” and special summer preparatory programs for children entering kindergarten and Head Start.
- Special outreach initiatives, designed for different age groups, focused on reducing alcohol, tobacco, and drug abuse.
- In-home visitation programs by trained staff to help improve prenatal care, and the health and development of children while preparing them for kindergarten.
- Classes for children age 3-8 who have communication deficiencies in speech and vocabulary as they prepare for kindergarten and first grade.
- Outreach courses directed at teenagers to reduce pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.
- Programs that encourage parents to become more involved in the schools and homeowners to become more involved in their neighborhoods.
- Parenting and family support initiatives to prevent and treat behavioral and emotional problems in children and teenagers.

More than 30 programs and initiatives make up the Indianola Promise Community, ranging from in-school mentoring, community service programming, and summer camps. Each program is designed to provide Indianola area children with the opportunity to succeed in school, graduate, and attend college.

## FOCUS ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

**EXCEL BY 5** is a certification process for early childhood education that is organized to help communities support young children and their families so that all children will be ready to learn when they start school. The program establishes standards for parental training, community participation, child care standards, and health care standards. The certification process also identifies available resources and existing best practices. Indianola achieved Excel by 5 certification in 2015.

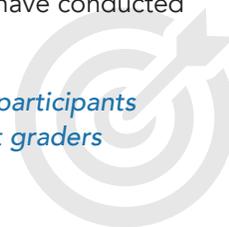
**STRENGTHENING CHILDCARE CENTERS** is a program in partnership with the Mississippi Low Income Childcare Initiative (MLICCI) and five of the childcare centers in Indianola in which IPC coordinates the implementation of common curricula and assessments among the centers. Both the academic curricula and assessments are aligned with what is used by the school system, Head Start, and the newly formed Pre-K program. This approach ensures that children are becoming better prepared to enter kindergarten.

**DELTA PARENTS AS TEACHERS (DELTA PAT)** is part of our Delta Home Visiting Initiative and provides parents of children zero to five years old with child development and parenting support through home visits, health, hearing and vision screenings, parent group meetings, and access to resource networks. Utilizing women recruited from the local community and trained as outreach workers, Delta PAT provides visits to pregnant women and families with young children in their home to promote healthy living. Leading by example, they listen to parents' concerns, educate them about nutrition, health and children's development, model positive parenting practices, and provide assistance linking to social services.

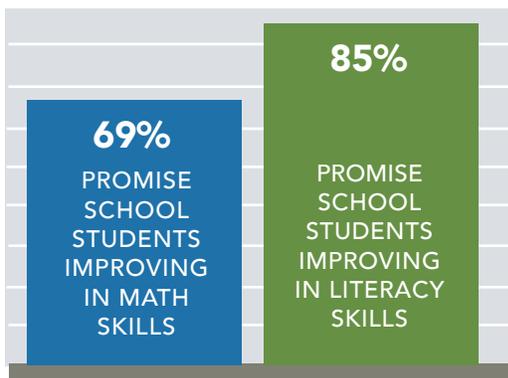
**SMALL WORLD** is an intensive summer session providing preparation for three-year-old children who will be entering Head Start in the fall. Participants are introduced to self-help skills and are assessed by providing a way for teachers to observe progress and accomplishments through ongoing assessment. The program has averaged 80 participants each summer.

**SUPPORTING PARENTS TO ASSURE READY KIDS (SPARK)** is an intervention program for children three years old to third grade that provides in-school sessions for students and home sessions for parents that addresses specific language and literacy difficulties in the development of children. The program focuses on communication issues like speech or vocabulary deficiencies. Kindergarten students are assessed three times a year and based on results from these assessments the children are provided with appropriate assistance and remediation to help them succeed in school. Over 180 children were part of the program in 2015, and since October 2014, SPARK advocates have conducted more than 860 home visits and 3,300 school visits.

*Over the course of the 2014-2015 school year, SPARK program participants in need of urgent intervention dropped from 41% to 0% for first graders and from 55% to 29% for second graders.*



**PROMISE SCHOOL** is a rigorous summer session transition program aimed at improving academic, social, and developmental skills for children who will be entering kindergarten in the fall. By employing and then offering supplemental training to Head Start teachers as the second teacher in the classroom for this summer program, the Promise School also improves the quality of instruction in those programs. Specifically, the program aims to improve upper and lower case letter recognition, improve awareness of print, phonological and phonemic awareness, develop appropriate receptive language and oral language for communication, improve self-concept and engagement in learning environments, and demonstrate control over emotions and develop positive relationships with adults and peers. *Promise School participants outperform non-participants in kindergarten and first grade assessments. Overall, 85% of Promise School participants demonstrated improvement in literacy skills and 69% demonstrated improvement on math skills.*



**ACADEMIC COACHES & TEACHER DEVELOPMENT** is a program developed in partnership with the Sunflower County Consolidated School District that provides educators with training and professional development. Teachers participate in job embedded professional development to effectively implement new state standard curricula as well receiving support to align and improve instruction with the present state standards and the ACT. Teachers are guided in the pacing and use of instructional materials that support state standards, state assessments, ACT, and Advanced Placement courses. Academic coaches assist teachers in the areas of lesson planning and instructional strategies, development and alignment of activities, instructional resources and assessments.

