



**Washington Association
for Community Health**

Community Health Centers
Advancing Quality Care for All

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

A Message From Bob



IT IS TEMPTING TO PUT 2020 FIRMLY IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR AND LEAVE IT IN THE DUST.

Yet, as unimaginably challenging as it was, it was equally inspirational and promising to engage with our community health centers as they responded to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Last year required the best from all of us. Our community health centers were put to the test like never before and delivered on the mission and promise of healthcare access, innovation, and value beyond what seemed possible. It required continuous learning, adaptation, and perseverance, and we had to make innumerable and complex decisions from one moment to the next. Resilience may be an overused word during this time, but it is an apt description of the community health center spirit. Community health centers rose to every challenge with courage and commitment to ensure the health and safety of their staff, patients, and communities.

In the early spring of 2020, as we began understanding the true crisis of the pandemic, health centers experienced devastating financial losses due to the suspension of dental care and other non-emergency services.

During the months following the murder of George Floyd, as people around the world demanded racial justice, health centers were already on the front lines addressing health inequities. They called attention to the safety challenges of our vulnerable farm workers and advocated for the needs of diverse populations to local and state agencies, informing critical policy decisions throughout the crisis. By the end of 2020, we saw our community health centers step up once more to deliver lifesaving vaccinations to our communities.

It has been an honor for the Association to work alongside our health centers through it all, serving as a conduit to policy makers, providing guidance on ever changing regulations, delivering technical assistance, and convening forums to share, learn, and encourage each other. I am proud of Association staff for finding new ways to serve our members, including the launch of a podcast to deliver expert insights to time-crunched health center staff.

In 2020 we welcomed four new CEOs to our membership: Jim Coffee of Cowlitz Family Health Center, Meredith Vaughan of Neighborcare Health, Rhonda Hauff of Yakima Neighborhood Health Services, and Jodi Joyce of Unity Care Northwest. They all proved their mettle by leading their organizations through unprecedented challenges.

To say that the COVID-19 crisis and racial injustice reckoning have changed all our lives dramatically would be an understatement. And yet they have only deepened my respect for the community health center mission and proven its vitality.

I know that Washington's community health centers played an essential role in our state's successful pandemic response. Every health center leader gave 200% of themselves to their staff, patients, and communities in 2020. They have inspired me and given me confidence that we will continue to advance healthcare access and health equity in Washington state. Thank you all for your dedication and service.

Yours for community health,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marsalli". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing 'M' and a cursive 'i'.

Bob Marsalli
Chief Executive Officer

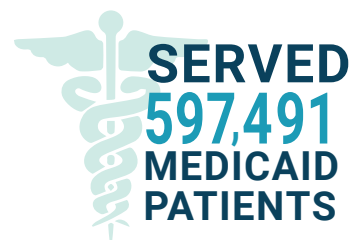
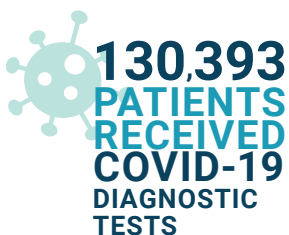


Community Health Center Impact

Washington State's community health centers (CHCs) provide essential health care to patients, regardless of their income or ability to pay.

At The Association, we support the work of our member health centers to make sure that everyone can access quality health care. We work to expand the reach of health centers and improve the health of the people they serve.

In 2020, Washington's 27 community health centers served over 1.1 million patients.



27 Member Health Centers *Across the State*

The Washington Association for Community Health includes 27 member community health centers across the state. Many of our members operate multiple clinic locations, providing health care at over 300 sites in Washington.



1. Sea Mar Community Health Centers
2. Moses Lake Community Health Center
3. Cowlitz Family Health Center
4. Tri-Cities Community Health
5. Neighborcare Health
6. Community Health Care
7. Columbia Basin Health Association
8. International Community Health Services
9. Valley View Health Center
10. Health Care for the Homeless Network
11. Lake Roosevelt Community Health Center
12. CHC of Snohomish County
13. Mattawa Community Medical Clinic
14. Family Health Centers
15. Peninsula Community Health Services

16. Seattle Indian Health Board
17. North Olympic Healthcare Network
18. Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic
19. Unity Care NW
20. HealthPoint
21. The Native Project
22. Community Health of Central Washington
23. Yakima Neighborhood Health Services
24. Columbia Valley Community Health
25. NEW Health
26. Country Doctor Community Health
27. CHAS Health

Policy Advocacy And Implementation

The Association helps community health centers advocate for policies that provide affordable health care to more people. Our work has helped increase community health center capacity by securing funding for programs, workforce, and infrastructure.

