Hey Community Engagers,

In case you haven’t heard, effective February 1, 2011, Dr. Chris Urbina—also PACT Council and Executive Committee member—was appointed Executive Director and Chief Medical Officer at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. A reception is being held February 25, 2011; please RSVP to Lorenzo Olivas at Lorenzo.Olivas@hhs.gov or Charlene Barrients Ortiz at Charlene.Ortiz@ucdenver.edu (303-724-1700). Congratulations, Chris!

Several CCTSI Community Liaisons had the unique opportunity to meet with staff from the United States Surgeon General’s Office on February 5th at Neighborhood Health Summit hosted by the 2040 Partners for Health. Santos Diaz, Lorenzo Ramirez, Susan Gale, and Michele Wheeler were part of a brief private session with Rear Admiral Chris Halliday (Surgeon General Chief of Staff) and Lt. Christine Collins. Also joining the liaisons were PACT Council members Alok Sarwal and Grant Jones. The liaisons each had a few minutes to inform the special guests of their work as research liaisons. They also were able to speak individually with the Admr. Halliday and Lt. Collins for several minutes about specific projects and health issues they witness and work to address in their communities. We thank 2040 Partners for Health for arranging this opportunity and to Michele for facilitating the session and photos.
February is Heart Month and there's no better time to learn how to protect yourself against heart problems. The Center for African-American Health joins with the health community in a special effort to raise awareness about heart disease. Encourage your community contacts to take a look at CAAH's Web site for some heart health tips: www.caahealth.org

Check out this invitation to submit an application for a $750 travel stipend to offset the costs of attending the 2011 Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Practice-Based Research Networks (PBRN) Annual Conference, held on June 22-24 at the Doubletree Hotel in Bethesda, Maryland. Applications are welcome from researchers, network directors, clinician members, and network staff working within a PBRN who lack travel funds and are interested in learning more about practice-based research. Application deadline: April 1, 2011. http://pbrn.ahrq.gov/portal/server.pt/community/practice-based_research_networks_%28pbrn%29__pbrn_annual_conference/1362/travel_stipend_application/17242

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is accepting nominations for the 2011 Healthy Living Innovation Awards until March 1, 2011. These awards will identify and acknowledge innovative health promotion projects that have demonstrated a significant impact on the health status of a community. The Healthy Living Innovation Awards offer an exciting chance to recognize and foster the spread of effective health promotion efforts, specifically community-based efforts that either make use of an entirely new tool or approach or have applied existing tools in an unusual way to improve community health and well-being. For details, see http://healthylivinginnovation.challenge.gov/.

Focus on PACT Communities - Centers for American Indian and Alaska Native Health (CAIANH)
The Centers for American Indian and Alaska Native Health (CAIANH) is located on the University of Colorado-Anschutz Medical Campus and lead by Distinguished Professor and Center Director, Spero Manson, Ph.D., (Pembina Chippewa). CAIANH's mission is to promote the health and well-being of American Indians and Alaska Natives (AIAN), of all ages, by pursuing research, training, continuing education, technical assistance, and information dissemination within a biopsychosocial framework that recognizes the unique cultural contexts of this special population. CAIANH works with 102 Native communities, including rural, reservation, urban, and village settings. To learn more about CAIANH projects, please visit the website: http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/PublicHealth/researchcenters/CAIANH/Pages/CAIANH.aspx

Have a great weekend!
Jack Westfall