

♀ Vital Signs

Health Care Is A Right, Not A Privilege

The Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland

The Free Clinic Expands Its Dental Services

The Free Clinic is excited to share the news that we are expanding the services offered through the Dental Clinic. To date, only emergency extractions have been done in our five-chair Dental Clinic. These services have been performed by a group of dedicated dentists from the community with the assistance of our two staff Dental Assistants. With the addition of Dr. Brian Kastner to our dental staff, we will introduce a full-care dental program.

Future plans include adding a dental hygienist to our staff in order to start performing routine dental cleanings and x-rays. The hours of the Dental Clinic will also be expanded to accommodate more patients. The Free Clinic's partnership with the School of Dental Medicine at Case Western Reserve University will include a clinical rotation for junior and senior students. Our goal is to have the Dental Clinic in full operation by this spring.



Dental Clinic Staff

Complete dental care, including raising the dental IQ of our patients, is fundamental to providing complete medical care. Dental problems are not only painful; they can lead to health and self-esteem problems. By teaching patients of The Free Clinic about

proper dental hygiene and supplying them with toothbrushes, floss, and educating them about hygiene techniques, we can improve the overall health of those who receive care at The Free Clinic.

Can You Help?

We are seeking donations of the following items:

- 5 exam tables
- 4 Adult regular-sized BP cuffs
- Teaching arm for phlebotomy training
- Wall racks for patient literature
- 4 peak flow meters with disposable mouthpieces
- WaterPik
- Colposcope
- Paper shredder (10 sheet capacity min.)
- Chart dividers (for medical records)
- DVD player and TV
- 2 full-sized refrigerators
- Left-handed phlebotomy draw station
- Liquid nitrogen portable unit
- 2 Purell dispensers
- Insulin and testing strips

All donated items must be in good working condition. The Free Clinic of Greater Cleveland is a 501(c)(3) organization and your donations are tax-deductible.

Please contact Jim Young at (216) 707-1415.

In This Edition

The Free Clinic Expands Its Dental Services	p. 1
Save the Date for Food and Flicks 2006	p. 2
Spotlight on Dr. Brian Kastner	p. 2
Women's Health – Colposcopies Added	p. 2
From the Waiting Room	p. 3
Development Corner	p. 3
Capitol News	p. 4
Syringe Exchange Program: A Focus on Harm Reduction	p. 5
2005 Annual Report insert	

SAVE THE DATE FOR FOOD & FLICKS FOR THE FREE CLINIC 2006

June 11th and Food and
Flicks 2006 are just around

the corner! Save the date today
so you can enjoy delicious food and
margaritas at Lopez in Cleveland Heights.
Last year's event elicited the following
remarks: "the food was outstanding,"
"best event around," "what a great way
to start the summer."

The plans are underway for the 2006 Food
and Flicks event. We hope to see you on
June 11th! **If you would like to be placed
on our mailing list, become a sponsor,
or join the planning committee,** please
contact Meg Harris, Administrative Projects
Manager, at (216) 707-3405 or
mharris@thefreeclinic.org.

THE FREE MEDICAL CLINIC OF GREATER CLEVELAND FOOD AND FLICKS 2006

Cinema Sponsor:

**Cleveland
Cinemas**



THANK YOU!

To everyone who has responded with a gift
to our 2006 Annual Campaign, to our more
than 300 volunteers, to our supporters from
the foundation community, and our federal,
state, and local governments. Without you,
our successes would not be possible.
Thank you for giving us the opportunity to
provide medical care to more than 10,000
Greater Clevelanders annually!

Spotlight on Dr. Brian Kastner



Dr. Brian Kastner is known for his excellence in dentistry, commitment to the community and working with underserved populations. Dr. Kastner is a graduate of the Case Western Reserve University School of Dental Medicine and holds a Master of Science in Health Sciences Education from Case's School of Graduate Studies. He has also held the position of Assistant Clinical Professor of Restorative Dentistry at Case's School of Dentistry and has worked with countless students through that position.