Our 2020 Impact

Protecting the Health Care Safety Net is an ongoing priority of our policy work. During the 2020 session, the Legislature made necessary investments in the health care safety net by restoring assumed Medicaid program integrity savings from the previous session, increasing provider rates, continuing investments in the Medicaid Quality Improvement Program, and extending postpartum Medicaid coverage from 60 days to one year.

When the coronavirus began to significantly change prospective state revenues as the legislative session was ending, Governor Inslee vetoed much proposed new spending, including the extended Medicaid postpartum coverage. Fortunately, the health care safety net was largely protected from veto, with the Governor prioritizing public health.

In addition to COVID response, our federal advocacy work focused on long-term extensions of funding for public health and Medicaid programs, including the CHC Trust Fund, as well as funding for the National Health Service Corps and the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education program.

ADVOCATING FOR COVID RELIEF FUNDS

Ongoing outreach to our state's Congressional members and staff kept the urgency of COVID relief funding for community health centers top of mind. By demonstrating the critical role of CHCs in community-based COVID response and its financial impact, we helped secure \$118 million in total emergency funding for CHCs in 2020 (not including PPP).

Of the \$118 million, \$98 million came from federal stimulus bills, starting in April with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, followed by the CARES Act, Washington Expanding Capacity for Coronavirus Testing Awards, and subsequent federal funding disbursed through the Provider Relief Fund. The other \$20 million in emergency funding included Federal Communications Commission Telehealth Grants, and local, state, and NGO funds. CHCs received an additional \$48 million through the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP).

Supporting Pharmacy Rate Stability

Even amidst the challenges of responding to COVID-19, we saw a major effort on the part of some drug manufacturers to limit the ability of health centers to partner with local pharmacies to get 340B drugs to our patients. The Association participated in a national legal response, assisting the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) and others to force manufacturers to deal more fairly with CHCs. Additionally, we educated members of Congress about the issue and asked them to sign on to letters of concern to both manufacturers and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service officials.

SUPPORTING REIMBURSEMENT RATE STABILITY

When the Health Care Authority (HCA) proposed a new value-based payment contract that would effectively cut CHC payments, the Association quickly began negotiating to protect the APM4 Budget Proviso and the state's innovative value-based payment program. We asserted that HCA was failing to comply with a 2019-21 Budget Proviso by attempting to change the way health centers are paid without the required oversight and approval of the Office of Financial Management and the Legislature. Through protracted and sometimes tough negotiations, the Association was able to improve proposed contract terms, leading to CHCs ultimately agreeing to the contract amendment in 2021.



STAFF PROFILE: KATE WHITE TUDOR *Policy Advisor*

Kate White Tudor has served as the Association's policy advisor and lobbyist for 14 years, with her first legislative session on behalf of the health centers dating back to 2008. She has worked over the years to expand Medicaid eligibility, increase access to behavioral health, and secure capital funding to build new dental clinics. Among all her accomplishments, her policy problem solving during the pandemic has been the most rewarding to her.

During COVID, Kate served as a messenger between health centers and policy makers, following the Challenge Seattle response group and engaging with dozens of stakeholders to shape Governor Jay Inslee's proclamations to safely reopen non-emergency medical and dental services during the pandemic.

Farm Worker Advocacy

Early in the pandemic, Kate White Tudor identified the need for CHCs serving the state's farm workers to engage in advocacy and she quickly convened a group of Eastern Washington CHCs to troubleshoot the public health response to pandemic developments.

Kate established trusted communications channels between health centers and a variety of public entities, including local public health jurisdictions, the State Department of Health emergency response team, Department of Agriculture, and Governor Jay Inslee's office. This work addressed the urgent health challenges facing farm workers and guided critical decisions around testing agricultural workers, providing PPE, and ensuring the safety of workers in quarantine and isolation. Through Kate's advocacy, CHCs shared community-level expertise to shape state policy protecting our essential agricultural workforce and saving lives.



Capacity Building

The Association provides training and technical assistance to build the capacity of community health centers to deliver effective, evidence-based health care. In 2020, we explored how to host virtual trainings to enable our programming to continue. From support implementing social needs screening, to supporting our community's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, to amplifying our Medical Assistance Apprenticeship Program to meet the high industry demand for healthcare workers. Our services include one-on-one coaching, collaborative process improvement, and connections to industry experts.



