



MOUNT ZION HEALTH FUND

Resources for a Healthy Community

COMMUNITY UPDATE : SPRING 2004

Panel Presents Latest Information on Breast and Ovarian Cancer Risk

New information regarding hereditary factors for breast and ovarian cancer prompted a presentation in early March to address this subject of particular importance to Jewish families. The program was sponsored by MZHF, in conjunction with the Cancer Risk Program of the UCSF Comprehensive Cancer Center at Mount Zion, Congregation Emanu-El, and Hadassah – San Francisco Chapter. A distinguished panel of experts, including oncologists and genetic counselors from the UCSF Mount Zion campus, addressed a range of issues including genetic testing, the multi-step process of genetic counseling, surveillance guidelines, risk reduction strategies, prevention strategies for gene mutation carriers, surgical prevention, lifestyle changes, and use of medicines.

Attendees learned that recent studies have demonstrated that one in 800 individuals in the general population carry a BRCA mutation, whereas one in 40 Ashkenazi Jews carries one of three specific mutations. Moreover, if an individual carries either a BRCA 1 or 2 gene mutation, the risk of breast cancer is 60 – 85% versus 12% in the general population. The risk of ovarian cancer is 30 – 50% versus 1 – 2% in the general population. Males and females who carry gene mutations are at increased risk for these and other cancers and their first-degree relatives are at 50% risk to carry the same BRCA mutation. Based on positive feedback, the panel may be repeated at other local community venues. For more information, please contact the UCSF Cancer Risk Program at 415 • 885 • 7779.

RECENT GRANTS SUPPORT RANGE OF VITAL COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

MZHF is pleased to announce several first-time grants to community-based organizations which, despite their differing missions, have a common theme: providing health-related services to some of our community's most vulnerable members. At a time when the overall non-profit sector is struggling due to government cutbacks and a slow economy, MZHF noted a critical opportunity to support the core operations of these local service providers. The recipient organizations include:

- **INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH OUTREACH** (www.ichoca.org) providing HIV/AIDS counseling and support to at-risk youth in the Bayview Hunter's Point neighborhood;
- **SHALOM BAYIT** (www.shalom-bayit.org), is offering a variety of outreach, education and direct service programs focused on reducing and preventing domestic violence in the Jewish community;
- **CADUCEUS OUTREACH SERVICES** (415 • 243 • 8420) which utilizes a cadre

of volunteer psychiatrists to address the complex treatment needs of San Francisco's mentally ill homeless; and

- **HOMELESS PRENATAL PROGRAM** (www.homelessprenatal.org) providing education and support to at-risk and homeless pregnant women and their families.



A Homeless Prenatal Program counselor shares a celebratory moment with a client holding her new baby.

Some of these grantees will use their MZHF award to expand current programming to reach *continued on back page*

GRANT HONORS RETIRING UCSF DEAN HAILE T. DEBAS, MD

During his tenure as Dean of the UCSF School of Medicine, Haile T. Debas, MD was an avid supporter of the Mount Zion campus. To honor Dr. Debas upon his retirement as Dean, the Board of Directors of Mount Zion Health Fund made a gift to the Innovations Funding Program of the Haile T. Debas Academy of Medical Educators. This particular initiative supports one of the goals of the academy, to foster medical student curricular innovation, and aligns with the MZHF goal of supporting creative and responsive solutions to health-related needs. Twice a year, the Academy issues a call for proposals and has funded 36 projects since its introduction. Successful proposals include such varied topics as health policy, community health and advocacy, and improving long-term care and end of life care.

MZHF Wellness Center at JCCSF Promotes Health and Fitness



With the recent opening of the Mount Zion Health Fund Wellness Center at the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco, the community is seeing the results of MZHF's multi-year grant to create this state-of-the-art health facility. The Wellness Center houses Red Hawk Physical Therapy which provides complete rehabilitation and sports medicine services. Red Hawk therapists also conduct lectures on anatomy, biomechanics and sports-related injuries. These sessions enable participants to explore personal health issues and learn specific exercises to do at home. MZHF is pleased to be a major partner in the JCCSF's creation of a fitness center that supports healthy lifestyles through exercise, education and therapy. Wellness Center programs are open to everyone – they are free for JCCSF members and non-members pay a nominal fee.

For more information on these programs, please call 415 • 292 • 1241.

Mount Zion Health Fund is committed to offering assistance to grant applicants that goes beyond funding of grant requests. In recent years, this assistance has included consultation on fund development. MZHF has underwritten grant research and writing services, as well as other development efforts, to help several local health organizations broaden their sources

FUND DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

of support. This technical assistance is provided by an MZHF staff person at no cost to the recipient non-profit agency. Organizations that fit within MZHF's guidelines for grant support and would benefit from technical assistance with fund development are encouraged to contact MZHF and inquire about these services. **Please call 415 • 750 • 4100 or email: information@mzhf.org.**

DONOR-ADVISED FUND SUPPORTS NOVEL THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES TO CANCER

When Hal Spitz lost his wife in 1997, he chose to honor her memory and her interests by establishing the Marlene Spitz Cancer Research Fund at Mount Zion Health Fund. Hal realized that the most positive action he



Hal Spitz (left) and David Jablons, MD at a UCSF Thoracic Oncology educational reception

could take would be to invest in those striving for improved cancer treatments. That goal hit even closer to home when Hal himself was diagnosed with mesothelioma in 2001. As a result of his illness, Hal met one of the premier

thoracic surgeons and researchers, David Jablons, MD, at UCSF Medical Center at Mount Zion. Impressed with his work, Hal has directed a series of contributions from the fund to support Dr. Jablons' initiatives. According to Dr. Jablons, "Hal Spitz has not only been extremely generous, but actively involved in our work through our Advisory Board. His support has allowed us to pursue new areas of investigation in both lung cancers and mesothelioma. We are extremely grateful to him for enabling us to undertake these novel therapeutic approaches." For his part, Hal is pleased to be honoring his wife Marlene's life by supporting research that will ultimately help other individuals battling cancer. For more information about establishing a donor advised fund with MZHF, please call 415 • 750 • 4100.

Grants Support Range of Vital Services *continued*

new clients or to provide more comprehensive services; other grantees will use the award to stabilize current services while additional new funding is sought to make up for recent financial cutbacks. David Agger, MZHF's Board President, commented, "Based on Mount Zion Health Fund's historical San Francisco roots, it is gratifying to support these vital organizations – each of which is striving to provide culturally-appropriate care to vulnerable, hard-to-reach members of our community. The bottom line is they have demonstrated the ability to both save lives and change lives in positive, lasting ways." □