Dr. Kastner has special interests in working with victims of domestic violence. His involvement in multiple dental missionary trips has taken him to Honduras and Mexico where he has helped more than 1,000 underserved patients. These people would not have had dental care if it were not for the dedication of Dr. Kastner and his colleagues. Dr. Kastner looks forward to continuing his work overseas with a trip to Honduras this February.

We are very pleased that Brian Kastner is bringing more than 30 years of experience to enhance our Dental Clinic. His expertise will raise the dental IQ of our patients and offer our patients much needed services.

Women's Health – Colposcopies Added

Women's health services are in high demand at The Free Clinic and with the growing number of women who must seek care, staff must perform more diagnostic tests, necessary to evaluate patients. During the past two years, women ages 19 to 25 years old had the greatest number of abnormal Pap tests, associated with the HPV (human papilloma virus) which causes genital warts. Because of the prevalence and potential serious consequences of certain strains of the HPV virus, this infection is a primary health concern. Testing allows for detection of the specific DNA virus, and practitioners can identify those patients who should be closely monitored. In addition, practitioners at The Free Clinic educate women about the risks of HPV and genital warts.

Until April 2005, patients with abnormal Pap tests who received care at The Free Clinic, were referred to another health care facility to obtain a colposcopy. A colposcopy is a visual examination which uses a large, electric microscope to visualize the cervix. A tissue sample or biopsy is taken from the abnormal areas and sent to the lab for further evaluation. With the colposcopy being performed at The Free Clinic, patients no longer must drive across town to receive

care. Some of our patients are homeless and unable to access transportation, and some have difficulty obtaining necessary forms and documents to receive services at other facilities. Among the teen population, The Free Clinic recognizes the importance of trusting relationships with practitioners. Teens are more likely to have important diagnostic tests performed by these same practitioners with whom they have an established professional relationship. Many women do not obtain a colposcopy, even when it is indicated, as they cannot afford to pay for the test. Depending upon the financial rating scale at a health care facility, the charge for the colposcopy itself, as well as the additional costs for any biopsies, can often be several hundred dollars. Now, The Free Clinic's patients can get their Pap exams, have their results explained and, when necessary, receive a colposcopy. The Free Clinic wants patients to obtain necessary tests and services to promote health.

The Free Clinic hopes that if a medical office has a colposcope that is in good condition, that you will consider donating the equipment to us. Our equipment works, but will soon need to be replaced.