**CHILDREN ARE REACHING EXCELLENCE WITH SUPPORT (CARES)** Mentoring Program is based in the elementary schools and trains volunteer adults to provide social and emotional support through one-on-one interaction with children. The mentor becomes a friend, a confidant, and positive role model for the child. The goal is to enhance his or her self-esteem, to improve attendance and academics, and to provide intervention at an early age. For example, a child who has a strong interest in computers will be matched up with a mentor who also has a strong interest in computers. In general, the mentor is to be viewed as an adult friend and not as a teacher or as a second parent.

*The IPC CARES program was the recipient of the 2014 Governor's Partnership in Excellence award from the Mississippi Association of Partners in Education.*

CARES works because the mentor becomes another source of caring adult support for the child. More than 190 K-third grade students are served by this program. Over the course of the last school year, mentors conducted over 1,800 school visits. In addition to in-school visits, mentors and mentees also participate in trips and social events outside of school. This past year, CARES mentors and mentees participated in over 30 events and trips.

**IPC FELLOWS** is a literacy support team, in conjunction with Teach For America, that provides high quality, researched-based reading instruction and intervention to struggling learners at Indianola's two elementary schools. Fellows work with students by providing intensive instruction matched to their needs. These services and interventions are provided in small-group settings in addition to their instruction in the general classroom setting.

**POSITIVE PARENTING PRACTICES (TRIPLE P)** is an outreach program for parents. The initiative is designed to address and treat behavioral and emotional problems in children and teenagers. Triple P aims to prevent problems in the community before they arise and to create family environments that encourage children to realize their potential. More than half of Triple P's parenting strategies are geared toward developing positive relationships, attitudes and conduct between and among children and their parents. Based on evidence from clinical research,

the easy-to-understand and useful strategies call for the IPC case worker to meet in the home with the parents and children for up to 10 sessions. They observe interactions between parent and child, and provide a valuable assessment to help families implement strategies for improvement.

**LIFE SKILLS TRAINING** is a school-based initiative whose goal is to increase student knowledge about drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and self-management skills in order to help them adopt healthy attitudes and choices. The program targets the major social and psychological factors that promote the initiation of substance use and other risky behaviors. This comprehensive program provides adolescents and young teens with the confidence and skills necessary to successfully handle challenging situations, contributing to students' academic success.

**READING IMPROVEMENTS FOR SUCCESS IN EDUCATION (PROJECT RISE)** is an afterschool enrichment program that allows at-risk students and students with learning and reading difficulties to improve their reading skills by immersing them in daily spelling, vocabulary, grammar and creative writing activities. The goal is to build skills to help students become proficient on the Mississippi Curriculum Test and core subject exams.

**DESIGN SQUAD GLOBAL** connects students in Indianola with others around the US and abroad through a virtual club that empowers the participants to solve real-world problems and understand the impact of engineering and technology in a global context. The initiative is also designed to help foster an early interest in students who want to pursue careers in science and math.

**INDIANOLA YOUTH COUNCIL** is comprised of Indianola students and is designed to provide them with lessons in leadership skills, civic engagement, and career building skills. It is a peer-to-peer program to engage Indianola youth in fun and positive relationships. During the 2014-2015 school year, 25 participants completed pre-, mid-, and post-tests concerning leadership, diversity, and civic engagement traits and mindsets. Council members participate in community service projects where they work alongside community volunteers to help solve issues facing youth. For example, members organized and assisted with an Anti-Bullying conference for students at Carver

Elementary. Beginning its fourth year, the Indianola Youth Council has evolved into an organization that provides an important voice for the discussion of issues that affect young people, exposing them to the nature and scope of city government and requiring a pledge to give the greatest possible service to the community. Comprised of 22 members in eighth through twelfth grades in the current year, the council brings these young people into the decision-making process of their community.

**ART OF LIVING SMART** is an afterschool enrichment program, provided in association with the B.B. King Museum and Delta Arts Alliance, which is designed to offer local youth exposure to art, music, dance and culinary arts in addition to academic assistance, 30 minutes of physical activity each day, healthy nutrition, and other activities to enhance physical, mental and emotional well-being. For example, third and fourth grade students took Art Appreciation, African Drumming, and African Dance. Fifth and sixth grade students took part in Videography, iPad Art, DJ 101 and Digital Media Arts.

**IPC SUMMER CAMPS** are multiple camps, designed and hosted by community-based organizations, that help kids continue to grow and learn during the summer recess from school, with a particular emphasis on reducing summer learning loss. Specific camps are chosen through a competitive application process each year. For 2015, over 480 students in grades K-12 enrolled in eight camps that focused on learning how to choose fresh, healthy ingredients and to prepare nutritious snacks and meals; art enrichment, drama and fitness training; touring historic Civil Rights sites; improving writing skills; and enhancing entrepreneurial and business skills. Last year, our overall retention of campers was the best in six years. Seventy percent of campers showed no learning loss in reading levels and word recognition over the summer, according to results of pre-camp and post-camp testing, and nearly three-quarters of campers met age-equivalency benchmarks on post-camp tests.

*Of 489 participants across all eight of the IPC camps, only 45 students dropped out over the course of the summer. Moreover, of the 120 campers identified as facing the most challenges with reading, 81% improved at a higher rate than other campers during the summer.*



**ACT PREP** is a school-based program that identifies a group of juniors and seniors at Gentry High School who are on track to graduate and provides them and their families with ACT Preparation, college/financial aid application support, career guidance, visits to local universities and colleges, and post-secondary school planning.

