



# THE COLLEAGUE

NEWSLETTER FOR ANCHORAGE PROJECT ACCESS

VOLUME 37 ISSUE 1

2401 EAST 42ND AVENUE STE 104 ♦ ANCHORAGE, AK 99508

SEPTEMBER 2018

## MISSION STATEMENT

To increase access to health care for low income uninsured members of our community by using a volunteer network of providers working in a coordinated fashion to create a compassionate, respectful, equitable, accountable, and efficient program of necessary services for those in need.

## OFFICERS

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### Executive Director

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Crystal Casad

### Development Officer

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## ANCHORAGE PROJECT ACCESS

P: 743-6600 F: 646-0542

[AnchorageProjectAccess.org](http://AnchorageProjectAccess.org)

## MELINDA FREEMON JOINS APA AS THE NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



On August 6<sup>th</sup> I began my position as the new Executive Director of Anchorage Project Access. It is an honor to lead such a wonderful organization with a committed team of professionals assisting our most vulnerable community members to access medical and dental care. For years I have been inspired by the outstanding mission and services of APA. It is a dream come true to be selected to join the APA team, and its fiscal sponsor, Christian Health Associates. As the incoming Director, I want to join the APA Board of Directors in thanking Charlene Vassar for her excellent leadership over the past 11 ½ years as Executive Director of APA.

Anchorage Project Access, and the Medical and Dental Partnerships that serve as the cornerstone of the program, are testaments to the extraordinary generosity of our health care partners in Anchorage. Since 2005, over \$45 million of donated care has been provided to individuals in need. APA has evolved from a coordinator of donated medical care to a three-tiered program providing outreach, eligibility screening and enrollment into ACA or Medicaid and coordinating over 600 local medical and dental providers donating care to low-income, uninsured members of our community. The founding members of the APA program created a vision of compassion and generosity that has expanded over the past 13 years in response to the changing landscape of health care in Alaska.

For over 30 years, I have worked in Alaska to ensure access to health care and housing for vulnerable individuals and families. Before joining the APA team, I served as the Director of the Municipality of Anchorage Dept. of Health and Human Services. Prior to my position at the Municipality, I served as the Director of Supportive Housing for the Rural Alaska Community Action Program (RurAL CAP). Before my tenure at RurAL CAP, I was the Executive Director of the Salvation Army Clitheroe Center residential and outpatient substance abuse treatment programs. I have worked in rural and urban Alaska as a clinical consultant in behavioral health and permanent supportive housing.

I look forward to working more closely with our providers, our sponsors and our patients to continue assisting those in need with donated care through our network of remarkable individuals and practices in Anchorage.

I look forward to serving with you.

Melinda Freemon, MS, LPC, CCS

## HERE'S HOW YOU ARE HELPING

"I got my smile back! It's amazing how good I feel about myself since I received my dental treatment and dentures. Many people have complimented me on my smile, I'm even wearing lipstick now! Thank you from the bottom of my heart. What a wonderful service you offer that makes such a difference in people's lives."

"Thank you so much for all your help and assistance. Anchorage Project Access is a God's sent organization in these difficult times. Blessings!"

## THANK YOU FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE.

***NO ACT OF KINDNESS, NO MATTER HOW SMALL IS EVER WASTED.***



**OPEN ENROLLMENT**  
**NOVEMBER 1 TO DECEMBER 15, 2018**  
**FOR 2019 COVERAGE**

We are gearing up for open enrollment should your patients need insurance assistance for 2019 coverage please refer them to our office. We are here to serve you and your patients. Give us a call at 743-6600.

## RETIREMENT CELEBRATION AND FAREWELL



Char Vassar began her work at Anchorage Project Access on October 3, 2006. With a background in marketing and public relations, her engaging personality and compassion for those in need, served as the foundation of her work and tremendous success at leading Anchorage Project Access for the past 11 ½ years. Char's leadership guided the agency from its single project focus of improving access to health care for low income and uninsured individuals to responding to the need for health care navigation with expanded Medicaid and ACA. Char has been a tireless advocate for the addition of dental services as a key component of APA's mission.

Char has volunteered for many years in the Providence Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. She has also volunteered for the SIDS foundation. Char has a servant's heart and demonstrates that in her professional and personal life. She is a champion of those without a voice and stands beside individuals and families to ensure they are informed about their health care options and supported throughout the process.

We thank Char for her limitless compassion and commitment as she embarks on her next life adventure. May she receive an equal measure of gratitude, appreciation, grace and health as she leaves APA to spend time with her family and begins a much-deserved time of renewal.

## BOARD MEMBER PROFILE: NOEL REA



Noel Rea has a long history working in health care in Alaska arriving in 1990 having moved here from Colorado. Noel has worked in numerous communities across Alaska over the last 28 years. Each opportunity has a common theme of working on improving access to, and the quality of, healthcare to some of the most vulnerable Alaskans. He currently works for the Virginia Mason Medical Center as their Senior Director/Hospital Administrator for their NetworxHealth division.

Noel and his wife Mari along with their four children (Henry, Sarah, Olivia and Samantha) all embrace the Alaskan way of life and could never imagine living anywhere else. The family's recent summer was spent supporting their four children on three different baseball/softball teams almost every night of the week.

Noel returned to the Anchorage Project Access Board of Directors in 2016 after having served on the Board during its inception in 2005 until 2008. In addition to his APA commitments he serves as President-elect of the Alaska Chapter of the American College of Healthcare Executives and serves on the Credit Union 1 board of supervisors. Noel has also served on the board of the Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center, the board of his community council and also been a Big Brother for Big Brother/Big Sisters of Alaska.



## MT. HUNTINGTON AWARD RECIPIENT



### *The Physical Therapy Place*

The Mt. Huntington Award recognizes providers and their staff for their exceptional services. To view all previous recipients visit:

[AnchorageProjectAccess.org](http://AnchorageProjectAccess.org)

## DONORS

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 State of Alaska DHSS

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 Municipality of Anchorage  
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**Pick.Click.Give.**  
 APA is a Designated Recipient