New Podcast – Community Health Commute

The Association launched the inaugural episode of our new podcast, [Community Health Commute](#), in November 2020 with the initial issues designed to share best practices and key information related to COVID-19 prevention, preparedness, and response. Over the past year, The Association has continued to produce a 15-minute commute-friendly conversation with a variety of experts delivering guidance and insights to support community health centers' work throughout the pandemic and beyond. The podcast is designed to listen to while biking, walking, driving, or busing to work. Episodes are available on any streaming platform where you get your podcasts.



Association Internship Program

To build and diversify Association staff, The Association created a new internship program to attract candidates from various professional and cultural backgrounds with an interest in public health, low-income health care, social services, or public policy. Clarissa de Barros Lacerda, (pictured left) a graduate student at the University of Washington Evans School of Public Policy, became our first Public Policy Intern in the spring of 2020. Of her experience, Clarissa stated, "The work the Association does is crucial for people who struggle every day trying to be healthy in such an inequitable society, and I'm glad I had the chance to be part of your team. I'm sure other Evans School students will also benefit from this internship in the future."



STAFF PROFILE: ALYSSA BURGESS
Workforce Improvement & Innovation Manager

In her role as the Association's Workforce Improvement & Innovation Manager, Alyssa Burgess is responsible for overseeing our Medical Assistant Apprenticeship Program which is a 12-month program that prepares students to take the Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA) test through the National Healthcareer Association. Over the course of the program, students are required to attend 3 in-person lab days with an expert instructor to practice and demonstrate mastery of hands-on technical skills.

Due to social distancing and quarantine requirements, Alyssa was required to think creatively and establish an alternative approach to how the in-person lab days would be held. And, with the increasing interest and need for Medical Assistance in Washington state, Alyssa also was faced with the challenge of accommodating an increasing number of students enrolled in the apprenticeship program.

By revising the schedule, adding additional lab day offerings, and contracting with more instructors, Alyssa was able to meet COVID requirements so the program could continue moving forward. Additionally, Alyssa has managed the tremendous interest and growth in the program. Typically, the program manages 10 cohorts over the course of a year, and in 2021 it is trending that this number will reach 20 cohorts.





Convening Community Health Centers

By working together, community health centers exchange ideas, identify shared concerns, and develop solutions that benefit patients. In 2020 the Association facilitated collaboration between health centers through online convenings, workgroups, and the online discussion forum on our website.

COVID Roundtable

As we all learned and adapted to the pandemic as it evolved, the collective wisdom and creativity of the community health centers was invaluable. With Community Health Network of Washington (CHNW), the Association hosted an online weekly COVID Roundtable to discuss new developments, share individual challenges and successes, translate new regulations, identify needs, and develop action plans and responses. These conversations helped highlight the extreme financial impact of dental services being suspended and a strategy to secure needed government funding.

"This has been an extraordinary time to start in my role at Unity Care NW. I'm not sure I would still be standing without the extraordinary support that you, and a chorus of others, have extended to me and our organization during this [COVID-19] crisis. It has been a true honor to see this pandemic bring out the best in those whom I have the privilege of working with." – Jodi Joyce, CEO, Unity Care NW, 5/21/20

COVID Financial Impact Analysis

Early in the pandemic, when health centers were faced with necessary service reductions, such as suspending dental and non-emergency visits and reducing all face-to-face services, it quickly became clear that this crisis response would take a heavy financial toll. The Association hired national accounting firm CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) to conduct a financial analysis of projected impacts from these operational changes over a six-month period. The analysis forecast losses that would devastate our healthcare safety net system, including 167 clinic closures, 8,000 staff layoffs, and \$473 million in lost revenue. This data enabled us to generate media attention about the situation and advocate with local and federal policymakers for emergency funding.



STAFF PROFILE: **KARIE NICHOLAS** *Data Analyst*

Undoubtedly, the COVID pandemic has impacted our work and staff in 2020. Our staff had to learn to communicate and collaborate virtually, and many staff had to pivot their roles and projects to accommodate quarantine and social distancing restrictions. But no staff member was impacted quite so dramatically as Karie Nicholas, Data Analyst for The Association.