July 1, 2004 — June 30, 2005

Annual Report

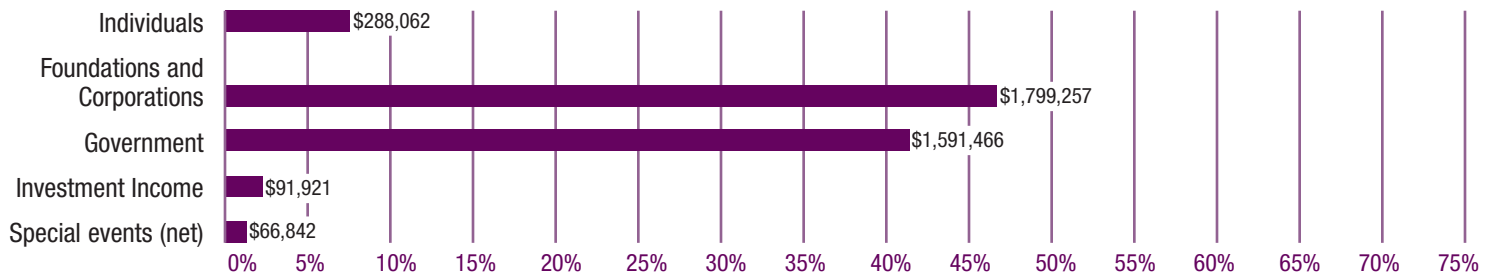


**Health care is a right,
not a privilege**

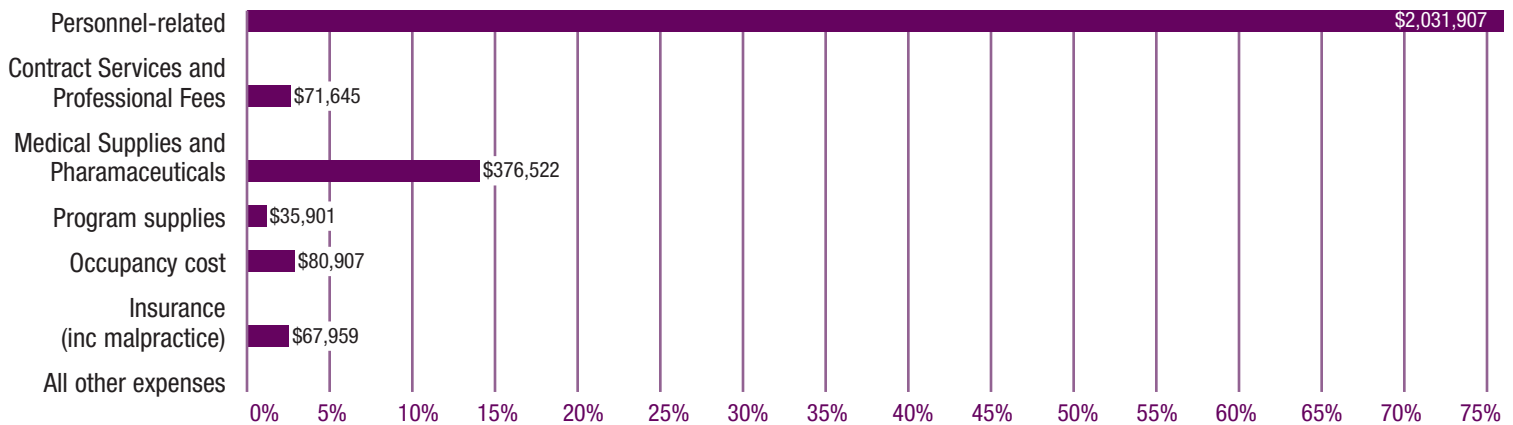
The Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland

Financial Information – Fiscal Year 2004-2005

Total Revenue by Source* \$3,837,548



Major Areas of Expense* 2,664,841



* Figures do not include the estimated \$1,077,846 that we received in volunteer services.

Client Services

Visits

Adult Medical	16,468
Teen Medical	1,661
Adult Dental	1,933
MH/Intake	6,076
Substance Abuse	5,672
HIV Treatment/Services	1,250
HIV Testing	3,780
Total Client Visits	36,840

Other Services

Prescriptions	16,008
Laboratory Services	15,938
Syringe Exchanges	123,430

Big Picture

including donated services
(in rev and exp fig)

Revenues	\$4,915,394
Expenses	\$4,231,298
Net Income (Loss)	\$684,096

Board of Trustees and Officers – July 2005

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Gail Bromley,

Executive Director

From the Waiting Room

Have you ever put a band-aid on a hemorrhage? The band-aid does not help and the patient doesn't improve and may get worse. More likely, the patient may question the clinician's judgment for attempting such an inadequate treatment. Yet, as a nation, we have been band-aiding a broken health care system for many years and OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM NEEDS AN INTERVENTION BEFORE A MORE SERIOUS CRISIS OCCURS! Throw money at the problem and fix it? We are the only country in the world that spends \$2 trillion on health care and we are the only industrialized country in the world without universal health care.

In Northeast Ohio, we are in a unique position to remedy such inequities. Safety net providers such as The Free Clinic have great potential to provide more health services and patient education. Patients who receive care at The Free Clinic report that they would simply not get care were it not for the staff and volunteers who provide essential care, encouraging them to become healthier. These interventions reflect a significant team effort to help patients. Patients realize that their life circumstances put



them a step away from serious health or economic problems, were it not for The Free Clinic services.

Consider the recent disasters in the United States and how the pictures in the news have brought home the stark reality of how vulnerable people can be if they have health problems. Our attention has been drawn to the many storm-related deaths which resulted not from trauma or drowning, but from lack of available medications and treatment for people with chronic illnesses such as diabetes, asthma, heart disease and hypertension. Disparities are present on a day-to-day basis in our community. Those with chronic illnesses who lack affordable health care are most at risk. These individuals are the faces of health care access disparities and the faces of the patients who seek care at The Free Clinic.

