

PanCanal Alumni Association "Where Panamanians Unite"

Alumni Spotlight

Featuring

HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS



Series 2

November 23, 2009

Presented By

PanCanal Alumni Association, Inc.

*515 S. Flower Street, 36th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90071
www.pancanalumni.com*



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Alumni Spotlight Health Care Professionals, Series 2

By Beverly D. Barnett, CEO

PanCanal "Alumni Spotlight" is a segment where we feature the work, experiences, and achievements of alumni in their careers, businesses, and volunteer service to the community. Alumni Spotlight will feature alumni in Law Enforcement, Fire Safety, Military and Civilian Personnel in the War on Iraq, Politics, Entertainment, Social Services, Sports, Media, Health Care, Entrepreneurs, Law and much more.

In this issue we **SALUTE** four (4) alumni in HEALTH CARE for their achievements, dedication, and selfless service to society. Our professional slate includes:

- ☆ Marjorie M. Bramwell, RN, BSN, PHN, MPH, FNE, Retired Nurse and Consultant
- ☆ Dilcia Sealey-Hylton, RN, BSN, MSN, FNP, Martin Luther King Multiple Ambulatory Care Center
- ☆ Maritza James-Oliveros, RN, Policlínica Dr. Santagio Barraza
- ☆ Divia Forbes, Public Health Analyst, Center for Disease Control (CDC)

This is an example of the strength and force of our community when we become united. At PanCanal Alumni Association our motto is "Where Panamanians Unite". One by one, we will reconnect, rebuild, promote and acknowledge our people and our great culture. Please refer to the following pages to learn more about our elite list of alumni as we spotlight them in their profession and their words of encouragement to our community about Health Care.

PanCanal Alumni Association, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. To learn more about us and how you can support our cause visit www.pancanalalumni.com.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge several individuals for their invaluable support and contributions to this newsletter: Mireya Brooks, VP of Alumni at PanCanal Alumni Association, Italina James-Buntin, VP of Operations at PanCanal Alumni Association; Jose "Joe" French, PanCanal Alumni Class Ambassador for Paraiso High School Class of 1967; Elena Ford & Maritza Trotman-Lashley, PanCanal Alumni Class Ambassadors for Paraiso High School Class of 1973; Mario "Mickey" Lashley, PanCanal Alumni Class Ambassador for Paraiso High School Class of 1974; Alberto Williams, Alumni of Paraiso High School Class of 1974; Sheryl Mayers, PanCanal Alumni Class Ambassador for Paraiso High School Class of 1975, and Deborah Beall PanCanal Alumni Class Ambassador for Balboa High School Class of 1979.



Marjorie M. Bramwell, RN, BSN, PHN, MPH, FNE

Marjorie M. Bramwell was born in the former Canal Zone in the Republic of Panama. She is the third child of Albert and Curling Bramwell (both deceased). Her father retired from the Pan Canal Railroad and her mother was a seamstress, who passed last year in Orlando, Florida. Her siblings are Alfonso Martin (singer, deceased), Aurelia Boyce, and Beatrice Carter.

Marjorie (aka Margarita) resided in Santa Cruz (Gamboa) in the former Canal Zone, and is a member of Paraiso High School Class of 1965. She completed the last two years of high school studies at the Instituto Nacional of Panama. Marjorie represented the Panamanian women basketball team in Provincial and Pan-American games. She then attended the University of Panama for three years majoring in Science. She also worked at Gorgas Hospital as a Nurse Assistant for five years. In 1978, she relocated to California with her then husband and two sons Cleveland and Joseph.

Marjorie attended Saddleback College in California where she received an Associate Degree in Nursing in 1982. While working as a Critical Care Nurse, she returned to school and received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing at California State University of Fullerton in 1987, along with a Certificate of Public Health Nurse with the State of California. She later attended San Diego State University and received a Master of Public Health degree in 1997. In 2009, Marjorie graduated as a Forensic Nurse Examiner from Kaplan University.

