

## **New Mexico Dental Therapist Legislative Proposal**

### **- Speaker Bios -**

#### **Health Action New Mexico**

*December 19, 2013 –NM Health & Human Services Cmte.- Santa Fe, NM*

#### **PAMELA K. BLACKWELL, JD**

##### **Health Action New Mexico – Project Director, Oral Health Access**

##### **Albuquerque, NM**

Originally from New Mexico, Pamela K. Blackwell, JD is the project director for oral health access for Health Action New Mexico, a statewide healthcare consumer advocacy organization. Blackwell's family has lived in New Mexico for more than six generations and she grew up in Santa Fe and Albuquerque.

Previously, Blackwell was the Associate Director for Federal Regulatory & Payment Policy for the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA) in Washington, DC. At the AANA, Blackwell was responsible for the management, strategy, policy development and implementation relating to federal regulatory and payment policy issues. Blackwell has worked directly with state and federal agencies (Medicare, FDA, DEA etc), legislators, and other organizations to develop and improve policy proposals and outcomes for her clients. Blackwell particularly enjoys educating others on the implications of federal and state policy and their very important role in influencing policy decisions.

Blackwell was a healthcare legislative assistant on Capitol Hill for Rep. Steve Schiff of New Mexico and Rep. Ralph Regula of Ohio, and served in the legal department of a major hospital system in Washington, DC. Blackwell is a board member of the New Mexico Telehealth Alliance (NMTA) and the YMCA of Central New Mexico and has been a member of Women in Government Relations (WGR) since 2003.

Blackwell earned her BA in journalism at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, CO and her JD at George Mason University School of Law in Arlington, Virginia. Blackwell and her husband reside in Albuquerque with their three young children.

#### **MARY ALTENBERG, MS CHES**

##### **Executive Director, Community Dental Services, Inc.**

##### **Fmr. NM Health Systems Bureau Chief**

Mary Altenberg, MS, CHES is the Executive Director of Community Dental Services, Inc., a non-profit dental organization providing services to vulnerable and underserved communities. Established in 1974, CDS provides comprehensive dental services to over 11,000 individuals annually. Prior to taking the position with CDS, Ms. Altenberg served as the Inter-professional Collaborative Practice Project Manager for El Pueblo Health Services, a FQHC look-alike in New Mexico. The Collaborative Practice Project is a engages primary care providers and nurse practitioners in incorporating oral health into the primary care delivery system. Through a partnership between El Pueblo, the University Of New Mexico College Of Nursing, and the Department of Dental Medicine, her role was to engage the providers of three distinct practices in expanding their knowledge and skills with the goal of providing better overall health for the patients of all three practices.

Ms. Altenberg has been active in promoting oral health in New Mexico for most of her public health career. She was the inaugural director of the Indian Health Service funded Albuquerque Area Dental Support Center, establishing and developing strategies for engaging American Indian community members in promoting oral health, as well as providing clinical and preventive resources for IHS dental programs. She then assumed the position of Health Systems Bureau Chief for the NM Department of Health, overseeing five statewide programs including the Office of Oral Health and the Office of Primary Care and Rural Health. She successfully obtained HRSA funding to establish the NM Dental Support Center, the first of its kind, modeled after the IHS Dental Support Centers. She has served two terms as chair of the NM Oral Health Advisory Council; served as the

coordinator of the Governor's Council on Oral Health; coordinated the federally funded dental school feasibility study; and served as president of the NM Public Health Association. She is currently serving on the Board of Directors of the American Association of Public Health Dentistry.

She has a Master of Science degree in Community Health Education from the University of New Mexico, is a Certified Health Education Specialist, and has completed coursework for a doctorate in Organizational Learning and Instructional Technology.

**TERRY BATLINER DDS MBA**

**Associate Director - Center for Native Oral Health Research**

**Colorado School of Public Health**

**Owner - Sage Dental Care**

**Enrolled member - Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma**

Terry Batliner, DDS MBA is a member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and spent the first 8 years of his career in the Indian Health Service. From there he went to Harvard Pilgrim Health care in Boston where he managed 7 large group practices as well as the optical program. He returned to Denver in 1995 to run the VA hospitals in the Rocky Mountain area until 2003. Since then Batliner has been involved with the University of Colorado. Batliner is now the associate director of the Center for Native Oral Health Research, part of the Colorado School of Public Health and the owner of Sage Dental Care - a private practice near Boulder.

**KRISTEN CHRISTY**

**Executive Director, Union County Network**

**Clayton/Union County, NM**

Kristen Christy founded the Union County Network and, since March 2010, has served as its Executive Director. She is an MBA Candidate with New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas, NM, specializing in Government and Not-for-Profit Financial Management. She obtained her BA in Spanish with a minor in Religious Studies from Bethany College, West Virginia. In August, 2008, she settled in the Clayton community to be close to her husband's family, whose history in the area traces back to the homesteading days. In her free time, Ms. Christy enjoys learning foreign languages, researching and writing, and spending time outside. She also serves as a private weight-loss and nutrition coach.