**COLLEGE PROMISE INITIATIVE** focuses on creating a “college going” culture in Indianola by aligning college preparatory services and assistance across all IPC programs with participants meeting college track criteria. It supplements the assistance being provided by the ACT Prep program, and includes parent and family engagement workshops, aggregating resources from colleges and universities into a resource guide for current and future student use, counseling, mentoring, academic support, personal college planning, and the use of guest speakers who can help prepare students for college life and the ACT.

**GETTING READY TO EXCEL, ACHIEVE, AND TRIUMPH (GREAT)** is one of IPC’s newest programs, is year-round, and is designed to give young adults in Indianola the opportunity to gain skills that will assist them with employment and furthering their education. Three tracks are available: (1) GED and soft skills employment training to prepare them to enter the workforce, (2) medical training to receive certification as a Certified Nurse’s Aide, Registered Phlebotomy Technician, Pharmacy Technician, Child Development Associate, Medical Laboratory Technician, or a Home Health Aide, and (3) work to obtain a certificate in one of two available trades.

**LINKING INDIVIDUALS, NEIGHBORHOODS, AND KIDS TO SERVICES (LINKS)** is a case-management system that targets at-risk children from birth to career identified through the use of academic and program data, early warning systems, and recommendations from school intervention teams. Each case worker (or LINKS) meets individually with targeted families and students to address issues relating to academics, behavior, and attendance as early as possible. The aim is to “link” each child to the best programs for them, individually, and for the family, so that the following goals can be achieved: inspiring and reinforcing the belief that college is possible; building an achievement plan for the entire family; supporting action on achievement plan goals; connecting individuals to resources to support the achievement plan; and recognizing and celebrating the progress families make as they move through the academic year. More than 350 families are currently enrolled in the program.

**NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS** are groups of Indianola residents who have come together to help build grassroots organizations in their respective neighborhoods and to develop service projects and annual events such as festivals, neighborhood clean ups, fundraisers, camps, and activities for children to strengthen their neighborhoods and connect with city and school officials.

*There are currently seven distinct geographical areas of Indianola that now have associations up and running.*

**PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT** seeks to create the same grassroots energy as is now found in the neighborhood associations, and replicates that model of parental involvement in the four schools that serve Indianola through platforms and systems that promote their active participation. The goal is to increase the knowledge and awareness of parents regarding their children’s academic performance and school requirements, encourage parents to become more active in the school and community, build PTA or PTO organizations in each school, and empower parents to make decisions on behalf of their children. This is yet one more way IPC is seeking to improve student performance while supporting family growth and development.

**FINANCIAL LITERACY** is a five-week course that provides adults with basic knowledge about personal and business finances. Participants are provided with tools, strategies, and access to low cost banking products and services that meet the FDIC "Safe Model" requirements, that help an individual build/rebuild credit, reduce debt, save money, and establish the base for overall financial wealth building. This program helps many low-income families in Indianola, a third of whom do not even use a bank, to make a move toward economic security.

**SOCIAL SERVICES COLLABORATIVE** is made up of local, state, and federal agency representatives who meet monthly to break down organizational silos, identify, and reduce duplication of services, educate one another on services and resources that are readily available to families and children in Indianola, and engage in internal and external referrals. The collaborative is just one way IPC is working to unite Indianola and bring people together to build on each others' assets and resources.

**HEALTHY LIFESTYLES INITIATIVE** is a community project aimed at improving the health and well-being of families and children through health literacy education, asthma control and patient education, community fit days, school-based fitness and recreation, church-based walking clubs, cooking classes, mental health services, and safety programs. Some of the programs include CATCH, or Coordinated Approach to Child Health, which uses a dietician to connect with students in PE classes and provide them with information about healthy meals; We Can!, which is a family-based program aimed at emphasizing the importance of eating a balanced portion of fruit and vegetables daily while limiting the amount of unhealthy foods; Fit Day, which is a special day held at an Indianola park where families come together and play; Health on the Shelf program, which works with local convenience and grocery stores to have a shelf or certain area of the store where healthier items would be marketed; and the use of "5-1-0" stickers that encourage five servings of fresh fruits and vegetables a day, one hour of physical activity, and zero sugary drinks.

**ABSTINENCE PLUS** is an eight-week group-level, education and behavior skills training intervention, utilizing a curriculum approved by the Mississippi Department of Health, designed to reduce risky sexual behaviors among teens. Using pre- and post-tests of the participants, we know that close to 95 percent of the students increase their knowledge and awareness of the key points in the class.

**MAYOR'S HEALTH COUNCIL** is a group of community members and local business leaders who meet on a regular basis to advise the city on policies and programs designed to target chronic diseases in Indianola. The council's work has been designed to strengthen the capacity of Indianola's existing health and wellness organizations and businesses and to promote new policies and community improvements that will support chronic disease prevention, healthy lifestyles, and a culture of wellness across all age groups in the city.

