

# Keogh Health Foundation

Volume I, Issue I

December 2007

## Special points of interest:

- Children use talent and discipline to help other children secure healthcare.
- Health-e-Kids outreach initiative brings KidsCare to schools.
- New Executive Director brings 25 years of nonprofit experience.
- AZ Woman article tells co-founder's story.

### Mission

The Keogh Health Foundation assists Arizona's vulnerable population by helping to facilitate the availability of healthcare services. We focus primarily on disadvantaged women and their children who are working toward self-sufficiency.

### Vision

Affordable healthcare is available to all men, women and children in Arizona.

### What We Do . . .

- Provide information, education and enrollment-screening for public programs, and referral to private programs.
- Provide short-term individual emergency grants requested by non-profit partners.

## Keep Kids Playing . . .

The First Friday in November saw 240 Foundation friends gather in the Grand Ballroom at the Arizona Biltmore and Spa. They enjoyed a gala evening dedicated to helping women and children secure healthcare. The evening's entertainment, three winners of the Second Arizona Youth Piano Competition, brought the enthusiastic crowd to its feet.

Karlene Keogh, Foundation co-founder, put the evening in

perspective by stating, "we envision a day when all the children in Arizona have access to affordable, quality healthcare. There is something magical about hearing these incredibly talented and dedicated students perform in front of a crowd of community leaders—knowing they are helping the Foundation fulfill its mission. I am thankful that we can both help kids and moms with their healthcare needs, and give these wonderful



2007 AYPC Gold medalists  
Anna Han, Eric Lin and Grace Ma

young students an opportunity to share their talents."

Since inception the Keogh Health Foundation has facilitated enrollment screening for more than 46,000 Arizo-

nans. To demonstrate how the Foundation assists individuals, a short video was premiered featuring AJ, a 12 year old who received a prosthetic eye (see page 3).

Executives from each of the three principal corporate sponsors; Health Net of Arizona, Humana and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona shared praise for the work of the Foundation. Chuck Sowers, CEO of Title Sponsor Health Net of Arizona, opened the evening. Jeff Montag, President of Commercial Operations for Humana, introduced the video premier. Richard Boals, CEO of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, presented first place checks to the three gold medalists from the Arizona Youth Piano Competition. KBAQ classical radio recorded the three performances for future broadcast.



## Health-e-Kids Initiative Launched

The number of children in AZ (190,000) who do not have medical insurance even though they are eligible for State sponsored KidsCare could fill every seat at Sun Devil stadium, University of Phoenix - Cardinals stadium and US Airways Center.

We estimate more than 43,000 children living in Maricopa County, age six and under

are uninsured, yet eligible for KidsCare. This estimate is based on 2006 US Census Bureau data and percentages that appear in a Roberts Wood Johnson Foundation March 2007 report.

Early in 2008 the Keogh Health Foundation will expand activities to include outreach with schools, community and faith-based groups to inform

parents about the importance of health insurance and facilitate enrollment in AHCCCS and KidsCare .

The health status of children is pivotal to their educational success. One study found that children enrolled in health insurance, such as KidsCare, improved their attendance and

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## Foundation Assists A.J.



A.J. before eye operation

A. J. and his cousin were just being boys, when a homemade bow and arrow turned into an accident that cost him his eye. Active in the Boys and Girls Club of Metro Phoenix, his injury was noticed by staff members. When his need for specialized medical care was brought to Amy Gibbons, CEO, she contacted one of her long time board members, Karlene Keogh, co-founder of the Keogh Health Foundation.

Amy tells the story, "They were just great. They got involved, helped A.J. and his family by determining that his current insurance would provide most of his needs. Next they helped him navigate confusing forms and finding a specialist. And, when there were bills that were not covered by his healthcare program, the Foundation covered them. Because A.J. had an advocate he received the care he needed and a new prosthetic eye."



A.J. after eye operation

**"The health status of children is pivotal to their educational success."**

## Health-e-Kids Cont.

performance in school by 68 percent (Families USA Foundation, "Good for the Economy: Health Coverage for All Kids Illinois," 2005). Another study revealed that children who were previously uninsured doubled their reading scores after they received health insurance (Council of Chief State School Officers, "Building Bridges to Healthy Kids and Better Students," 2002).

Health-e-Kids will:


- ◆ Promote children's health through information, education and enrollment in

existing public and private healthcare programs.

- ◆ Reduce the number of uninsured children.
- ◆ Increase the retention rate of medical insurance for children.
- ◆ Build strong collaborations with community-based organizations, schools and community health clinics.
- ◆ Provide meaningful internships for students in healthcare related careers.

Additional volunteers are needed to create our Health-e-Kids Advocacy Corps, which will provide assistance to individuals who are initially turned down. Volunteer advocates will also work with families during renewal, a process that is currently required every six months.

KHF is seeking foundation, private and State funding for this ambitious program.

Please contact Allen Gjersvig for more information, 602-424-2505. 

## New Executive Director Leads Foundation



Allen Gjersvig was recently selected by a Board search committee to lead the Foundation. "Allen stood out among the many candidates because of his broad nonprofit executive experience, which includes healthcare, insurance, organizational leadership and fundraising," said Glen Padula, Board Chairman.

Gjersvig has lived in the Valley for 20 years and served as Executive Director for United Blood Services and the Na-

tional Multiple Sclerosis Society. He has also written grants for nonprofits that assisted victims of domestic violence, homebound senior citizens and youth.

