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CLAY COUNTY PUBLIC  
HEALTH CENTER

ANNUAL REPORT

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2023



## MISSION

Through service, partnership, and leadership we deliver the essential public health services of prevention, promotion, and protection to improve the health and well-being of all communities in Clay County.

## VISION

Empowering all people in Clay County to lead healthier lives.

## BOARD OF HEALTH



**Kathy Ellermeier**  
Chair



**Dr. Dan Purdom**  
Vice Chair



**Courtney Cole**  
Treasurer



**Dr. John Barth**  
Secretary



**Debbie Florido**  
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## PUBLIC HEALTH LEADERSHIP TEAM

**Gary E. Zaborac**, MS, Director of Public Health

**Darrell Meinke**, MPH, Deputy Director

**Robert Gilliland**, CEHS, Section Chief, Environmental Health Protection

**Jami Hrenchir**, MPA, SPHR, Section Chief, Operations/HR Director

**Jason Stalling**, DHSc, MBA, Section Chief, Community Health Promotion

**Ashley Wegner**, MPH, CIC, Section Chief, Health Planning and Policy

# A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Welcome to our 2023 Annual Report. The following pages offer a brief review of the many accomplishments of your nationally accredited Clay County Public Health Center (CCPHC) during 2023. As our county continues to grow, our Board of Trustees and dedicated staff work tirelessly to make sure we deliver the highest quality of service possible to our community.

In 2023, our health center focused on program growth and celebrating milestones. At the beginning of the year, we kicked off our new Strategic Plan that will run from 2023-2026. This plan gives us a well-thought-out roadmap to grow in the areas of Community Health Improvement, Excellence in People as well as Operational Excellence and Sustainability. We intend to use this plan to grow our programs for years to come.



This year, we also continued to grow and increase our partnerships in the community. One of our top partnerships is our work with the Northland Health Alliance and the incredible organizations that are committed to the effort. We work with these partners and members of the community to assess the health of our community and work through coordinated efforts to improve the health of Clay County. During our work on the Community Health Assessment and the Community Health Improvement Plan, we focus on the areas of access to mental-behavioral health services, access to healthy food, and access to transportation.

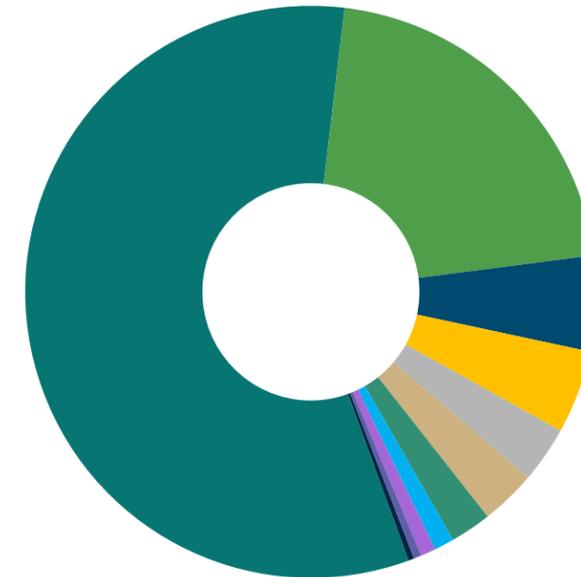
The health center celebrated two large achievements this year as well. In September, we celebrated our 70th anniversary. It was incredibly rewarding to celebrate with our community and look back at how far we have come since we were founded in 1953. The services we offer have truly made a positive difference in the health of Clay County.

As we closed out the year, we celebrated another large achievement. Gary E. Zaborac, our Director of Public Health for the last 20 years, retired at the end of 2023. I am proud to have taken over the role of Director of Public Health as of January 1st, 2024 after working at the health center in a variety of roles for the last 18 years. I grew up in Clay County and the Northland continues to be my home. I understand how important our organization is to the community and how important our community is to our success. It's an incredible honor to serve Clay County and I'm humbled and appreciative of the opportunity. I want to thank our community, partners, and staff for all the work you do to make this such a great community to raise our families.