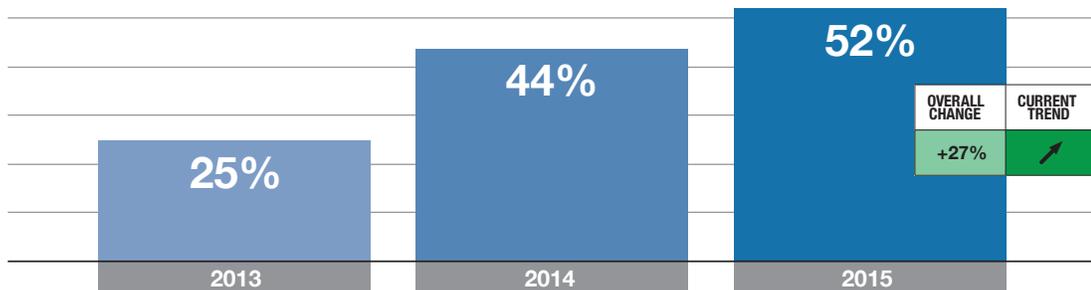


**COMMUNITY GARDENS** focuses on increasing the number of children consuming fruits and vegetables and educating families on how to plan, start, grow, and maintain a source of their own fruits and vegetables.

**SPECIAL PROGRAMS** include a variety of outreach activities geared to emphasizing certain issues within the Indianola community. Over the last year, special workshops have been held on "Fathers & Sons," "Girl Power," and "Bullying."

# A Case Study: How IPC Works

## Indianola is turning the curve on Kindergarten Readiness!



## HOW IPC IS TURNING THE CURVE

### DUAL ENROLLMENT

- As of January 2016, 100% of Parents-As-Teachers program participants are dually enrolled in Imagination Library – **up from only 53%** in March 2014.
- As of January 2016, 88% of eligible SPARK program participants are dually enrolled in Imagination Library – **up from only 47%** in March 2014.
- Overall enrollment in Imagination Library has **steadily increased** since March 2014.

### COORDINATED TRANSITION SERVICES

- IPC, Save the Children, Sunflower-Humphreys Counties Progress, the Sunflower County Consolidated school district, and local childcare centers partnered to provide a 6-week **transitional summer boot camp** for incoming Kindergarteners, called the Promise School.
- Implemented at the elementary school, **Promise School** gives incoming Kindergarteners an opportunity to better transition to formal schooling.
- Promise School participants, in general are better prepared for Kindergarten.

### ALIGNED CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT

- As of May 2015, 5 private childcare centers, Head Start provider and state's Pre-K program are all implementing **Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies Gold** – serving over 450 children county-wide.
- **Data sharing** agreements with childcare centers and Head Start provider.

# IPC WEEK

**Neighbors, friends, partners, and allies are appropriate words to describe the relationship between the Indianola Promise Community and the Delta town it serves.**

Location, history, economics, and dreams are the threads that bind the two together. For a week in September, IPC demonstrates those connections in a week-long series of events throughout the city.

Dubbed "IPC Week," this annual housewarming party spans six days and connects people from throughout Indianola, reinforcing ties with partners and introducing IPC to residents unfamiliar with its programs and services. It is a showcase and a celebration intended to bring people together and demonstrate our commitment to the community.

The program began on Monday, September 7, 2015 with television appearances on Good Morning, Mississippi, and Delta Daybreak, and ended on Saturday with a day at the park. The key events included a "Showcase of Students" at Gentry High School, where more than 60 students demonstrated their talents; "Family Reading Night" for K-3rd graders and their parents at the public library; about 90 parents and teachers attended the "Early Education Training for Parents and Teachers" at the Indianola Neighborhood Facility Building; "Annual 9/11 Remembrance and Service Day" was held at the Carver Elementary School gymnasium with an overflow crowd of more than 400; and the "Friends of IPC Day" and "Fit Day" at the Kaboom! Park in Indianola's Southgate neighborhood.



# Renovations IN THE DELTA

## A NEW SWIMMING POOL IN INDIANOLA

*If the children of Indianola were feeling the heat of a community swimming pool that's been closed for two years, Indianola Mayor Steve Rosenthal was feeling it even more. "Oh yeah, it's been rough," Rosenthal said early in June, "Nobody's happy when the city pool isn't open in the summer."*

Rosenthal and the kids got relief when the pool re-opened in mid-July thanks in part to an \$80,000 grant from our Indianola Promise Community. Renovations included new filters, edging, tiles, pumps, motors and a chlorinator for the pool, in addition to extensive repairs and upgrades to the pool house, including a new roof and lockers and showers. The entire structure received a fresh paint job.

In any community, the neighborhood swimming pool is a thread that ties residents together. It's a gathering place where you know you'll have fun, see friends, and create memories. More importantly, these children will have a venue to learn swimming and lifesaving skills that every child should know. IPC recognized all of this and helped make sure the pool was re-opened.



*As one happy swimmer said, "It's summer and it's really, really hot. So you just have to have a swimming pool to jump into."*





## DELTA Home Visiting INITIATIVE

*This is DHA's comprehensive initiative to directly address our region's high rates of infant mortality and poor maternal and infant outcomes. We have received funding for this initiative from several sources to provide coverage in Holmes, Humphries, Leflore, Sunflower, and Washington counties to more than 700 individuals. The four component programs of this home visiting initiative are Delta Parents-as-Teachers, Delta Healthy Start Collaborative, DHA/USDA Partnership, and DHA/Save the Children Partnership.*

**91% of infants in participating families in Sunflower and Leflore Counties are born at full birth-weight compared to an average of 84% for all Delta counties.**

The Delta Home Visiting initiative utilizes an evidence-based early childhood home visitation curriculum that builds strong communities, reinforces families and facilitates the development of children who are healthy, safe, and ready to learn. DHA's certified parent educator staff members work one-on-one with high-risk parents of children ages zero to five to emphasize parent-child interaction, development-centered parenting, and family well-being. There are four interrelated components of the model, including personal home visits, group connections, screening, and easy access to a comprehensive resource network.

