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## **National TB Controllers Association Honors Regional Partners**

The National Tuberculosis Controllers Association (NTCA) was created in 1995 to bring the leaders of tuberculosis (TB) control programs, throughout all states and territories, together. The uniting also included multiple city, county, and state health departments that were previously organizing their own TB control activities. Their mission became, "...to advance the elimination of TB in the US through the collective, concerted action of the officials of state, local, and territorial government who are empowered by their jurisdiction with the responsibility for carrying out programs to prevent and control TB." This simple mission is partner to the theme of this year's annual meeting: *Innovate to Accelerate: On the Move to Eliminate TB*

Heartland National TB Center's (HNTC) regional partners were well represented during the 2010 National TB Conference, held June 21st through 25th in Atlanta, Georgia. The NTCA accepted nominations for a series of awards to recognize those who have excelled in the various aspects of TB prevention and control.

Dr. Barbara Seaworth, Medical Director and Principal Investigator to HNTC was nominated and chosen by the Executive Committee of the National Society of TB Clinicians to receive the 1st annual TB Clinician of the Year award, named after William Stead, boasting outstanding contributions in Tuberculosis physician services. Dr. Seaworth handles hundreds of consultations annually from within the HNTC region and beyond, as well as from border lying areas of Mexico.

Deborah (Deb) K. Sodt, RN, MPH, Program Manger of the Minnesota Department of Health Tuberculosis Program in St. Paul, was the recipient of the President's Award. This is given at the discretion of the NTCA President to acknowledge special accomplishments of an individual or organization who has contributed to the NTCA or the TB community in general.

Dawn Farrell, RN, BSN, Nurse Educator at the Texas Center for Infectious Disease (Texas Department of State Health Services, DSHS) was selected as the incoming president of the National Tuberculosis Nurses Coalition (NTNC). NTNC is a division within the NTCA whose objective is to advise and support the TB control officials of state, local, and territorial governments by providing a coordinated nursing perspective on issues vital to the success of TB prevention and control programs.

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## Honors—

Charles Wallace, PhD, MPH, Manager of the TB Services Branch at the Texas Department of State Health Services in Austin, was elected President of the NTCA. Dr. Wallace has also been chosen as the TB Controller of Texas.

Shannon Jones, MPA, Deputy Director of the Austin-Travis County Health Department, has been nominated for the position of Chairman of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Advisory Committee to Eliminate Tuberculosis (ACET).

Let's send out a warm Congratulations to all!!

## Los Dos Laredos Bi-National Project Receives "Models of Excellence" Award



San Diego — On May 26, 2010, the Heartland National TB Center and the Texas Department of State Health Services received an award from the U.S.-Mexico Border Health Commission (BHC), in collaboration with the BHC's Mexico section's Tamaulipas Outreach office, for the bi-national tuberculosis control effort named *Successful Ambulatory Care of Multi-drug Resistant TB in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico: Results of Los Dos Laredos Binational Project*.

Initially implemented in 1991, the project is one of several bi-national TB projects that serve sister cities along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Named a "2010 Border Model of Excellence in Tuberculosis Surveillance and Control," *Los Dos Laredos* was recognized by BHC as "a vital and integral part of tuberculosis work along the border." The commission recognized Heartland for "exceptional leadership, innovation, and determination."

Travelling to San Diego to accept the award on behalf of Heartland were Dr. Barbara Seaworth, Medical Director, HNTC, and Nurse Educator and Consultant, Catalina Navarro, RN, BSN. Upon arriving, they were joined by Maria Carlota Soto de Alvarez, a nurse in Mexico who has provided care for TB patients for nearly twenty years. Ms. Soto de Alvarez was instrumental in initiating case management by nurses in Mexico for Nuevo Laredo's multi-drug resistant (MDR) TB patients.

*Los Dos Laredos* provides consultation to the MDR TB committee in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico, who care for patients with resistant strains of TB. Nurses in Mexico are trained in areas such as case management, laboratory support, and the use of TB drugs. Of the 80 patients enrolled in the project, 62.5 percent have successfully completed the two-year course of treatment required to treat MDR TB, while 10 percent are still receiving treatment.

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*Pictured above—Dr. Barbara Seaworth, Medical Director, HNTC and Catalina Navarro, RN, BSN, Nurse Consultant and Educator, HNTC.*

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TB control along the U.S.-Mexico border is particularly important in Texas, where half of all people diagnosed with TB are foreign-born.

Along the border, 70 percent of TB cases involve foreign-born individuals. With thousands of residents crossing the border daily between sister cities such as Laredo and Nuevo Laredo, cooperative bi-national TB surveillance and control is a public health necessity.

To be considered for this award applicants had to document:

- that their program improves TB surveillance, control, prevention, and/or treatment;
- how the technical approach used in the program is both innovative and clinically sound;
- that their project targets populations along the U.S.-Mexico border with limited access to medical resources and that it meets the needs of those populations;
- that the results of their program can be measured; and show that their program can be duplicated in other parts of the border region.

The **VISION** of Heartland is to provide *excellence, expertise, innovation* in training, medical consultation, and product development to reduce the impact of tuberculosis in our region.

The **MISSION** of the Heartland National TB Center is to build capacity with our partners. We will share expertise in the treatment and prevention of tuberculosis by: developing and implementing cutting-edge trainings, delivering expert medical consultation, providing technical assistance, and designing innovative educational and consultative products.

## HNTC Remaining 2010 Trainings & Meetings

Date	Course	Location
September 23	MDR Expert Network Conference Call **Hosted by SNTC**	WEBINAR – please contact SNTC for further information.
October 5	Understanding and Managing Latent TB Infection (LTBI)	Arnold, MO
October 14	Everyone's Doing It and So Can You, but Better: Successful Youth Outreach Via Social Media **Hosted by the Center for Health Training**	WEBINAR – please contact SNTC for further information.
October 19	Advanced TB Nurse Case Management Updates	St. Paul, MN
October 26 – 27	TB in Vulnerable Populations	Chicago, IL
October 28	So You Want To Incorporate New Media: Making the Case and Making It Stick **Hosted by the Center for Health Training**	WEBINAR – please contact SNTC for further information.
November 3 – 5	Nurse Case Management	San Antonio, TX
November 17	Substance Abuse and Tuberculosis	Oklahoma City, OK
December 1 – 3	TB Intensive	San Antonio, TX

Please visit our website: <http://www.heartlandntbc.org/training.asp> to find detailed information concerning registration and participation.

Proposed topics are subject to change; check website for the latest updates.

**The NEW TCID facility is READY!! There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony and tours of the building on September 22, 2010 in San Antonio, TX. More information concerning this event will be in the next newsletter**

## \*\*New Guidelines for IGRAs Released\*\*

In June 2010, the Centers for Disease Control released updated guidelines for using Interferon Gamma Release Assays (IGRAs) to detect *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* infection. The report provides guidance to U.S. public health officials, health-care providers, and laboratory workers for use of FDA-approved IGRAs in the diagnosis of *M. tuberculosis* infection in adults and children. In brief, TSTs and IGRAs (Quantiferon Gold, Quantiferon Gold-in-Tube, and T-Spot) may be used as aids in diagnosing *M. tuberculosis* infection. The tests may be used for surveillance purposes and to identify persons likely to benefit from treatment. Multiple additional recommendations are provided that address quality control, test selection, and medical management after testing. The guidelines can be viewed at

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5905.pdf>

Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. 59 (RR-5); 1-25, June 25, 2010