Marjorie's work history is quite extensive, from Critical Care and Emergency Room Registered Nurse to multiple roles as a Staff Nurse and Charge Nurse. She has worked for San Diego Health and Human Services as a Public Health Nurse, Maternal Child Expert, Community Epidemiologist/Lead Inspector Nurse (childhood lead poisoning) along with some research, and as an HIV in Women and Tuberculosis Nurse. She has also served in community collaborations such as Consultant for CalSahf (California Safe and Healthy Families) Program dealing with first time mothers; as Chairperson for the North County Beyond Boucher for the Homeless; and is a member of the United States-Mexico Border Health Association and Multi-agency Focus Group and Faith Group.

She is currently retired and plans to do a lot of consulting and traveling. During her most recent travels Marjorie visited the Democratic Republic of Congo and Johannesburg, South Africa last year and just loved it. Her many hobbies now are selling things on e-bay, visiting art galleries, gemology exhibits and auctions.



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It is noteworthy to mention that Marjorie received a Certificate of Merit from Governor Pete Wilson, State of California Office of Emergency Services for the Northridge Earthquake in 1994. She has also received many Certificates of Appreciation from the American Red Cross, Southern California Wildfire 2003, County Director of Health and County Supervisor Strategic Plan 2001, and St. John's Missionary Baptist Church Women Issues 2000.

In closing, Marjorie would like to acknowledge her 5th grade teacher Mr. Haywood whose words she still remembers: "Life is not what you find in it, but what you can make of it" and "You can be anything you want to be with hard work". So with this thought she leaves this message for all the young people and anyone else reading this.



PanCanal Alumni Association SALUTES Marjorie M. Bramwell, RN, BSN, PHN, MPH, FNE!



Dilcia Sealey-Hylton

RN, BSN, MSN, FNP

When Dilcia reflects on her past, she says that she can only thank God for all her accomplishments in life. Her endeavor to become a health care professional was not an easy one. Dilcia is the third child of six children born to Rosaline and Vincent Sealey, Sr. They lived in Paraiso in the former Canal Zone. Her siblings are Sandra, Sonia, Elvira, Vincent Jr., and Gilberto. In those days it was very difficult to raise 6 children and her parents made many sacrifices to their marriage to give them the best education.

Dilcia recalls vividly that in 1969 at the young age of 16, her parents both decided on sending her younger sister Elvira and her to study abroad. So the Canal Zone and all that they knew and loved in life was coming to a quick halt and also quite a blow to her emotions. She remembered that they both cried and protested, telling their dad that their mom will never know if they did or did not go because mom was in the United States busy caring for their elder siblings Sandra and Sonia who were already there furthering their education. Non-the-less their dad took both of them by Tica bus on a one day journey to enroll at a Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Academy in Costa Rica. As they watched him pay a full year's tuition, they realized that this was quite difficult for him because his countenance changed to a very sad one. But it was too late and the money was non-refundable. He just loved obeying mom's orders, says Dilcia. Staying behind in the former Canal Zone was their younger brothers Gilberto and Vincent Jr.

Being in a foreign country with no family and total strangers in their surrounding was very harsh and brutal for two young girls who had to either sink or swim, but by God's grace they swam with graceful colors and received their academic diplomas at the end of 3 long years and guess what? Their mom and dad were there to witness the graduation.

In 1972, Dilcia traveled to the U.S. and started her pre-nursing education at The Oakwood Seventh Day Adventist College in Huntsville, Alabama. This was a total culture shock when they met with freezing degree temperatures, extreme overwhelming heat, different culture lifestyles and harder studying techniques. But through it all she survived the pre-nursing year and sold religious magazines during the breaks and holidays periods to help pay her tuition.



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She then applied to the prestigious SDA University of Loma Linda in Riverside California in hopes of continuing her nursing career and to her surprise she was accepted. From day one it was not easy with little to no money for tuition, book cost, room and board. She was certainly caught in between a rock and a hard place, but miraculously and by faith in God he brought her through this uncertain journey with a student loan. Dilcia praised God on July 11, 1977 with tears of joy and a song of victory in her heart when she marched down the aisles and received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing and received her Public Health Certificate as well.