This DHA program also provides participants with access to other complimentary programs and services for pregnant women and for young adults who may soon start a family. Parent educators, recruited from the communities they serve, receive extensive training and learn to work with and develop a relationship with parents to provide infants and young children with the stability and enriched environment they need to thrive. The key to the program's success is that the parent educators are from the same community as the families with whom they are working.

A recent study found that 91% of Delta Home Visiting babies are born at full-birth weight, breastfeeding had improved from 24% of participants to 36% in less than a year, and that at ages two, six, and twelve months, close to three-fourths of the children had been rated with having no developmental concerns.

Delta Home Visiting also works with local high schools to make sure young parents graduate on time, provides links to GED and job training programs, and access to health and developmental screenings for children.



# Leland Medical CLINIC

*Originally the Leland City Hospital, the facility has been a fixture for patient care since its opening in June 1957. Since 2013, Delta Health Alliance has owned and fully operated Leland Medical Clinic providing a medical home for Delta residents.*

The clinic is not only a qualified rural health clinic; it is now recognized as a certified Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) by the National Committee for Quality Assurance. This national rating organization has been dedicated to helping improve health care quality since 1990. The rating is recognition of how the clinic treats patients. The PCMH approach means that the entire LMC staff, as well as the patient, work together as a team by focusing on all aspects of the patient's health using enhanced technology and chronic disease management. We use the Allscripts suite of Electronic Health Record products to facilitate delivery of care by allowing our providers to spend more time examining the patient and less time on record keeping. The LMC staff can connect electronically to pharmacies and area hospitals and patients have real time access to their medical records via our online portal.

The clinic uses technology to monitor patients with the electronic patient portal entitled "Follow My Health" where patients can communicate with the clinic through a computer or portable device using secure email. Patients can go online and request prescription refills and other services through our high-speed, secure data connection. Over 50 percent of the clinic's patients have been using the portal and it gives patients 24/7 access to clinic information, scheduling and other important services.

The clinic employs a nurse practitioner, part-time physician, a dietician, three nurses, and two front office staff on a daily basis. The clinic is in the midst of a nine-month, \$1.2 million dollar renovation and update.

The clinic serves more than 2,700 patients, a quarter of whom have no insurance. Twelve percent have been diagnosed with diabetes while more than 21 percent receive care for high-blood pressure. For the last two years, the number of clinic patients who are controlling their diabetes has increased from 3% to 39%. This means fewer trips to the emergency room, less money spent on doctor visits and prescription drugs, and a much healthier lifestyle. Services provided by the clinic include management of acute and chronic illnesses, wellness exams and checkups, immunizations, pediatric care, work-injury treatment, drug testing, pre-employment and school physicals, and nutritional services.



**Leland Medical Clinic**  
Supported by Delta Health Alliance

***For the last two years, the number of patients who are controlling their diabetes has increased from 3% to 39%.***



# Renovations AT LELAND MEDICAL CLINIC

A number of officials and health care providers helped break ground in early October for a \$1.2 million renovation for Delta Health Alliance's Leland Medical Clinic. The work is being funded with a grant from the US Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Office. Once the renovation is complete, the clinic will be able to provide more services and opportunities for patients, including an upgraded exercise room, a new pediatric examination room, x-ray services, and an additional waiting room.

At the groundbreaking ceremony, DHA announced that Neal Soares, M.D. would be joining the staff as Medical Director. Dr. Soares is also in private practice at Gamble Brothers Clinic in Greenville and has full hospital privileges at Delta Regional Medical Center. He currently serves on the Foundation Board of the Mississippi Academy of Family Physicians.

DHA has contracted with Beard & Riser Architects and Kenneth R. Thompson, Jr. Builder, Inc., both of Greenwood, to ensure that the renovation will meet the needs of the patient population served at the clinic. Completion of the project and a grand opening is targeted for May 2016.



# Electronic Health RECORDS

Since Delta Health Alliance began to install Electronic Health Records (EHR) in the Delta in 2009, our EHR initiative has grown into a state-of-the-art system that connects more than 74 health care providers in 32 locations with 178,000 patients into a seamless electronic recordkeeping and reporting organization that is at work 24/7.

Maintained and operated throughout the Delta by DHA, the system allows patients to contact clinics anytime day or night, put in prescription refill requests, and check on appointments, while letting physicians and nurses have instantaneous access to patient records from any connected health care provider, file prescriptions online, and consolidate all billing and practice management into one comprehensive suite of programs.

The system has been integrated at rural health clinics, private practices, hospital based clinics and other health related businesses. Once a patient is entered into the system and their records are uploaded, they can get treatment at facilities that have authorized access to our secure EHR network. The system has better documentation than a paper system, fewer medical errors, and allows for a much easier flow of communication between health care workers and facilities. Having one system with multi-functions means fewer technical problems in situations where a clinic is trying to get different systems to work together.

