

HEALTH MATTERS

Kidney Classes Tackle Disease

Multicultural approach earns high honors

BY RAYMOND RENDLEMAN
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A dedicated group of volunteer educators has focused on the kidney to battle its connection with an epidemic of heart disease, obesity, diabetes and drug use.

Often forcing painful, time-consuming treatments and early death, kidney disease alters the lives of 26 million Americans this year, up 30 percent from the year before. The Multicultural Integrated Kidney Education (MIKE) Program aims to reverse those outcomes for future generations.

Recently honored with a Public Health Hero award from the Multnomah County Health Department, the MIKE program is geared to inner-city high-school teachers and students.

"In contrast to a kiss-and-tell approach, where you kiss a subject, tell about it and leave, the MIKE program really changes the context of people's lives," says Dr. Cheryl Neal, the program president who founded it as tribute to the work of her hus-



Venasha Williams (from left), Pablo Juan, Dr. Cheryl Neal and Antonio Askew celebrate the success of a multicultural approach to learning about keeping your kidney healthy and preventing heart disease, obesity and diabetes.

band, Dr. Michael Hartnett, after he died of lymphoma in 2000.

One of the first things that students recognize is the importance of giving up soft drinks in favor of water. They construct models of a kidney's filtration system using household objects like rags, colanders, bowls, sponges and baskets.

Later on in the program, groups visit a dialysis center and the anatomy lab at Oregon Health Sciences University. Although one of the program's goals involves encouraging minority students to enter health professions, it begins with challenging the assumptions that come with various economic

backgrounds.

Wrapping up semesters at three schools this year, the program aims to expand to five by next year.

The public is invited to learn more at MIKEprogram.org or at a MIKE open house on Wednesday, May 21 from 3:30 to 7 p.m. at 9340 S.W. Barnes Road, Suite 100B.

Streaks for Stroke Supports

Salon assists health campaign awareness

In a month-long event called Streaks for Stroke, Robert's of Portland salon, Providence Stroke Center and the American Heart Association have teamed up to educate the public about stroke risk and recognizing the signs of stroke.

The event kicked off May 3, at Lloyd Center Mall when Robert's stylists offered free red hair extensions to anyone wanting

to show their support for stroke awareness. Dozens of people left the mall wearing a bright red streak in their hair. At a table nearby, Providence nurses offered blood pressure screenings and helped people assess their risk of having a stroke.

Salons around the country have taken part in a similar program, which has proven to be an effective way to increase stroke awareness.

Stroke is the third leading cause of death in America. On average, every 45 seconds someone suffers a stroke.



Free red hair extensions are given to customers of Roberts of Portland Salon in a promotion to educate the public about stroke risk and recognizing the signs of stroke.

HEALTHWATCH

Big Brother & Big Sisters -- Saturday, May 17 from 10 to 11 a.m., this special sibling class is for ages 3-6, to help prepare them for their new role as a big brother or sister. Parents must be present. To register, call 503-574-6595.

Ready or Not? -- Thursday, May 28, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., learn how to prepare your family for a major disaster. The class is free. To register, call 503-335-3500.

Childbirth Preparation -- Fridays, beginning May 30, from 7 to 9 p.m., the four-week series to help first-time parents prepare for a more comfortable labor and delivery with lectures, practice and discussions; \$85 per couple. To register, call 503-574-6595.

Infant Massage -- Wednesdays, beginning June 4, from 6:45 to 8 p.m., this four-week class teaches the rhythmic massage strokes designed to relax your baby (up to 6 months) and you; \$45 per couple and baby. To register, call 503-574-6595.

Breaking the Cycle Men's Conference -- Saturday, June 7, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Calvary Christian Center, 126 N.E. Alberta St., will host the workshop for men of all ages to discuss health, nutrition, addiction, communication and other issues facing men today. To register, call 503-422-8573.

Managing Chronic Hepatitis C -- Third Wednesday of each month at 5 p.m., the informative session led by a registered nurse to help manage side effects of medications and dosage preparations and administration; doctor's referral required. To register, call 503-251-6313.

Maternity Water Workout -- Helping new moms regain muscle tone, strength and flexibility, all in the support and freedom of the water. Call 503-256-4000 for more information.

Peer-to-Peer Recovery -- Peer-to-peer education recovery is a free nine-week course for mental health patients. Mentors who are recovering from mental illness are trained to teach coping strategies to others. For more information, call 503-228-5692.

Bereavement Support Groups -- Free, safe confidential group meetings for those who have experienced the death of a loved one offered on various nights and locations. For information and registration, call 503-215-4622.

Leg Alert Screening -- Check for peripheral arterial disease with this safe, simple screening using ankle and arm blood pressure. The fee is \$40. To schedule an appointment, call 503-251-6137.

Stroke Alert Screening -- Check your carotid arteries with a painless ultrasound to assess your risk. Fee \$40. To schedule a screening, call 503-251-6137.

Parenting Classes -- Newborns don't come with instruction manuals, but parents and parents-to-be can learn about a variety of topics from pain and childbirth to breastfeeding to infant CPR and much more. For a schedule of events, call 503-574-6595 or visit: providence.org/classes.

Cancer Resource Center -- Providence St. Vincent Medical Center and the American Red Cross have joined forces to create the first in-hospital resource center providing books, printed material, computer access and more for individuals and families dealing with cancer. The center is open Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

PIL Allstar Banquet

Thursday May 29th, 2008

Time 7pm - 9pm

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