

AMCHP 2008 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE:

Opening Plenary:

A Vision for a Compassionate and Affordable Health System

March 1st to 5th, 2008

MICHAEL FRASER: All right. Well, good morning everybody. Welcome to AMCHP 2008. How is everybody doing this morning?

You made it. I'm going to ask everybody to stand up. Oh, they say. All right. Stay standing if it took you -- sit down if it took you an hour or less to get here. Sit down if it took you two hours or less to get here. Sit down if it took you five hours or less to get here.

Wow. Sit down if it took you seven or less hours to get here. Almost a full day's work. Sit down if it took you eight hours or less to get here. 10 hours or less to get here.

12 hours or less to get here. Oh my goodness. Where are you guys from?

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Micronesia.

MICHAEL FRASER: Micronesia is in the house. Welcome.

How about in the back?

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Guam.

MICHAEL FRASER: Guam's in the house. Welcome.

And how about in the back there? Where is that.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Washington State.

MICHAEL FRASER: Washington State. Well, thank you for making it.

We're so glad that you're here and you took the time to be here. We realize, especially our friends from literally around the world are with us this morning, and it's really a pleasure to welcome you.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to really thank the AMCHP board of directors which has been steering our conference and our organization so well leading us forward as AMCHP has developed its new programs, its new energy. So would the board please stand so we can acknowledge our board of directors?

Thank you all. We have several amazing people to present this morning and to get a chance to meet. But in the spirit of amazing people, I would like to acknowledge the AMCHP staff. Could our AMCHP staff please stand so you guys can recognize them.

Thank you all, please have a chance to visit with our staff. We have an incredible team back at the office working on your behalf day in day out. It's a wonderful privilege to work with such talented, smart, fun, energetic people. I hope you also get the chance to work with them closely.

I want to acknowledge our sponsors as well. We have several wonderful sponsors here in the exhibit hall close to our plenary session. If our sponsors could please stand. Altarum, Association of Teachers of Maternal and Child Health. The Children's Safety Network, City Match, the Commonwealth Fund, ESRI, Go Beyond, the John Hopkins University Women's and Children Health Policy Center, March of Dimes and Patient Services Incorporated. Thank you for your support of our conference.

All right. Well, technology is wonderful. And this is our just-in-time shot of earlier this morning at 6:30 a group of hard core AMCHPers went out on the fun run walk and we had a great time. It was a beautiful sunrise, for those of you that missed it. We'll hopefully be back in the lobby tomorrow at 6:30, if anybody wants

to join us. We only had one runner, and we're not sure if she came back, so we're still waiting for her to come back.

We found a Starbucks along the way and it was a great, great opportunity. Thank you all for being here. Thank you all who woke up so early this morning to join us in our walk.

AMCHP is on the move. And I want to take a minute to talk a little bit about some of the things that we're really excited about that are described in the pamphlet that you'll find at your tables.

AMCHP has taken some time to intentionally review our programs, our policy work and our partnerships. The transition over the past year has been a tough time for us and it's been an amazing and exciting time for us.

To really look at what is AMCHP all about, what do we need in our office? What do you need in your states? What are your programs doing that we need to talk about, that we need to share, that we need to support.

And AMCHP has recommitted itself as an association to the work of MCH programs across the country and our partners across the country and around the world to continue to push for MCH programs as an advocate, as a resource and a partner.

And I hope that through this conference you have the chance to feel the new energy, to feel AMCHP moving. This is a great event for us to make AMCHP real to you and to listen to you and to share with you some of the wonderful things that you all are doing, that we're talking about here in Washington, and that we want to share with our partners.

So thank you for all the hard work you're doing and for your support of AMCHP. Our strategic plan is available for those of you who need some late night reading, perhaps. We have four goals that I'm not going to review with you now. But we're committing to a national agenda for MCH. We're committed to working with partners to develop that. We're recommitting to our policy focus and our number one legislative priority will continue to be pushing for full funding for the Title V Block Grant. The time has come to do that. And we have a team that if we can't make it happen, we're going to have to reassess that goal because I'm not sure how else we're going to make this happen. We have a team that is working tirelessly, specifically on that objective.

One of the things that I think is important for us to keep in mind as we set our goals for full funding for Title V, a lot of folks said don't do it. Ask for part of it. It's tough times. You know, how can you really be sure that's going to happen. And as folks were telling me that and as we visit with members of Congress and we visit with policy friends in Washington, this quotation came to mind the greater

danger for most of us are not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that we aim too low and we reach it.

If we're going to aim -- if our success factor is going to be flat funding for Title V, I think we're aiming too low. Let's aim high together for full funding for the Block Grant. We can do it. It's going to take some time, but we can do it. And with your help we will do it. And I'm confident that we can do it.

On our journey, leading us forward to reach our goals, not only for Title V funding but for all the wonderful things you do and we do in MCH, is Nan Streeter. I know many of you are familiar with Nan. Bureau Director of MCH and Family Services in Utah. She's been a wonderful resource not only for me being new to AMCHP but to our board of directors and to y'all as members.

Nan is going to be our mistress of ceremonies this morning as we acknowledge some remarkable people here in the audience that are your peers and colleagues and celebrate their success. Following our awards ceremony, we have a wonderful keynote address by Governor Richard Lamm, Former Governor of the State of Colorado. Any Colorado in the house? You've got some hometown crowd here Governor Lamm. I'll introduce him after our award ceremony. Without further ado, I'd like to invite Nan Streeter to the stage.