Moreover, because our EHR system is connected to the Mississippi Health Information Network, we are able to securely exchange pertinent patient data and referrals from other doctors, clinics and hospitals around the state that are also part of the network. Participating health care providers can exchange patient data from their EHR main screen easily and quickly. **For example, if one of our patients in Indianola had to be transferred to a participating hospital in Jackson, the health care team there could instantaneously view the patient's medical history through our EHR system. In addition, through the patient portal feature of our website, our patients have the ability to view, download and transmit their entire patient record to the provider of their choice.**

Our EHR system is supported locally; anyone who calls in with a technical problem doesn't get an overseas operator but a local person with the specific knowledge to help. DHA offers custom installation of turnkey and customized hardware and software programs (including ePrescribing), comprehensive training, the latest in security features, long-term service contracts, and a full-time HELP Desk.



Powered by Delta Health Alliance



# Health Information TECHNOLOGY

*Electronic Health Records started the revolution, access to health information networks sustained it, and now smart phones, tablets and powerful software are transforming the day-to-day practice of medicine. Delta Health Alliance can not only help providers, clinics, and hospitals take advantage of all these systems have to offer, but keep you current and in front of the changes that take place on a daily basis.*

## THE DHA HIT DIFFERENCE

When it comes to Health Information Technology, everyone has a product to sell, but no one wants to commit to custom installations, comprehensive training, long term maintenance and compliance, and 24/7 customer service. For the last eight years, the Delta Health Alliance HIT team has been doing just that. Our state-of-the-art interface connects more than 74 health care providers in 32 locations with 178,000 patients into a seamless electronic recordkeeping and reporting system that never sleeps. The DHA team is local, connected, and ready to go to work.



## THE DHA HIT COMMITMENT

- Guaranteed to stay certified, current, and compliant
- Consistent negotiations with vendors to obtain best pricing & services
- Local support staff available 24/7 remotely or onsite
- Secure access from anywhere
- Little or no upfront cost
- Custom installations
- Comprehensive training
- Interfaces with networks and labs

## THE DHA HIT MENU

- Electronic Health Records
- Practice Management
- Patient Portal
- Financial Accounting & Reporting
- Interfaces
- Performance Improvement
- Dashboard & Reporting
- Care Coordination
- Chronic Care Management
- IT/Consulting Services



# Imagination

## LIBRARY

This is Delta Health Alliance's longest running program. We are now into the eighth year of our partnership with the Dolly Parton Foundation to provide the Imagination Library program in the Delta, which calls for mailing a free book, each month, to any participating family before their child turns five. Currently more than 1,700 children in Bolivar, DeSoto, Sunflower and Washington counties are receiving books. Through the Imagination Library program, it is possible for a child to receive 60 early reader and picture books before ever entering kindergarten! In Sunflower County alone, more than 2,400 children have been part of the program since its inception.

Funded by the US Department of Education and Monsanto Corporation, DHA's Imagination Library program staff enrolls children and performs community readings at local schools and learning centers. In this way, children are exposed to reading who may not be enrolled in the program and children who fit the age requirement can be enrolled regardless of income. Books are also available in Braille and in audio version for children who are blind or visually impaired.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the program, new kindergarten students at the elementary school in Indianola took a school readiness assessment called the Measure of Academic Performance (MAP). The results of the MAP assessment give teachers and school officials information about the pre-reading and pre-math skills of each student, which they use to help design the kindergarten curriculum.



## DHA spearheads expansion of childcare in Sunflower County

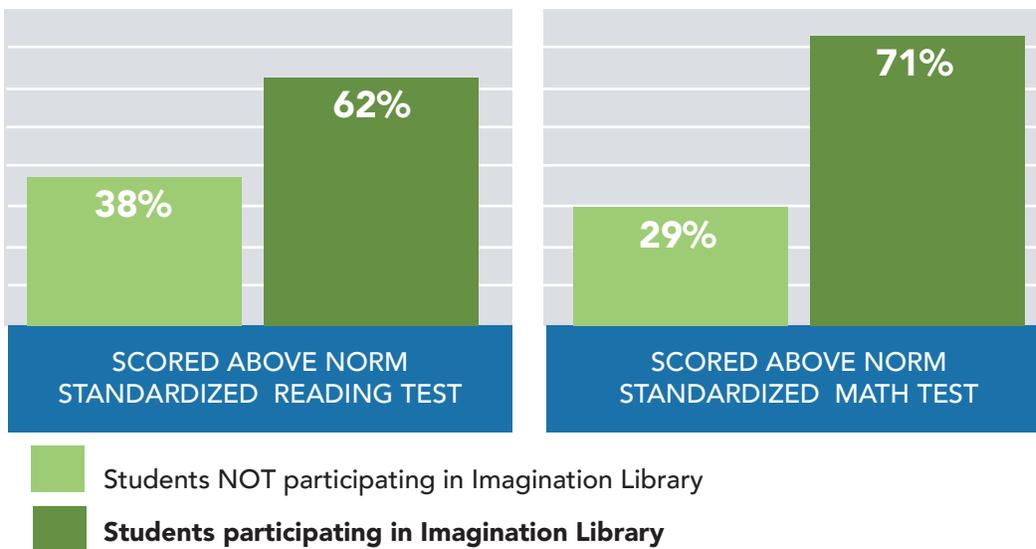
Thanks to a multi-million-dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, DHA has created the Sunflower Childcare Coalition to operate a system of private day care centers that meet Early Head Start requirements. More than 150 children will be served by new facilities in locations throughout the county when the program becomes operational in 2016. Each childcare center will use a standardized curriculum designed to ensure students are ready for kindergarten. Moreover, the centers will coordinate health and nutritional services, including vision, oral and health screenings. A separate initiative will work with parents to ensure their involvement in the education of their children every step of the way. This collaborative program will work with local partners, community leaders, and state agencies to help the childcare facilities and affiliated services work in a coordinated fashion. Finally, performance measures will be established to ensure that each center meets academic and development benchmarks for the children enrolled in its program.