Darrell Meinke  
Director of Public Health

# 2023 FINANCIALS

## REVENUE



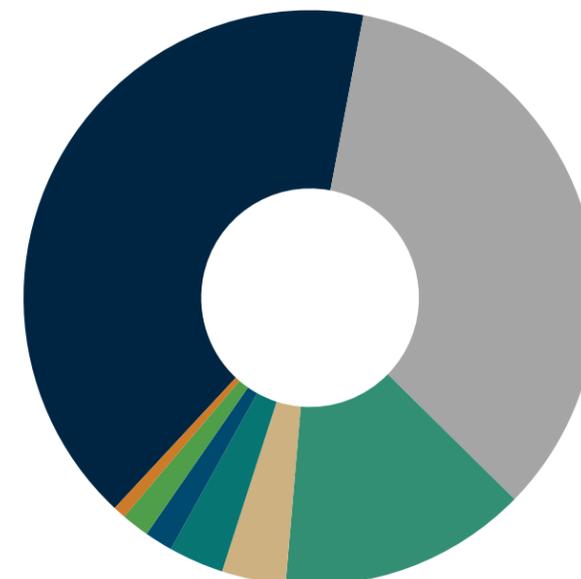
Local Taxes	\$5,357,245.07
Federal Grants/Contracts	\$1,965,834.41
Environmental Health Fees	\$503,647.22
ARPA*	\$439,544.75
Vital Records	\$295,436.00
Insurance Billing	\$293,336.13
Other**	\$217,122.24
Medicaid/MC+	\$105,301.75
State Grants/Contracts	\$78,883.59
Clinic Fees	\$41,208.17
Interest	\$29,359.88
Medicare	\$196.22

**TOTAL 2023 REVENUE : \$9,327,115.43**

\*Federal grant for COVID-19 relief

\*\*Facility rent (Rodgers Health), miscellaneous refunds and reimbursements

## EXPENDITURES



Benefits*	\$4,911,265.99
Salaries	\$4,113,692.03
Contract Services	\$1,676,104.58
Capital Expenses**	\$432,046.60
Other***	\$372,084.57
Supplies	\$189,531.35
Utilities	\$187,598.39
Travel	\$85,216.38

**TOTAL 2023 EXPENDITURES:  
\$11,967,539.89**

\*Board voted to make extra payments to pension obligation fund

\*\*For the replacement/updates of facilities and equipment

\*\*\*Banking fees, vehicle expense, vaccine costs, interest expense

The information on this page has been calculated in advance of the health center's annual audit. Therefore, the information is subject to minor changes.

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH



## OPERATIONS



# ALLIED FORCES

As active members of the Northland Health Alliance, Clay County staff put in many hours to promote the organization and its efforts.

Clay County Public Health Center (CCPHC) has always been a big part of the Northland Health Alliance (NHA). Before it was even formed, CCPHC's director was one of the local leaders that realized that hospitals and health departments should consolidate efforts and work together on their required community health assessments (CHA). They could also work together on the health priorities identified in each CHA and improve health in the Northland as a team instead of as competitors.

Director Zaborac was elected as the first chairperson of NHA in 2014 and held the role through the end of 2023. Similarly, many members of CCPHC staff have participated in the various task forces, chaired task forces, or led the work on special projects.

One of NHA's ongoing goals is to engage the community and include feedback from the people who live, work and play in the Northland. Six events, called "Community Conversations," were held throughout the summer and fall of 2023 in various areas across the Northland. Each event focused on just one of the three priority initiatives of NHA: transportation, access to food or mental health. CCPHC staff were a key part of making these public forums possible by facilitating and arranging the venues, childcare and food.

As chair of the marketing task force, CCPHC Communications Specialist Kelsey Neth mobilized the group to support the Community Conversations by creating promotional materials, including advertising. Approximately 75 community members attended the events in total. As a result, several productive and enlightening discussions occurred and gave NHA task forces new opportunities and insights into what matters most to the community.

"We had more participation than we've ever

had at these types of events so that was super exciting," said Monica Miller, CCPHC community engagement specialist. "It made me want to cry a little, in a good way, seeing everyone interact and learn from each other."

Other NHA events CCPHC staff organized in 2023 included a smaller focus group at CCPHC and an event in September to kick-off NHA's advisory council and thank those who participated in forums over the summer.

Although the Northland Health Alliance has made great steps to be an impactful organization, there finally came a time where the work required more than what employees from the member organizations like CCPHC could accomplish. So in 2023, NHA hit a big milestone and hired its first staff member, Emily Fundermann, as executive director. This allows someone to focus 100% on the alliance and its goals. Hopes are high that she will bring the organization into a new era, accomplishing more every year to improve the health of those in the Northland.

**Below:** Community Engagement Specialist Monica Miller speaks at one of the six Community Conversations events hosted by NHA. Photo by Jason Cole, Excelsior Springs Citizen.



- 134 complaints investigated
- 1,530 food establishment inspections
- 297 temporary food permits & inspections
- 3,690 food handlers and 277 food managers trained
- 416 pool/spa inspections
- 163 on-site sewage inspections
- 25 annual lodging inspections

- 9,271 birth and 13,542 death certificate requests processed
- 2 capital renewal projects (A/V systems, HVAC)
- 100% staff completion rate of HIPAA training
- 902 purchase orders processed
- 81,515 website visitors
- 744,645 views of social media posts

# 2023 AT A GLANCE

- 309 STI clients tested, 108 STIs treated
- 9,591 immunizations administered
- 40 school immunization clinics held
- 6,428 applications of fluoride varnish at school dental clinics
- 175 dental sealants provided
- 1,186 WIC participants
- 78% of WIC participants initiated breastfeeding, 39% still breastfeeding at 3 months, 17% at 12 months

- 3,291 communicable disease cases investigated
- 1,923 households served through Harvesters food pantry
- 69 enrollees in Happy Bottoms diaper distribution program
- 1,074 hours logged of volunteer/intern/student hours
- 13 community coalition meetings regularly attended

## COMMUNITY HEALTH PROMOTION



## HEALTH PLANNING & POLICY



# END OF AN ERA

The community celebrates the retirement and legacy of Clay County's longest-serving director of public health.