For thirty-six years, The Free Clinic has been committed to minimizing these disparities and assuring that health care is available for all. Affordable health care is one of our most critical rights in our country. Most notable is The Free Clinic's commitment to act as a trampoline for patients—those between jobs who have no health care coverage, those who work in jobs where health care coverage is not provided or too costly. This message is familiar to you as a friend of The Free Clinic. Each year the demands for care are growing because more patients, working and unemployed, are suffering from the economic changes. As patients with health problems age, their conditions are more complex and their outlook on life becomes less optimistic. This year, in addition to needing more financial resources to serve more complex patients, we look to you to voice your concerns about the critical need to fix our broken health care system. Our community needs and deserves hope for the future and we need to know that patients and their families will be able to access basic health care. While not in a storm ravaged location, the patients who count on The Free Clinic for care experience many of the same challenges on a daily basis.

Gail E. Bromley

Gail Bromley, Executive Director

Development Corner

Ways you can give to the free clinic

Cash Contributions

Many people want to see their money go to work for The Free Clinic and its patients immediately. An annual cash contribution to the general fund is one of the best ways to ensure this. Don't forget! If you work for a company that matches your charitable gifts, please let us know.

Appreciated Assets

Gifts of appreciated assets (typically equities, or stocks) can provide a significant tax advan-

tage. Your gift would provide you an income tax deduction equal to the current value of the asset, a higher value than your original cost. As long as the asset is classified as a long-term capital gains property (held for at least 12 months), you also avoid paying capital gains taxes on the growth of the asset.

Making a Bequest

Making a bequest in your will is an effective way of supporting The Free Clinic. Bequests to The Free Clinic are not taxable as part of

your estate. There are many options and methods for making a bequest and you should choose the type that best suits your personal objectives. For example, a bequest could be a stated dollar amount, or it could be a specific property or asset. Your bequest could be immediate, or contingent upon non-survival of preferred beneficiaries (such as your spouse). You should always work with your attorney to draft or change your will.





CAPITOL NEWS — January, 2006

by Amy Goldstein

It is customary, or at least common, to reflect upon the past, and to look ahead to the future at the beginning of every new calendar year. I intend to do just that in this edition of “Capitol News” by highlighting some of the accomplishments of The Free Clinic’s advocacy program in 2005 and by giving you a glimpse of what lies ahead as we begin 2006.

The FY2006-2007* biennium budget for the State of Ohio was an early priority for the legislative work of The Free Clinic in 2005. Notably, The Free Clinic’s interest in the state budget was not because there was an existing line item for free clinics that had to be protected, but because proposed cuts to the Medicaid program and the proposed elimination of the Disability Medical Assistance (DMA) program promised to result in a significant increase in the size of our patient population. Since **an influx of new patients** in the absence of an increase in clinic funding **would inevitably result in fewer available funds per capita**, it was critical that The Free Clinic voice its opposition to proposed program cuts too, in an effort to maintain current service levels for our patients. Toward this end, we joined forces with selected statewide organizations including the Campaign to Protect Ohio’s Future, the Universal Health Care Action Network of Ohio (UHCAN Ohio), and the Family Coverage Coalition in order to maximize both opportunity and visibility.

During the course of the state budget process, **I testified three times before the General Assembly**, appearing before the **House Finance and Appropriations Committee**, the **Human Services Subcommittee of the House Finance and Appropriations Committee**, and finally before the **Senate Finance and Financial Institutions Committee**. Each time I testified I emphasized that if the largest free clinic in Ohio did not have the resources to absorb the cost of the proposed Medicaid cuts and the elimination of the DMA program, no other free clinic in Ohio would be in a better position to do so. I explained that there would be no true cost savings for Ohioans as proponents of the cuts claimed, but that cost shifting for which free clinics, emergency rooms, and residents of the state would pay the

ultimate price. I expect that some of you may have heard me address this during a WCPN interview that aired while the budget process was underway.