## Imagination Library – continued

Meanwhile, as part of the kindergarten registration process, parents of these students completed a survey that determined whether or not they participated in the Imagination Library program. With the kindergarten readiness scores from the MAP assessment, we were able to compare the readiness scores of the group of children who received Imagination Library books with the group of children who did not participate in the Imagination Library program.

According to the data, 62% of the students who were above the norm for the reading portion of the MAP test participated in the Imagination Library program, compared to only 38% who did not participate. In other words, a child who participated in the Imagination Library early reading intervention was nearly twice as likely to be kindergarten ready in reading as a child who did not receive the Imagination Library program.

These differences are even more pronounced on the pre-math portion of the assessment. Here, 71% of the students who scored above the norm were Imagination Library participants, compared to only 29% of students who were not. In other words, Imagination Library kids were two and a half times as likely to be kindergarten ready.



*A child who participates in the Imagination Library early reading intervention is twice as likely to be kindergarten ready in reading and more than two and a half times as likely to be kindergarten ready in math as a child who is not.*



# NEW Health Care INITIATIVES

*Three new grants have allowed DHA to expand our health care reach throughout the Delta. All three programs are in the planning and early implementation stages, so full outcome reports will be included in next year's annual report.*

## GROWING MEDICAL HOMES IN THE DELTA

**THE MEDICAL HOME CLINIC INITIATIVE** is a partnership between DHA and the Mississippi Medicaid Division to create a pilot project that will transform rural clinics in the Delta into medical homes, similar to the patient centered medical home model at DHA's clinic in Leland.

Eligible patients will be able to access care locally through one of these clinics as their permanent medical home, providing access to a wide range of preventative, general, and specialty care services. The clinics will operate through a team-approach to care, driven by the patient's needs and preferences, to better manage chronic care conditions and to prevent avoidable hospitalizations. These certified Rural Health Care clinics are also serving as training locations and health-clinic incubation centers, to assist other rural providers in transitioning to the Patient Centered Medical Home Model to improve patient outcomes and care coordination, while decreasing overall costs of care.

Participants receive practical experience, tool kits, sample forms, and starter materials for replication of the model in their own clinic settings. Clinicians learn how to foster and develop a local network of health partners to facilitate neighborhood support, including implementing community gardens, encouraging municipal support of exercise programs and recreational facilities, and working with faith-based partners.



## DHA Working to Prevent Smoking

Now operating in six counties, our Tobacco-Free Coalition project has been recognized for Exemplary Service by the Mississippi Department of Health. Our staff work directly with schools and community organizations to prevent the initiation of tobacco use among youth, reduce exposure to secondhand smoke, promote tobacco cessation services, and eliminate tobacco-related disparities. As a result of its outreach program, smoke-free ordinances have been adopted in the Delta municipalities of Coahoma, Friars Point, Clarksdale, Jonestown, Lyon, Marks, Sledge, Tutwiler, Sumner, Charleston, Beulah, Drew, Moorhead, Duncan, Alligator, and Indianola, as well as Coahoma County and Delta State University in Cleveland.



## REDUCING HOSPITAL READMISSIONS

**THE DELTA CARE TRANSITIONS PROGRAM** is a community-based project designed to improve health outcomes for at-risk, rural patients who transition from in-patient to out-patient settings. The goal is to reduce hospital readmissions, and thus cost, for patients with chronic illnesses who have a history of multiple hospitalizations. Developed in partnership with South Sunflower County Hospital and North Sunflower Medical Center, Sunflower Clinic, Indianola Family Medical Group and Leland Clinic, the program assigns specially trained patient navigators to ensure that individuals receive appropriate post-discharge follow-up care, patient education, assistance navigating health care programs, and access to support services for family caregivers. In this way, patients seek follow up treatment from local clinics and physicians, rather than from hospitals; the care patients receive is more individualized and more timely and the cost to the health care system is dramatically reduced.

## REDUCING TEEN PREGNANCY

**THE DELTA FUTURES PROJECT** is a comprehensive initiative aimed at preventing teenage pregnancy. Working with six public school districts and five local Rural Health Clinics across ten counties, Delta Health Alliance will put in place results-oriented Teen Pregnancy Prevention programs in schools and community settings. Delta counties have some of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the country and with this grant from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, we will implement evidence-based programs that target young people in communities with the greatest need. All programs utilized in schools have been approved for use by the Mississippi Department of Education and are coordinated with other risk-avoidance efforts that may already be underway in those settings. All program materials are medically accurate, age appropriate, culturally and linguistically relevant, and inclusive to all youth of each community.

# DHA Beacon GRANT

BEACON was a major federal grant program that DHA administered over the last five years that provided funding to build and strengthen health care systems (1) using nationally recognized best practices in direct patient care and (2) supporting and enhancing those practices with health information technology. DHA was a recipient of one of the seventeen Beacon grants awarded nationally in 2010. The U.S. Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) provided us with \$14.6 million to implement the grant, which DHA called the Delta Better Living Utilizing Electronic Systems (BLUES) project.

