

NEWS RELEASE
St. Mary's County Health Department

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**HEALTH DEPARTMENT RECOGNIZES VOLUNTEERS DURING NATIONAL
VOLUNTEER WEEK APR 15-21**

Volunteers give more than their time to the community.

(LEONARDTOWN, MD) April 11, 2007 – Giving time. Touching lives. Volunteers at St. Mary's County Health Department are getting special recognition this week for the work they do and the compassion they give to the people whose lives they touch. The Reproductive Health and Family Planning program is highlighting the work of four special volunteers whose efforts have made a difference in the program's success.

Long term volunteers, Sister Agnese Neumann, a nurse practitioner, and Dr. Susanne Ashton, an experienced OB-GYN physician, deserve special recognition, according to Cindy Spalding, Administrative Officer for the St. Mary's County Health Department who records the many hours that they contribute each month. Women's health care services has been the focus of their contribution since they began volunteering long days in the clinic five years ago. Through their commitment they have helped countless numbers of women who lack adequate health insurance coverage for their women's health needs.

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“Both volunteers are strong advocates for their clients’ health and have used their extensive networks in the community to help women gain access to a wide range of services individually suited to their problems,” said Caroline D’Wynter, RN, Reproductive Health and Family Planning Clinic manager.

Another long term volunteer, Catherine Thomas, provides volunteer services every week at the health department’s Teen Walk-In Clinic at the Jarboe Center in Lexington Park. The clinic now in its third year offers counseling and information to teens to help them choose healthy behaviors and make healthy choices as they navigate those difficult teen years.

A fourth volunteer, Annette Jackman, who has helped at the health department since 1999 provides office support in the Medical Vital Records unit. In addition to filing reports, and placing lab reports and doctor notes into patient charts, she also assists clinic staff by preparing charts for the day’s clients.

Together in the last nine months, these four women contributed 571 of the 879 total volunteer hours at the health department. An analysis of the financial impact of these volunteers on the health department, indicates an impressive cost savings. “In tough fiscal times, like those facing the health department now, volunteerism becomes even more important,” noted Deputy Health Officer Tracy Kubinec. “In this fiscal year alone, our health department has seen a cost savings of nearly \$20,000, thanks to these and other volunteers.”

But the real benefit is to the community, adds Kubinec. “By any measure, the improved health of

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women who might not otherwise receive care, the wise decision making of our young people who enter our walk-in clinic, and the support provided to the caregivers who take care for our patients, all adds up to a better quality of life for St. Mary's County residents fortunate enough to come in contact with our volunteers.”

For additional information about volunteering at the St. Mary's County Health Department, please contact our volunteer coordinator, Cindy Spalding, at 301-475-4328.

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Photo #1 caption: Sr. Agnese Neuman volunteered 192 hours over the last 9 months at the health department..

Photo #2 caption: Dr. Susanne Ashton prepares a patient chart.

Photo #3 caption: Annette Jackman works in the medical records program and supports the Family Planning and Reproductive Health Clinic.