"Access to healthcare is a basic need, and while politicians and interest groups argue about healthcare reform — families and children in Arizona are falling through the cracks. I am very excited to be working with a group of people who want to make a difference,

now," said Gjersvig. He continued, "This Foundation is young, has already done amazing things, and can become a significant positive force in our community. We can assist individuals who are uninsured by informing, educating and enrolling them in available programs; we can also continue to grow our resources so when individuals like A.J. need financial help, we can make a difference; and we can help those in need navigate a confusing system."

## Second Arizona Youth Piano Competition Winners

“Amazing”, “unbelievable”, “wow”, were just a few of the superlatives heard among the guests in the Biltmore’s Grand Ballroom as three Arizona Youth Piano Competition gold medal winners entertained First Friday Gala patrons.

**Eric Lin**, Elementary Division Winner, is 10 years old, and started piano lessons at age five. He currently studies with Mrs. Hong Zhu. Competition awards include two first places, two Medals with Distinction and a 2006 Silver Medal in the First Arizona Youth Piano Competition. He also enjoys video games.

**Anna Han**, Junior Division Winner, is an eleven year old 7<sup>th</sup> grader in a gifted program at Santan Junior High School in Chandler. She started her piano lessons with Mr. Fei Xu at age five and has many 1<sup>st</sup> place credits, including National Winner of 2007 MTNA Baldwin. Besides music, Anna enjoys reading, dance, and outdoor activities.

**Grace Ma**, Senior Division Winner, is 15 years old, and is a high school sophomore living in Chandler. She started private piano lessons with Mr. Fei Xu in 1999. Grace has been winning piano events since she was 11 and has performed in concerts in the US, Canada and Austria.

These three exceptional students represent more than 30 outstanding students who competed over a Friday and Saturday in late October.

The Keogh Health Foundation, sponsor of the competition, is grateful for the dedication and hours of work offered by the AYPC Committee.

Thanks and appreciation go to: Judie Beach, Board Liaison and Shauna Leavitt, Director, who provided leadership for the successful event. Other Committee members were: Dayton Grafman, Steinway Artist; Sharon Stevens, Phoenix Music Teachers Association; Glenn Mlynarek, and Evie Offord of Steinway of Phoenix.

Senior Division Gold Medalist



Grace Ma

Junior Division Gold Medalist



Anna Han

Elementary Division Gold Medalist



Eric Lin

## First Friday Brings Smiles and Funds for Healthcare

First Friday in November, a Gala in support of the Keogh Health Foundation, brought smiles to guests and helped raise \$86,000 to bring healthcare to the working poor. Pictured on the left, from top to bottom: Ray and Sue York, Jean Higginbotham and Karlene Keogh, Bill and Judie Beach; center: Gail Damico, Steve and Cindy Scifo; right: from top to bottom, Laura and Dayton Grafton, Bill Vanaskie Betsy Bayless and Karen Ford.



A successful First Friday Gala was co-chaired by Board Members Gail Damico of Blue Cross Blue Shield and Judie Beach, Community Volunteer.



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## Donate & Get it Back

- ◆ **Donations to the Keogh Health Foundation qualify for the AZ Working-Poor Tax Credit.**
- ◆ **Donate \$200 (\$400 per couple) and receive a tax credit, and also take the amount as a federal deduction.**
- ◆ **Donate before Dec. 31, 2007.**
- ◆ **You can participate in this and the School Tax Credit program.**
- ◆ **Please check with your tax advisor.**

## Do a Little, It Means a Lot.

### Get Newsletters and Updates by Email

If you prefer to receive information about the Keogh Health Foundation by Email, send an Email to:

**Info@KeoghHealthFoundation.org**

## Foundation Offers Health Care to the Needy

A rough Childhood not only exposed Karlene Keogh to life's hardships at an early age, but it also drives the longtime Phoenix resident's various philanthropic efforts.

Keogh and her late husband, Kevin, started the Keogh Health Foundation four years ago with the hope of filling a void in Arizona's uninsured population, primarily low-income women with children who are participating in programs to achieve self-sufficiency.

The foundation has partnerships with clinics and eight agencies that assist women and children in need, including Sojourner Center, De Colores and Homeward Bound.

The agencies identify those who qualify for help, and the Keogh foundation covers the co-pays or enrollment fees and clears other obstacles to insur-

ance. The foundation also pays for improvements to help non-profit partners reach more people.

"I wanted to help other kids to have it easier or to help kids who had it worse than I (did)," says Keogh, president of insurance firm Arnold & Associates. Keogh also is on the boards of directors for the Boys & Girls clubs of Metropolitan Phoenix and Fresh Start Women's Foundation.

This month the Keogh Health Foundation is sponsoring the Arizona Youth Piano Competition, in which \$12,000 in prize money will be given to winners. The three first-place winners from each division will then perform at the foundation's fundraising banquet at the Arizona Biltmore Resort & Spa on Nov. 2.

Keogh is low-key when it comes to talking about herself;

she prefers to keep the focus on the foundation. She is passionate about spreading the word that health care is obtainable for everyone, despite economic circumstances.

She says she wishes top-level officials such as Gov. Janet Napolitano would advocate more, even if it means just reminding the community that KidsCare, Arizona's health-insurance program for children, provides free medical and dental health care to anyone 18 and younger.

"A lot of people don't know there are places where you can get help. It's frustrating trying to get the word out," Keogh says. "If you're sick or need glasses or have a tooth-ache, life is already hard enough."

*By Georgann Yara, from AZ Woman, Oct 07, used with permission.*