Dilcia worked as an Interim Nurse at Loma Linda University Hospital for three months and it was time to spread her wings when she went to Los Angeles, California and applied for a job at Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital that is now known as Martin Luther King Multiple Ambulatory Care Center (MLK MACC). She worked there in the Maternity Ward from 1977 to 1980 and then transferred to another county facility the San Antonio Health Center Department and worked there for 16 years as a Public Health Nurse. Dilcia wanted to expand her role in nursing and decided to return to school to study at the University of Southern California (USC) where she was awarded with a Master in Science and Nursing Degree and received her Certificate for Family Nurse Practitioner in 1998.

As if that was not enough she began pursuing another degree for medical doctor and got as far as completing all her perquisites. She completed the MCAT and applied to several medical schools and that was the end of that when her beloved maternal grandmother got sick and had to be cared for two years before she died at a ripeful age of 100 plus. Her beloved parents had experienced some physical and medical problems as well and it was too much, too overwhelming, so she stopped the MD pursuit. It was not a hard decision to make, caring for her parents when they were the ones that got her where she is. She appreciates their willing effort to put their marriage on hold and their sacrifice to send her and their five other children in search of their educational careers. What a sacrifice of love and devotion on their part, she loves them very much.

This now ended the plight of her career but even though Dilcia did not succeed in becoming a medical doctor, she is being challenged as one doing what the doctors do in the department of Internal Medicine at MLK MACC as an accomplished Family Nurse Practitioner.

Dilcia is deeply honored to be one of the many that have migrated to a land of opportunity, representing an "extinct population" (The Canal Zone Community) and made something of herself in the medical field. Once again, she thank God and her parents for allowing her to make it through this rough and emotional journey.

Dilcia is also happily married to Rafael Hylton of Pedro Miguel (Boat Club area) in the former Canal Zone and he is currently a candidate for Sheriff of Prince George County in Maryland.

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PanCanal Alumni Association SALUTES Dilcia Sealey-Hylton, RN, BSN, MSN, FNP!



Maritza M. James-Oliveros, RN

Maritza M. James-Oliveros was born at Gorgas Hospital, Ancon in the former Canal Zone to Joseph and Caroline James. Her father (deceased) retired from the Dredging Division in Gamboa. She is the fourth of five children. Her siblings are Sonia, José, Ricardo, and Italina. Maritza is married to Alejandro Oliveros and from this union they have three wonderful children: Victoria Isabel, Ana Victoria and Samuel Abdias. She is an alumni of Paraiso High School Class of 1974. Maritza was proud to return to her alma mater to play the last pomp and circumstance with the band for the last graduating class of Paraiso High School whose closure was a result of the ratification of the Panama Canal Treaty. She played the flute and it was such a privilege to be back.

Martiza attended the University of Panama and graduated as a Nurse in 1981. At that time nurses were scarce in the country. In 2002, she graduated as a Registered Nurse and in 2006 she became specialized in Epidemiology.

Today, she has over 28 years experience in the nursing field. Maritza has worked for Hospital de Chepo, Complejo Hospitalario Metropolitano CSS, and since 1996 she has worked at the Policlinica Dr. Santiago Barraza in Chorrera, in the Republic of Panama. Her rotation experience at hospitals encompasses medical-surgical, obstetrics, urology, orthopedic, hemodialysis, pediatrics, and the hematology ward which taught her the value of life, health and the mercy of the Lord that we have everyday.

It is noteworthy to mention that Maritza has received the following certificates of recognition:

- 2006 - Participant in Simposio de Medicina Legal, and participation in workshop: Vigilancia y Contención de la Gripe Aviar Para Epidemiólogos Regionales y Nacionales
- 2007 - Seminar Attendee "Atencion Integral a los Pacientes VIH/SIDA, Simposio "La Paciente Mastectomizada y su Calidad de Vida".
- 2008 - Seminar & Workshop "Protocolos de INFLUENZA" Special Recognition for 27 years of Institutional Work and Service to the Population.
- 2009 - Seminar & Workshop "Evaluacion de la Vigilancia Epidemiológica de las Infecciones Nosocomiales y Actualizacion en Vacunas", Recognized for her extraordinary work and highest level of commitment during the sanitary containment of the AH1N1 virus in Panama.

