

Cornerstone News

National Cornerstone Healthcare Services, Inc. September 2004



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Note from the President



A warm welcome...

By David S. Espinosa
President, NCHS

At National Cornerstone Healthcare Services, it takes a team effort to succeed. Each month on these pages we introduce you to a different component of that team. This month we're pleased to introduce you to Renita Oliver.

Shortly after graduating from California State University, Los Angeles, Renita set about choosing a field in which to apply her business administration degree. She did so strategically.

"I was talking with a friend who suggested that health care was a recession-proof industry," she said. "That intrigued me."

Born and reared in Los Angeles, Renita, our director of payer relations, chose a good company with which to begin her career: Johnson & Johnson. That, too, was by design.

"I thought that if I was going to go into that industry, I should choose one of the top three companies in the healthcare industry," she said. "I interviewed with all three companies and was offered a job by J&J."

Renita joined Johnson & Johnson's Patient Care Division, where she sold wound care products to hospitals, physicians and wholesale distributors. She remained with the company five years. From there she joined Cooper Vision, one of the world's largest makers of intraocular and contact lenses. Renita most recently worked at Hemophilia Therapeutic Service Company as manager of managed care for the Western U.S.

"I've been in the healthcare industry since 1980, in varying roles: from sales representative to sales manager, managed care manager, director of reimbursement, and now payer relations and reimbursement director," she said.

Last year, a good friend referred Renita to National Cornerstone, touting her as someone who could ably assist the company with its managed care needs. As director of payer relations she troubleshoots both reimbursement and payer relations issues as they arise. A typical day might involve initiating telephone calls to payers in hopes that National Cornerstone might become an in-network provider for that payer.

"I very much enjoy what I do," she said. "Reimbursement is one of those interesting fields. It changes constantly, and there's always someone very interesting to talk with on either the payer end or the provider end. It's a very enjoyable segment of the healthcare industry to be in."

Has she found it to be recession-proof?

"Pretty much," she laughed. "The only difficulty is that with companies going out of business you have to stay ahead of the curve."

Renita manages to do that and enjoy a personal life a well. When not working she spends time with her husband and enjoys home decorating, cooking and planning special events.

At National Cornerstone Health Services, we're pleased to introduce someone with Renita's strong background and skill dealing with people. We're happy to have her on our winning team.

Sincerely,

David S. Espinosa

Overcoming

Ismael has von Willebrand's disease, Type I—a genetic disorder he passed along to his son, who has von Willebrand's, Type II. Ismael was born in Columbia and reared in Mexico City, and his mother knew about his rare blood type from the get-go. However, in Mexico it didn't have a name.

At age 12 Ismael recalls having teeth pulled and bleeding for two days afterward. The hospital treated him with whole plasma, which did not resolve the bleed. Doctors then diagnosed him with hemophilia, but did not know what type he had.

Ismael's mother feared her son's new diagnosis, however she had heard about the good work being done at Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA). In April 1989, the family visited the hospital, where Ismael received a definitive diagnosis.

The hospital recommended that Ismael and his mother not to return to Mexico, where medication and proper care were in short supply. They complied, continuing to live in the U.S.

Three years later, in 1992, Ismael was kicked in the leg during a high school soccer game. He thought little of the injury until that night, when he awoke to find his leg swollen. His mother rushed him to CHLA, where surgeons discovered severe muscle damage in his femur. Mother and son faced a dramatic decision: leave the muscle intact and risk a 50/50 chance of cancer or gangrene developing, ultimately costing him the leg, or remove the muscle, wear a leg brace and not be the active young man that he always had been.

With time running out, Ismael decided to remove three muscles. Just one year later he was showing off the healing process at CHLA. Robert Miller, P.A., was so impressed with the way he walked, he asked him to remove the brace. Ismael told Robert he never wore one.

Meanwhile, he continues to play tennis, ski, and participates in other sports, all of which help to heal and strengthen his tendons.

While in his late 20's, Ismael married Nicole and became a father. His son, Donavon, is an active child just like his daddy. Donavon experiences nose bleeds and bruises easily, but is every bit as rambunctious as an average 4-year-old. Most important, Ismael and Nicole have no fear that their son will fail to receive proper care. After all, they live in the U.S., where great doctors and proper medical care are readily available.