On June 30, 2005, the final FY2006-2007 biennium budget was signed by Governor Taft and this budget legislation contained both good and not-so-good news. The bad news was that **we were unable to convince the General Assembly to eliminate all proposed Medicaid and DMA cuts**, but the good news, in a nutshell, was that **vision care and critical dental care will still be covered under Ohio’s Medicaid program** and \$60 million in DMA funding was preserved. Also, benefiting The Free Clinic is a new line item created in the budget to **allow free clinics reimbursement by the State of Ohio for 80% of their medical malpractice insurance premiums up to a cap of \$20,000** (the annual premium at The Free Clinic tops \$90,000). While this \$20,000 cap helps with escalating premiums and creates a new funding source for free clinics, it still reflects a significant compromise and one which we hope to eliminate in the future.

On another front, **I have been working as a member of the Legislative Committee of the Ohio Association of Free Clinics (“O AFC”) to develop its formal 2006 legislative agenda.** The first legislative priority we have identified is to **pursue an increase in the amount of funding designated for free clinics** under the uncompensated care program of Ohio’s Health Priorities Trust Fund and to allow all of these funds (commonly referred to as the “tobacco funds” which are proceeds from the settlement of litigation that Ohio and other states brought against tobacco manufacturers in the 1990s) to be spent on any uninsured person whose income is below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

Another funding initiative that will be explored in 2006 includes both the prospect of adding a voluntary donation check-off box on initial licensing and reregistration forms for health care professionals and directing a percentage of fines paid by health care professionals to free clinics. Both of these ideas are excellent examples of how free clinics work to identify creative new funding possibilities in the face of a demand for services that threatens to outpace existing revenue. Efforts on this front will continue long beyond 2006.

The advocacy efforts of The Free Clinic are not limited to state funding issues. **I am pleased to report that I have been invited to serve as a member of the newly created Legislative and Public Policy Committee of the National Association of Free Clinics (“NAFC”)** which focuses on federal issues, budgetary and otherwise, which impact free clinics. On October 27, 2005, Gail Bromley and I traveled to Washington, D.C., for the first NAFC Legislative Day and, in conjunction with that event, had the opportunity to meet at length with key legislative staff for Senators Voinovich and DeWine, and Representatives Boehner, Kucinich, Brown, Pryce, and Tubbs Jones of Ohio. (Special thanks are due to long-time Board member vic gelb who helped arrange many of our meetings, including a meeting with an aide to Senator Barbara Mikulski of Maryland who serves as member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee.)

Each of the meetings we had on Capitol Hill gave us the opportunity to educate key legislative aides and through them, members of Congress, about the work of free clinics, the ever-widening gaps in access to health care, and the challenges with which both free clinics and free

clinic patients are faced. It should come as no surprise that members of Congress with constituents in Northeastern Ohio have the greatest familiarity with free clinics because of the unparalleled history of The Free Clinic. My favorite memory of the day was talking at length with Congresswoman Tubbs Jones on the best ways to educate constituents about the new Medicare drug program and about the impact of increasing pharmaceutical costs on The Free Clinic. The value of this kind of dialogue is immeasurable and the opportunity to meet face-to-face with a member of Congress typically too uncommon.

I am proud to be a part of The Free Clinic's significant commitment to health care advocacy on both the state and federal level. **The important goals of our advocacy program include educating elected officials, government officials, and the community on matters of health care policy that affect our patients, maintaining an ongoing dialogue about the social and clinical implications of health care legislation, strategically increasing our partnerships with advocacy coalitions, and both protecting and expanding funding opportunities so that we can continue to meet the needs of those who increasingly rely on The Free Clinic for their health care.** It is a privilege to lead our advocacy efforts, and the challenges along the way can be opportunities rather than roadblocks.

As always, you can e-mail me at agoldstein@thefreeclinic.org to share your thoughts about public policy and advocacy issues as they impact The Free Clinic and our patients. **I welcome your input and involvement as we continue to move forward and of course, I wish you a happy and healthy New Year!**

* The FY2006-2007 state operating budget covers the period between July 1, 2005 and June 30, 2007. The FY2008-2009 budget period will begin on July 1, 2007.