Since 2012, Karie has been part of the Thurston County Medical Reserve Corp, a community-based group of local medical and non-medical personnel who serve as volunteers during a public health emergency. Karie was called on to provide onsite service at the Valley View Community Health Center to assist with case investigations, COVID testing, and vaccination. With a background in epidemiology and experience with community health centers, Karie was a critical frontline worker donating her time each weekend to volunteering.

Karie's service gave her a new perspective to the work of The Association, "the pandemic brought forward how valuable the relationship is between the state and federal governments and health centers. I think it has made clear the value that community health centers have in our communities and in serving our public." Everyone at The Association is very proud of Karie and grateful for her service.

Financial information

Financial summary for 2020 (April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021)

Revenues.....	\$2,378,211
Expenses.....	\$2,168,167
Assets.....	\$4,080,756
Liabilities.....	\$1,595,955



Washington Association for Community Health Staff



Kristina Alnajjar
*Director of Equity and
Workforce Development*



Jessica Bateman
Health Policy Associate



Terri Blazell-Wayson
*Emergency Preparedness
& Group Purchasing
Coordinator*



Alyssa Burgess
*Workforce Improvement &
Innovation Manager*



Yasmine Duenas
*Workforce Support
Specialist*



Deanna Fluke
*Executive Assistant
& Communications
Coordinator*



Patricia Gepert
Health Access Coordinator



David Gonzalez
*Behavioral Health
Coordinator*



Eric Griffith
*Director of Finance
& Operations*



Bob Marsalli
Chief Executive Officer



Karie Nicholas
Data Analyst



Amanda Nicholson
*Education Systems
Administrator*



Courtney Smith
*Director of Government
Affairs*



Hannah Stanfield
*Care Improvement &
Innovation Manager*



Kate White Tudor
Lobbyist and Policy Advisor

The following staff left the Association to pursue other opportunities:



Chris Kaasa
Senior Policy Advisor



Ian Randall
Senior Strategy Advisor



Ashley Lile
*Director of Training &
Technical Assistance*



Katherine Lechner
*Workforce Development
Manager*



Clarissa de Barros Lacerda
2020 Public Policy Intern

2020 Association Board Members

Nieves Gomez, CEO, [Columbia Basin Health Association](#)

David Olson, CEO, [Columbia Valley Community Health](#)

Aaron Wilson, CEO, [CHAS Health](#)

David Flentge, President & CEO, [Community Health Care](#)

Joe Vessey, CEO, [CHC of Snohomish County](#)

Angela Gonzalez, CEO, [Community Health of Central Washington](#)

Raleigh Watts, Executive Director, [Country Doctor Community Health](#)

- Brandy Taylor and Matt Logalbo served as co-interim Executive Directors from September 2020 - February 2021. Brandy Taylor has served as interim Executive Director since February 2021

Dian Cooper, CEO, [Cowlitz Family Health Center](#)

- Jim Coffee appointed CEO in October 2020

Jesus Hernandez, CEO, [Family Health Centers](#)

Lisa Yohalem, CEO, [HealthPoint](#)

TJ Cosgrove, CHS Division Director, [Health Care for the Homeless Network](#)

Teresita Batayola, CEO, [International Community Health Services](#)

Joseph Pakootas, Executive Director, [Lake Roosevelt Community Health Center](#)

Sheila Berschauer, CEO, [Moses Lake Community Health Center](#)

Michael Erikson, CEO, [Neighborcare Health](#)

- Meredith Vaughan appointed interim CEO in October 2020

Desiree Sweeney, CEO, [NEW Health](#)

Michael Maxwell, CEO, [North Olympic Healthcare Network](#)

Jennifer Kreidler-Moss, CEO, [Peninsula Community Health Services](#)

Mary Bartolo, Executive Vice President, [Sea Mar Community Health Centers](#)

Esther Lucero, Executive Director, [Seattle Indian Health Board](#)

Toni Lodge, Executive Director, [The NATIVE Project](#)

Jim Davis, CEO, [Tri-Cities Community Health](#)

Jodi Joyce, Executive Director, [Unity Care Northwest](#)

Gaelon Spradley, Executive Director, [Valley View Health Center](#)

Anita Monoian, President & CEO, [Yakima Neighborhood Health Services](#)

- Rhonda Hauff appointed interim President & CEO in October 2020

Carlos Olivares, CEO, [Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic](#)





Washington Association for Community Health

Community Health Centers
Advancing Quality Care for All

Our Mission: To strengthen and advocate for Washington's Community Health Centers as they build healthcare access, innovation and value.

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