Today, Ismael has much to be thankful for, including the physicians and medication that helped to save his leg and life during surgery. He survived the HIV scare of the late 1980s despite the influx of contaminated plasma. And, he's thankful for California Childrens Services (CCS), which helped to pay for his hospitalization and medication when he was not yet a legal citizen.

CCS is a special program that also supports non-citizens who travel to this country to receive care for a child. While highly beneficial, there is no guarantee that this program will continue to receive funding, saving the lives of people such as Ismael. In a day of tight fiscal management, let's pray that the state does not reduce or eliminate this vital program.

Nicole Beatty



H.A.W.C

(Hemophilia Adult Weekend Camp)

October 1-4, 2004

You are cordially invited to a weekend retreat at beautiful Gatlinburg, Tennessee. You may bring one adult guest that is your major supporter.

We will be staying in Stephen's Sanctuary, a 50 person chalet, advertised as having regular star guests such as Brooks and Dunn.

This years H.A.W.C date is not yet set in stone. We would like to make the date October 1st-4th. Would this work for you? If absolutely not, what would be a better date?

We are looking forward to a weekend of time to get away and enjoy an adult weekend with a spouse or friend, and most importantly, have the opportunity to meet and support fellow adult bleeders.

Our goal was to make this a weekend that is cost free as possible to you. If you can get yourself there, this weekend will be worth your trip. We will be charging a \$25 admission deposit. This fee will guarantee your room.

We will arrive on Friday evening between 2-5pm. Camp will begin Saturday morning. We will depart Monday morning. Each day will consist of 3 meals, 2 support meetings/or group activities, and an event on Saturday and Sunday.

Saturday: Your choice of

Gatlinburg sky lift or

Gatlinburg Space needle

Sunday: Your choice of

Cars of the Stars or

Motion Theater

If you are interested in attending this weekend retreat, please email us back. After we get your response, we will be sending you further information. We are looking forward to hearing from you!

For any questions contact info is:

Jenny Massey - 527 Wren Hill - Troy, ILL 62294 (618) 667-1864.

We Will Fly High for Hemophilia

When I was born
My mother perched me high above the rest
Unashamed of my differences
Showed me how to make my own nest
So I stretched out my wings
Put my feathers in the sky
Over a sea of troubled waters
And I learned how to fly
And though there are times
I will fly alone
There are hawc's all around me
That soar where I have flown

And we will fly in circles
And spiral to the ground
Catch the updraft of our friends
And land safely and sound
And where we fly
We've seen many things others have not dreamed
Of thorns below us and storms above
Over land and sky and sea
We will come together in a time of need
For our sisters and our brothers
For though we might be far apart
We will fly high for one another.

Written by: *Jenney Massey*

Cornerstone Kids

Banana on a Stick

- 1 Banana
- 1 Popsicle Stick
- Vanilla or Plain Yogurt
- Toppings (Chocolate Chips, Crushed Graham Crackers, Yogurt Chips, Cereal etc)
- Wax Paper (place choice topping on paper)
- Place banana on a stick. Cover with yogurt, then roll banana over topping.



Eggshell Planter

- 1 Eggshell
 - 1 Small Sponge
 - Grass Seed
 - Water
- Cut top half of egg and discard contents leaving only the shell.
- Cut 1/2 by 1/2 sponge and wet it before placing in shell.
- Add seed on top.
- Be sure to sprinkle with water daily.
- Soon you'll have grass in a shell.

KIDS: Please attempt only under adult supervision!



My Struggle

Hemophilia is a difficult thing to live with, especially for a soccer player like me. With this painting, I metaphorically personified my struggle, comparing Hemophilia to a noose tied around my neck. But despite it I remain upright and pushing forth because that's all I can do. Even though my dreams of becoming a professional soccer player won't become a reality, Art has been my escape . Everything seems to

happen for a reason in my life and whereas my past dreams were of packing the crowds into the stadiums, something inside me tells me I'll be packing the crowds into galleries instead.