On December 14, community members and local leaders gathered at the health center to celebrate the retirement of Public Health Director Gary E. Zaborac. After a 38-year career in public health, with 20 years at Clay County Public Health Center, Zaborac made the decision to retire at the end of 2023.

"It's been an honor and privilege to serve the people of Clay County for the last 20 years," said Zaborac. "My family and I remain extremely grateful for the opportunity."

Zaborac began his career as an environmental health sanitarian at Peoria City/County Health Department after graduating from Western Illinois University with a degree in microbiology. He experienced public health up close - inspecting restaurants, private sewage disposal systems and private water wells, and working in lead abatement and rodent control.

Zaborac earned a masters degree in health services administration from the University of St. Francis and moved on to become director at two rural health departments in Illinois. It was in one of these roles that Zaborac knew he made the right decision to work in public health, after helping an elderly couple get fresh and affordable running water in their home for the first time.

In 2004, Zaborac moved to Clay County, Missouri to become director of Clay County Public Health Center. Under Zaborac's direction, a modern health department

building opened in 2007. In 2015, CCPHC became one of the first 100 accredited health departments in the nation. He was also a key figure in establishing the Northland Health Alliance in 2014, allowing local health organizations a better way to work together to address top health issues in the area.

Zaborac was forced to make numerous difficult decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic as health officer for the county. During this time, more eyes were on public health than ever before and many public health directors across the country were leaving their positions due to high levels of stress and criticism. However, Zaborac remained a steady leader throughout it all, producing emergency orders, guiding his staff and expediting protection for community members through CCPHC's involvement in Operation Safe.

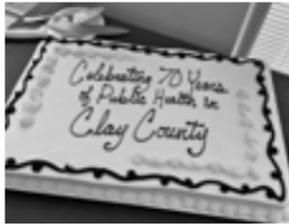
"Gary's dedication to the health of Clay County is unmatched," said Darrell Meinke, former deputy director and incoming director of CCPHC. "The positive impact he left on our organization and the community will serve as the foundation for our community health efforts in the future."

**Right:** Springfield-Greene County Assistant Director Jon Mooney and Missouri Center for Public Health Excellence Executive Director Spring Schmidt presented Zaborac with the first "Gary E. Zaborac Award," which will honor individuals who provide outstanding leadership in public health for years to come.

**Far Right:** A small collection of moments from across Zaborac's 20 years at CCPHC.



## 70 YEARS OF PUBLIC HEALTH



Clay County Public Health Center was established in 1953, after citizens voted to approve a mill tax to fund it. On September 20, 2023, health center staff hosted an open house to celebrate 70 years of service. In addition to food and a speech by Dir. Zaborac, programs hosted tables in the lobby for citizens to walk around and learn more.

## LEADERS IN EQUITY WORK

In December, Ashley Wegner, section chief of Health Planning and Policy, presented in a NACCHO (National Association of County and City Health Officials) webinar. This webinar introduced the Equitable Workplace at Local Health Departments toolkit. This new resource aims to be a robust tool for organizations to address topics of diversity, equity and inclusion.

As part of the toolkit, CCPHC contributed a case study about the launch of its Health Equity Action Team (HEAT). It shared how the group built its foundation by creating a charter, a logic model and subcommittees. It also outlined the ways the group worked to support change management, including hiring external consultants to advise and provide training, plus conducting an organization-wide culture assessment.

"We wanted to be intentional about practicing what we're preaching," said Wegner. "We understood that getting us to a good place internally was necessary for us to have any impact at the community level."

## SENSORY FRIENDLY

To take steps towards being a more welcoming place, CCPHC became certified as Sensory Inclusive by Kulture City in June. This means that visitors are offered sensory bags, a quiet area, and a social story on the website, all of which can prevent overstimulation or anxiety.



## FAMILY FUN, SEVEN YEARS RUNNING

The 7th annual Family Fun Day was held on Saturday, Sept. 16. This was the second year CCPHC hosted it at North Kansas City's Macken Park. The event was bigger and better than ever. Families in attendance could take home free books, participate in activities for prizes, do yoga, listen to live music, win raffle prizes, make crafts, pet a snake, enjoy food trucks, get a balloon animal, pick up free diapers and groceries, meet public safety staff and interact with over 30 different local organizations.



