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Kentucky

Rural Health Update

*A quarterly newsletter update of the Kentucky Rural Health Association
March 2014*

It's been a Busy Year for KRHA



NRHA Policy Institute 2014

A Message from President Sheri Erwin

Things have been very busy the past three months! Twenty KRHA members made the trip to Washington DC for the Policy Institute this year. Many thanks to Ernie Scott for arranging the visits "on the hill" with all of the congressmen from Kentucky. Two Representatives have already visited rural hospitals as a result of invitations they received during the visits.

A big thanks to Andrew Bledsoe for minute-to-minute Facebook

pictures and information. The Policy Institute was a wonderful experience and I encourage everyone to attend if given the opportunity to do so and see our government in action.

A \$5,000.00 NRHA grant has been submitted for financial assistance for a joint conference with the Department of Justice. It is the result of a panel discussion during the 2013 KRHA Annual Conference. The tentative date is Saturday, April 26, 2014 in Lexington. More details to follow.

The 2014 KRHA/AHEC Legislative Day was a great success with 71 registrants and 400 legislators and staff eating lunch with us. We were hoping for a vote on Smoke Free so we could all celebrate while we were together, but unfortunately that didn't happen, but will very soon.

Be sure and visit the KRHA website KyRHA.org and the Kentucky Rural Health Association Facebook page.

Greetings from the Kentucky Office of Rural Health!

Ernie Scott, Director

The Kentucky Office of Rural Health (KORH) recently completed a statewide “roadshow” highlighting the Kentucky Health Benefit Exchange- kynect. With sessions held in Hazard, Paducah,



Morehead and Bowling Green, over 400 Kentucky healthcare administrators, providers, managers and other interested individuals participated in Informational Sessions lead by officials from the Kentucky Health Benefit Exchange. Open Q&A sessions provided time for specific concerns to be addressed. We would like to thank all of our regional and community partners who made these events a success: UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health, ARH- Hazard, Purchase AHEC, Western Kentucky Rural Healthcare Network, Northeast Kentucky AHEC, People’s Clinic, Eastern Kentucky Healthcare Coalition, South Central Kentucky

AHEC, WKU Institute for Rural Health and WKU College of Health and Human Services. If you have suggestions for similar regional events or would like to discuss future collaborations, feel free to let us know.

I count it a privilege to have once again served as the Kentucky State Contact for the National Rural



Health Association’s Rural Health Policy Institute. Kentucky was unquestionably well -represented with over twenty (20) rural health stakeholders and advocates in attendance. Aside from the meaningful presentations and networking opportunities at the Policy Institute itself, I was so impressed with the passion for rural demonstrated by the Kentucky Delegation in each of the Hill visits. I feel certain we not only successfully educated and advocated for rural Kentuckians,

but we demonstrated the camaraderie and solidarity of each of our organizations to rural. Please mark your calendars for the 2015 NRHA RHPI February 3-5, in Washington, D.C.

We are pleased to welcome Marcus Pigman, Rural Project



Manager, to the KORH team. His primary areas of

responsibility will include rural hospital quality and financial improvement, rural health clinic initiatives, network development and policy analysis. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Health Care Administration from Western Kentucky University and is completing a Masters of Health Care Administration from the University of Kentucky. Mr. Pigman brings over fourteen years of rural healthcare experience ranging from clinic, hospital and corporate health system settings. In addition, his experience with

reimbursement, revenue cycle, policy analysis and community-based planning impart him as a valuable resource to the KORH as well as the rural communities across Kentucky. Marcus resides

in Hindman, Kentucky with his wife Heather and two sons, Tyler and Jake. Please join me in welcoming Marcus. Thank you for your support of your State Office of Rural Health. We are

always open to new ideas and opportunities to collaborate for the good of rural Kentucky. Let us know how we can best serve you and please continue to stay in touch.

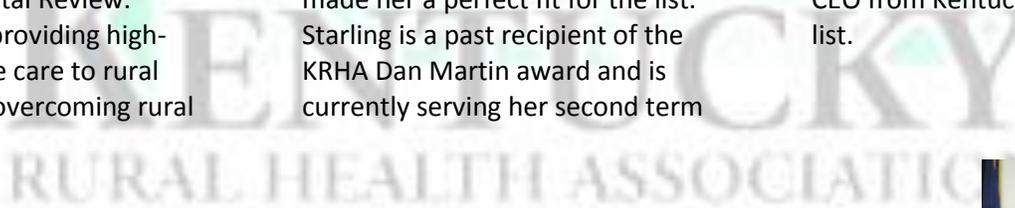


Kentucky Critical Access Hospital CEO Susan Starling makes Becker's Hospital Review-50 Rural Hospital CEOs to know.