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Amy Goldstein is an attorney and the Director of Government Relations and Strategic Planning for The Free Clinic. Amy has a master's degree in social work from Columbia University and a Juris Doctorate degree from Cleveland State University. She lives in Columbus with her husband Marc Sigal, also an attorney, formerly from Cleveland Heights and University Heights, and their poodle "Joe."

Syringe Exchange Program: A Focus on Harm Reduction

Did you know?

- Over 1 million people in the USA are living with HIV/AIDS¹
- 156 people living in Cuyahoga County were diagnosed with HIV between July 2003 and June 2004²
- 10% of all people living with HIV/AIDS in the Cleveland area were infected by intravenous drug use³
 - The highest number of those infected were Hispanics and African Americans
- One-third of all people in the US who have HIV/AIDS got it through intravenous drug use⁴
- The Free Clinic has the only Syringe Exchange Program in Ohio
- The Syringe Exchange Program is possible due to a special arrangement between the City of Cleveland and The Free Clinic whereby it is legal to exchange needles one for one.

What is being done in Greater Cleveland?

In an effort to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS and other blood borne diseases, **The Free Clinic began its Syringe Exchange Program (SEP) in 1995.** The goal of this program is to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS among the high-risk group of injection drug users (IDUs) by providing clean needles, prevention education, HIV testing, and referrals to drug detoxification programs. The Free Clinic's SEP is currently the only needle exchange program in Ohio. In addition to providing needle exchange opportunities on the east and west side of Cleveland five days per week, we also perform HIV/AIDS testing and health education. Also of note, approximately 20% of individuals who have used the SEP have been referred to treatment centers.

Myths about Needle Exchange Programs:

MYTH: Providing more needles to drug addicts will only increase the number of dirty needles in the neighborhoods.

FACT: The SEP exchanges needles on a one-for-one basis; this way, IDUs are encouraged

to turn in their dirty needles in exchange for clean ones, thereby reducing the number of possibly contaminated needles on the street.

MYTH: Needle exchange programs promote and increase drug use.

FACT: Studies have shown that when combined with referrals to drug treatment and HIV care and support services, needle exchange programs do not increase drug use. In fact, a 1997 study by the National Institute of Health states that evidence shows in areas with a needle exchange program, drug use has decreased or remained the same among IDUs who participate in the needle exchange program.

MYTH: Needle exchange programs aren't endorsed or supported in the health community.

FACT: Virtually every scientific body that has studied needle exchange programs supports them: the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Research Council, National Commission on AIDS, General Accounting Office, National Academy of Sciences, American Medical Association, American Psychiatric Association and the American Public Health Association.

MYTH: Needle exchange increases crime in a community.

FACT: In actuality, needle exchange programs may reduce the level of crime in a community. When needle exchange programs assist IDUs in linking them with treatment facilities, the number of individuals using drugs may decrease, thereby reducing the demand for drugs and, as a result, reducing drug related crime.

MYTH: Needle exchange programs are not cost-effective.

FACT: A sterile needle costs 7 cents wholesale, annual needs of an IDU can be met with an investment of about \$70. The estimated lifetime medical costs of treating someone with HIV/AIDS is \$190,000.

1. Centers for Disease Control, December 2003
2. Ohio Department of Health
3. Ohio Department of Health
4. As estimated by the Centers for Disease Control



The Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland
 12201 Euclid Avenue
 Cleveland, Ohio 44106
 www.thefreeclinic.org

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Mission Statement

The mission of The Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland is to provide quality healthcare and related services free of charge to those who lack appropriate alternatives, and to advocate for policy changes that make healthcare available to all.

HELP KEEP THE FREE IN THE FREE MEDICAL CLINIC

Please complete this form and mail to:

The Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland
 12201 Euclid Avenue,
 Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Gift Amount _____ Check enclosed. (Please make all checks payable to The Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland.)

Please charge my credit card MasterCard VISA

Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Pledge Amount _____ I will fulfill my pledge in _____ installments beginning _____.
 (Please fulfill pledges by June 30, 2004)

- I am making a gift of securities
- I have included The Free Medical Clinic in my will
- Please contact me about planned giving opportunities
- My employer matches gifts. Enclosed is a matching gift form.

Name: Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Please list my name as follows in donor recognition materials _____