## SAVING LIVES WITH NARCAN

In September, Narcan, otherwise known as naloxone, became available in the health center lobby for the public to easily access at no cost. Narcan is a tool that can be used help someone who has overdosed on opioids. Each box contains two doses. Visitors can also grab a packet of helpful information with instructions, treatment resources and more. This effort was made possible through funding from the Missouri Institute of Mental Health. In 2023, 542 naloxone kits were distributed.

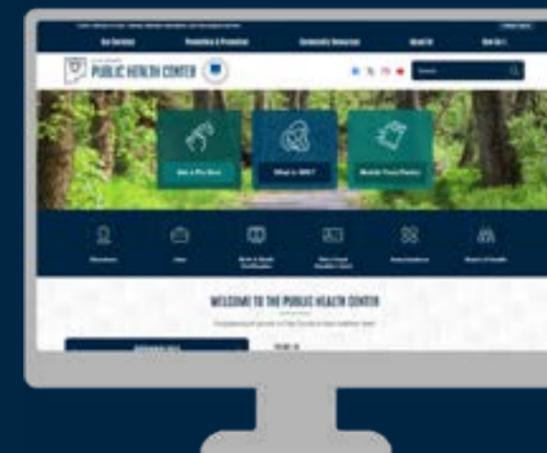


## LESSONS LEARNED FROM COVID-19

In July, multiple staff members traveled to Denver for the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) annual conference. Two members of the epidemiology team, Nkolika Obiesie and Ashley Wegner, were selected to give a poster presentation during the event. The presentation looked at the health center's work with long-term care facilities to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infections. Although there were many lessons learned, one conclusion was that building community relationships and partnerships before disaster strikes can yield better results.



## REFRESHING NEW LOOK



CCPHC's website, clayhealth.com, underwent a redesign during 2023. The communications specialist worked with website provider CivicPlus to improve the layout of the website so visitors can more quickly find helpful information. The new look launched on September 20.

## COMMIT TO THE BIT

Did you know - there are six internal committees that staff members can serve on to make CCPHC a better place? Here are some brief highlights from their work in 2023.

**Social & Wellness:** This group, focused on employee satisfaction and health, organized an off-site Day of Wellness, National Public Health Week celebrations, a Giving Tree for the lobby, a Halloween decorating contest, employee appreciation day at T-Shotz, dessert contests and much more.

**Education:** This committee planned all sessions for each month's all-staff meeting, which typically included topics presented or hosted by other committees.

**Safety:** This group reviewed incident reports, evaluated facility needs after a power outage, implemented panic buttons for frontline staff, updated the emergency procedures guide and led tornado and earthquake drills.

**Continuous Improvement:** This team created a new customer service survey, provided quality improvement education, administered a PM/QI Culture & Staff survey, launched a suggestion box and started work on a survey that can be given to partners for feedback.

**Health Equity Action Team:** This committee, plus its subcommittee Staff Engagement, hosted leadership and all-staff trainings, a cultural potluck, Lunch & Learns, and STAG Day presentations. Read more under *Leaders in Equity Work*.

**Green Group:** Although this group was on hiatus for much of the year, staff continued to collect recycling and organize a community clean up day in April for Earth Day.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

In response to decreased vaccination rates, Clay County Public Health Center nurse Pat Carrington wrote a letter to the Courier-Tribune newspaper, sharing why she personally believes vaccination to be important. The letter was published in May 2023.

*"Important tasks fell behind during the pandemic. Rates are down for routine childhood vaccinations and now is the time to get caught up. Children entering day care, preschool or elementary school will be exposed to new groups of people and new germs. They need the protection of vaccines to help them stay healthy.*

*The parents of today's young children aren't old enough to have experienced the devastating effects of some vaccine preventable diseases such as polio and measles. Being of a certain age, I do remember, and I know people who were affected by these diseases. Growing up in Fulton, the home of the Missouri School for the Deaf, I had several childhood friends who were deaf due to measles.*

*I have relatives and friends who were affected by polio. We are so fortunate now to be able to prevent these and other diseases by vaccination.*

*The World Health Organization has listed vaccine hesitancy as a threat to global health. People may be hesitant to vaccinate for a variety of reasons.*

*Some people are complacent, thinking that they won't get any disease; some people lack confidence in the vaccine; and for some people, it is just inconvenient to have to make time for a vaccination appointment. We need to trust the scientists who developed vaccine, trust our health care providers and trust in the importance of vaccination.*

*For more information or to schedule a vaccination appointment, please call the Clay County Public Health Center at 595-4355. My colleagues and I will be happy to serve you for the protection of yourself, your family and our community."*



CLAY COUNTY

# PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER



800 Haines Drive, Liberty, MO 64068  
816-595-4200 | clayhealth.com



@claymohealth