KRHA long-time member, current Board Member and former President Susan Starling was featured as a rural hospital CEO to know in a recent article published by Becker's Hospital Review. Commitment to providing high-quality, accessible care to rural populations and overcoming rural

health barriers were just a few of the criteria reviewed to make the list. Starling's national and local awards, along with her leadership and organizations performance made her a perfect fit for the list. Starling is a past recipient of the KRHA Dan Martin award and is currently serving her second term

on the KRHA Board. Listed among individuals from across the United States who have worked to strive for quality care for rural communities, Starling is the only CEO from Kentucky making the list.



KRHA and Smoke Free Kentucky Partner to Advocate for the Health of Rural Kentuckians

Betsy Janes

Even though rural Kentuckians are even more supportive of smoke-free policy than our

urban counterparts, they are the least likely to be covered by a smoke-free policy!

It's not surprising that rural state legislators are as reluctant as rural local officials to support

a smoke-free law. So, for the Smoke-Free Kentucky campaign, working with dedicated advocates from the Kentucky Rural Health Association has been just what the doctor ordered.

It has been a pleasure to work with KRHA on a grant awarded by the Americans' for Nonsmokers Rights and administered by the American Heart Association. KRHA has gone above and beyond the goals laid out at the beginning of the agreement. KRHA exceeded its objectives in quantity, quality, and timeliness. Here is a quick glance at KRHA's achievements by the numbers.

Obtain 10 resolutions:

KRHA obtained 15

Identify and train at least 10 spokespeople:

KRHA trained 17

Have 15 letters to the editor placed throughout Kentucky:

KRHA placed 24 and assisted with 7 positive editorials.

Conduct 5 community presentations: KRHA spoke at 11 community events.

Not only did KRHA exceed its goals, but our partnership lent validity to the smoke-free cause in Kentucky. Smoke-free Kentucky has often referred to its partnership with KRHA as evidence to legislators that smoke-free workplaces and public places are even more important to rural constituents. KRHA has helped us carry the message that all Kentuckians are for a Smoke-free Kentucky, not just those in Louisville and Lexington. Thanks to KRHA, we have been able to refer to smoke-free supporters who not only live in rural Kentucky, but some who actually farm tobacco and still support smoke-free, like Sherri Erwin. We have been able to show support in the Three Rivers District thanks to people like Dianne Coleman, Jim Thaxton, and Denise Bingham. Thanks to David Gross, we met with several editorial boards about smoke-free and received positive coverage. Shortly

thereafter, David conducted a formal presentation to Appalachian Regional Healthcare winning their support, which was not an easy task. All of this great work was carried out under the leadership of Tina McCormick who did a wonderful job of facilitating engagement opportunities for KRHA members.

Although the majority of the work that was carried out by KRHA was educational and not lobbying, we are confident that your work has helped us reach a groundswell of smoke-free support in the state capitol. We witnessed KRHA's influence in the legislative process during their annual day at the capitol on February 20th where members called on President Robert Stivers, House Majority Floor Leader, Rocky Adkins, and other legislators to support smoke-free legislation and take immediate action on it. Thank you, KRHA, for being a strong voice for all of rural Kentuckians.

Executive Director's Report

Tina McCormick

February has been an exciting month for the Kentucky Rural Health Association.

During the week of February 4, Kentucky was represented on a national level at the National Rural Health Association's Policy

Institute and I was proud to be a part of the delegation that met with national level officials. We stressed the importance of Critical

Care Access Hospitals to the rural communities we serve. I learned so much from the institute and the people who made those house visits with me. We had at least 20 attendees. It was exciting to be part of influencing decisions at the national level. A special thank you to Ernie Scott, Director KORH for setting up the hill visits for the Kentucky Delegation.

During the Smoke Free Kentucky day at the Capitol on February 12, our association was represented by Tina McCormick, Andrew Bledsoe, Kayla Rose and Denise Bingham as well as other rural health advocates. A great many thanks to those individuals for assisting in promoting and educating the need for Smoke Free Kentucky. I was able to meet with Legislators educating them on the necessity of this law. I was also able to attend the Western Kentucky Night at the Convention Center where I was able to request support of Smoke Free Kentucky and request attendance of Legislators at our February 20 Legislative Conference Luncheon.