Her community work includes: speaking at school and private entities concerning different health topics, regarding support by auto-support groups on HIV/AIDS, mastectomy in women; she represented CSS at interdepartmental



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and intersectional meetings about "Dengue" in the City of Chorrera; the formation of the Epidemiology Group at the Policlinica; Vaccine Campaigns; Campaign against AH1N1 Influenza (speak to officials, distribute pamphlets, announcements, and speak to the public in general). She is currently involved with the Campaign to Control the spread of "Dengue". She speaks at public and private schools, to officials, distribute pamphlets, conduct door-to-door inspection for potential mosquito infestation in conjunction with local authorities in the area. She is also part of the rapid response team to control the spread of AH1N1 Influenza Virus.

Maritza is an active member in the church she attends. She is also a sunday school teacher and participates in many courses offered at the church as well as lead seminars. In closing, she would like to thank the Lord Almighty for her profession and she is very grateful of this recognition.



PanCanal Alumni Association SALUTES Maritza M. James-Oliveros, RN!



Divia Patricia Forbes Public Health Analyst

Divia Patricia Forbes is the eldest of three children born to James H. (deceased) & Ena H. Holder. She was born and raised in Gamboa, in the former Canal Zone. Her siblings are Dezmo A. Holder (Navy Retiree) and Dr. Troy K. Holder in Panama. Divia lived in Gamboa until her father retired and relocated to Panama City (good old "Calle J") when she was in the ninth-grade. She then moved to Pensacola, Florida where she married her high school sweetheart, Theodore A. Forbes Jr. (Ted). They have been married for twenty-nine years and he is retired from the US Navy after serving a little over 20 years. From this union, they were blessed with three beautiful children: Theodore, III (TJ), Marques and D'Angela. TJ is a graduate from the

Florida A&M University and is a Signal Corps Officer in the U.S. Army and a Logistic Manager for Plastics Color Company in North Carolina. Marques is a graduate from Auburn University Montgomery in Alabama and a licensed Massage & Body Therapist; he is looking forward to pursuing his doctorate as a physical therapist. D'Angela is currently attending Clark Atlanta University, majoring in Biology, and will continue her studies to be a Radiologist. TJ has blessed them with one grandson: Theodore A. Forbes, IV (Teddy).

Divia attended Paraiso High School and is an alumni of the Class of 1977. She always had a fascination with science and as a subject in school. She knew that she always wanted to be a nurse to take care of children; but later learned that she couldn't handle the site of blood. However, that never stopped her from being involved in science and today is pursuing her Masters in Public Health degree as an Epidemiologist with the Walden University. She looks forward to continuing her education to obtain her Ph.D.

Divia currently work for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as a Public Health Analyst in the National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD & TB Prevention (NCHHSTP), Office of Health Equity, Office of the Director. She enjoys working in the public health arena where she comes in contact with different people and learning each day more & more about the different diseases. Divia has worked for the CDC since 2001 and has learned so much from different mentors which helped her career. She currently serves on several workgroups and committees such as the coordinator of the NCHHSTP Health Disparities Workgroup, member of the CDC Pandemic Influenza Working Group on Vulnerable Populations (**PIWVP**), and the CDC/ATSDR Minority Initiatives Coordinating Committee Report (**CAMICC**) to mention a few. Divia also enjoy mentoring students, interns and other CDC employees. Divia chairs the Communication & Public Relations Committee for the CDC/Blacks in Government Chapter. She has also held jobs with the US Navy (Norfolk, VA) & US Air Force (Panama). Her areas of interest are in HIV Prevention, Eliminating Health Disparities & Promoting Health Equity.



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As an entrepreneur, Divia also has her own business "Estilos Caliente" which consists of men linen clothing and accessories. She is in the process of networking with other seamstress to make a signature line in the near future.

She is very close to her family and acknowledges her parents for always being involved every step of the way giving encouragement and always a positive force in their lives. Divia stays very active as she still enjoys playing softball competitively with the fellows, bowling, golfing, playing dominoes, working out at the gym, cooking and most of all traveling. Family time is very special to her as well and as they look forward to a new milestone/chapter in their life, she continues to keep God first, in the middle and last.

Divia has a very big heart as she is always looking for ways to help others improve their condition and better their lifestyle. She echoes the following verse from her son TJ that they have always embedded their children...."Always be the leader others want to follow!"



PanCanal Alumni Association SALUTES Divia Patricia Forbes, Public Health Analyst!