**Delta Health Alliance's specific goal was to demonstrate new and innovative ways to improve the health care of people with diabetes while lowering the cost of that care.**

**Here is what was learned from the Delta BLUES Beacon project:**

- By investing a modest amount of money in paying for a health coach at a local hospital or a pharmacist working directly in a local clinic, we can save five to ten times that investment by helping a patient apply complex medication protocols or understand necessary follow up treatment after a hospital discharge. This has become the new Delta Care Transitions project, as described on page 16 of this report.
- By utilizing information technology, doctors are given more time with patients and more tools to diagnose and treat their patients.
- People with diabetes can enjoy a healthier life, at a lower cost to the overall health care system, if they are treated comprehensively and regularly. Targeted interventions can improve the health of chronically ill patients, improve a region's overall health, and reduce its overall cost of care.
- Because Electronic Health Records and Health Information Exchanges can organize and display massive amounts of data and can help providers communicate securely in real time, these systems have the ability to create foundations for new models of health care delivery.
- By using non-traditional assessments, such as eye exams and foot exams, health care providers can detect early stages of diabetes, which is less expensive to treat and is more likely to prevent more serious complications from developing.





The focus of the Delta BLUES Beacon project was on improving outcomes for diabetic patients and using innovative technologies and clinical interventions to improve management of this debilitating chronic disease. This Delta Health Alliance project brought physicians, nurses, hospitals, clinics, pharmacists, community health programs, and patients together to craft new ways of improving the quality of health care and the efficiency of health care delivery. The project also redirected existing resources out of administration and record keeping and into patient care.

Unlike many other major diseases, such as heart disease or cancer, the occurrence of diabetes is increasing at an alarming rate. In the last ten years alone, the incidence of Type 2 diabetes has increased by almost fifty percent, especially among young people. This rapid increase in diabetes goes hand-in-hand with the epidemic of obesity; being overweight is the main risk factor for Type 2 diabetes. The Delta BLUES Beacon project was focused on ways to overcome this crisis. The key initiatives were health information technologies (HIT) and clinical interventions. It was those interventions that formed the backbone of our BLUES project.

*As a result of this study, we identified specific clinical interventions that could make a difference in the care of patients and technology deficits that prevented the implementation and use of the latest software and communication tools.*

In collaboration with AcademyHealth, the Southeast Michigan Beacon Community and the Hawaii Island Beacon Community, DHA published the first of three manuscripts, "Patient Engagement and Activation in Three Underserved Beacon Communities," in the August 2015 issue of the Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved.

DELTA HEALTH ALLIANCE

# Board

**BILL KENNEDY,**  
**CHAIRMAN**  
*Inverness*

**LISA PERCY,**  
**SECRETARY**  
*Greenville*

**WILLIE BAILEY**  
*Greenville*

**WOODS EASTLAND**  
*Indianola*

**CASS PENNINGTON**  
*Indianola*

DELTA HEALTH ALLIANCE

# Partners

AmeriCorps\*VISTA

B.B. King Museum

Children's Defense Fund

City of Indianola

Delta State University

Delta Housing Authority

Excel By 5

Guaranty Bank

Mayor's Health Council

Mississippi Center for  
Education Innovation

Mississippi Center for Justice

Mississippi Community Financial  
Access Coalition

Mississippi State Department  
of Health

Mississippi Low Income Childcare  
Initiative

P-16 Council

Parents for Public Schools

Save the Children

Sunflower County Childcare  
Association

Sunflower County Consolidated  
School District

Sunflower County Ministerial  
Alliance

Sunflower County United for  
Children

Sunflower-Humphreys County  
Progress, Inc.

Teach for America

Urban Child Institute

DELTA HEALTH ALLIANCE

# Staff

Karen Matthews,  
*President & CEO*

Marlin Womack,  
*VP of Administration*

Sam Dawkins,  
*VP Information Technology*

Josh Davis,  
*VP External Affairs*

Deborah Moore, *Associate VP  
IPC, Community Relations*

Carolyn Willis, *Associate VP  
IPC, Education & Outreach*

Daniel Thomas, *Assistant VP,  
Information Technology & CIO*

Elizabeth McCullers, *Director,  
Sponsored Programs*

Karin Scott, *Director,  
Research*

Joy Henderson, *Director,  
Human Resources*

Jobyna France, *Director,  
Communications*

## MISSION STATEMENT

**THE MISSION OF THE DELTA HEALTH ALLIANCE IS TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH AND EDUCATION OF THE MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN WHO MAKE THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA THEIR HOME.**

*Delta Health Alliance aims to carry out this mission in three ways.*

*First, we will seek to understand the fundamental causes of poor health and lack of educational opportunities in the region through comprehensive research programs and statistical analysis of relevant data. Second, we will fund programs to increase access to health care and education.*

*Third, we will educate residents of the Delta in ways that encourage them to adopt healthy lifestyles.*



**DELTA HEALTH ALLIANCE**

Solutions for a Healthy Tomorrow

P.O. Box 277 / Stoneville, MS 38776  
Phone: 662-686-7004 / Fax: 662-686-3522  
info@deltahealthalliance.org  
[www.deltahealthalliance.org](http://www.deltahealthalliance.org)



**DELTA**  
**HEALTH**  
**ALLIANCE**