During KRHA/AHEC's Legislative Conference Day at the Capitol on February 20, we were able to hear from Legislators such as

Representative Rocky Adkins, Senator Robert Stivers, Representative Brian Linder and Representative Tom Burch. We also had several legislators visit such as Senator Dorsey Ridley and Senator Albert Robinson whom we able to talk to and express concerns for rural Kentuckians. We were able to provide 400 lunches for Legislators and staff.

A special thank you to our speakers: Sheri Erwin, KRHA President; Amy Barkley, Tobacco Free Kids; Betsy James, Smoke Free Kentucky; Regan Hunt, Kentucky Voices for Health; Elizabeth Cobb, Kentucky Hospital Association; David Bolt, Kentucky Primary Care Association and Dr. White, Department for Public Health. A special Thank you to the "Legislative Committee" for the dedication to making the day successful. Thank you to Denise Bingham for facilitating the session.

We can make a difference when we work together as is shown in our recent activities. The Kentucky Rural Health Association works together for the betterment of all rural Kentuckians. We partner with many other organizations to achieve a

concentrated effort for those people.

We constantly are working toward increasing membership and the benefits we offer to our members, as well as association sponsorships and funding. I've been making contact with other associations that are similar to ours to partner with those for the good of all. We also continue to work with the State Office of Rural Health to achieve the optimal goals.

Once, again, I want to express my excitement at being part of an association that has the best interest of "Rural Kentuckians" at heart. As I have stated many times, I am proud to be part of making our association one of the best in the nation. I am proud to have a "board of directors" that believes in our mission. Please feel free to contact me or any board member if you as members have ideas or needs.

Thank you
Tina McCormick
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Upcoming events:

April 26- Department of Justice Joint Conference with KRHA

September 17-Rural Medical Educators Conference

September 18-19 Kentucky Rural Health Association Annual Conference

Another Successful KRHA Legislative Day at the Capitol...



Amy Barkley gets attendees fired up about Smoke Free!



Regan Hunt discusses the work of the Kentucky Voices for Health and how everyone can become involved.



Representative Brian Linder discusses the rural landscape in his area and his concerns for the Smoke Free Kentucky bills.



David Bolt with the Kentucky Primary Care Association provides update of healthcare in rural Kentucky.



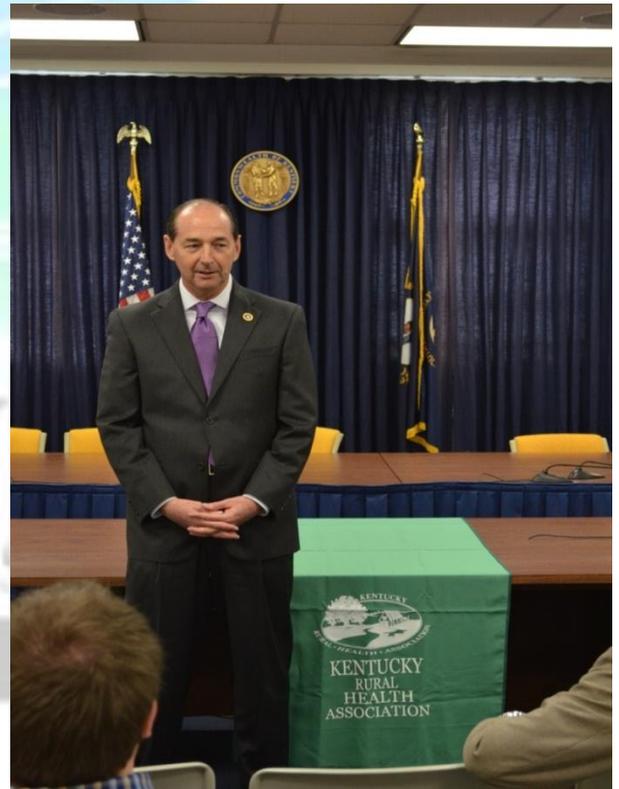
Representative Tom Burch addresses the crowd and provides personal stories of why rural health is important to his constituents and himself.



Senate President Robert Stivers discusses his views of rural health in Eastern Kentucky and how the Smoke Free bills affect his area.



Jamie Bloyd speaks to the group about the Physician's Assistant Bill.



Representative Majorities Floor Leader Rocky Adkins discusses his personal experiences in his 26 years as Representative.