- *Ramiro Gomez*

Current News

NHF's 56th Annual Meeting:

Pathways to a Healthier Tomorrow

Register online for NHF's 56th Annual Meeting, this year in Dallas. Visit www.hemophilia.org/annualmeeting to register and learn more about the Meeting, which will be held November 4 to 6, 2004.

NCHS is a proud sponsor of NHF and will attend the 56th Annual Meeting. To find us, look for the Pucker Powder Candy dispenser.

A Safe and Healthy Return to School



As the summer's glare begins to fade, the season turns to a sudden reminder that school is nigh. What follows are some important guidelines designed to help both parents and students make a safe and healthy transition from the rites of summer to the halls of learning.

Perhaps most important is completion of an accurate, comprehensive health and emergency contact form. Make an appointment to visit the school nurse and apprise him or her of any condition, such as hemophilia. Do not forget to arrange that your medications (i.e. factor, nasal spray, oral anti-fibrinolytic agents, etc.) be stored appropriately at school.

Parents (and schools) are encouraged to eliminate high-fat and empty-calorie munchies. Pack your children healthy snacks (i.e. fresh fruit, low-fat dairy products as well as bottled water or 100% fruit juices). Soft drink consumption should be restricted due to the high caloric count in each can of soda.

Backpack safety is emphatically promoted since backpacks are a part of every-day school attire. Backpacks should have wide, padded shoulder straps that do not dig into the shoulders, cause pain and restrict circulation. Look for a padded backing to protect against sharp objects in the pack. It is also recommended to pack *light*—never more than 10 to 20 percent of the student's body weight—and to use both shoulder straps. This can prevent curvature of the spine resulting from prolonged heavy loads. Students also may choose a rolling backpack, however these still must be lifted when climbing stairs or getting in and out of vehicles.

Whenever possible sit in the back seat of any car—away from windshields and explosive dashboard mounted airbags. Always use seatbelts and booster seats correctly, as they can save lives. Children are reminded to remain seated at all times while a car or bus is in motion, and not to horse around. Drivers are distracted enough, with cell phones, radios, DVD players and the like now common place, and do not need rambunctious kids to detach them even further from the job at hand.

Physical education and sports inspire a healthy mind and body. Exercise makes stronger muscles that subsequently protect the joints. Kids are encouraged to choose swimming, walking or bicycling as excellent physical activity choices.

Once in school, you'll want to stay there and not miss any days due to illness. A cold is the number one reason why kids visit the doctor and miss school. A cold is an infection of the upper respiratory system, which means it affects the nose, throat and ears. Many viruses can cause colds, but the most common one is the rhinovirus.

There is no cure or vaccine for a cold; the human body's immune system is the best defense against that and other illnesses. Unfortunately, there are times when such viruses simply take over, replicating more viruses. With colds, mucus drops are sneezed into the air, then breathed in—spreading a cold from person to person. A cold also can be caught by touching the nose or eyes after handling a contaminated school desk, computer or doors.

It is usually two to three days before the following flu

or cold symptoms may appear: low fever, watery eyes, body chills, coughing, sore throat, lethargy, runny nose, and congestion. Although colds don't get better any faster when medications are applied, some do help to relieve symptoms.

These include:

- Analgesics/antipyretics—for headaches, fever or muscle aches
- Decongestants—to shrink swollen nasal linings and make it easier to breathe
- Antihistamines—for drying up mucus and stopping runny noses and sneezing
- Lozenges and sprays—to soothe a sore throat
- Ophthalmic decongestants—for minor eye symptoms such as itching and redness.

First and foremost, however, always check with your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions about any of your medications.

Other ways to prevent a cold, or to feel better when you have a cold, include consuming hot foods or drinks, which help to soothe coughs and sore throats. A steamy shower or humidifier will aid a stuffy nose by loosening mucus. Additionally, get plenty of sleep/relaxation, drink lots of fluids and don't forget to blow your nose. Last but not least, do not forget to wash your hands frequently with soap and water or to use one of the popular pump hand sanitizers that are available.

Good luck during the new academic school year, and may your return be safe and healthy.

Richard Aguilar, Jr., Pharm.D.
Director of Pharmacy Operations



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