

# EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Readers:

**“Children are our future.”** This may be an old cliché and perhaps the most memorable line in one of Whitney Houston’s hit songs, but it nevertheless rings true. That is why as members of society – whether we have children of our own or not – we have a responsibility to invest in the well-being of *ALL* children. Love is important, yes, but children also need access to healthy, nutritious food, a solid education and quality health care. We therefore must support policies and provide resources that protect and nurture children and their families – especially those most vulnerable.



In this last issue of the calendar year, *Community Health Forum* informs on many ways community health centers are helping children by addressing some of their most pressing physical and mental health needs – from obesity to food insecurity to substance use disorders. We also share some great news about a new NACHC partnership with Sesame Street that will help children and their families cope with difficult life challenges (*see page 12*).

Also, at a time when natural disasters are hitting our communities more frequently, we examine key things health centers should consider regarding their IT systems in preparing for and recovering from a major storm or other widespread public emergency (*see page 26*).

And last, but certainly not least, Dan Hawkins, NACHC’s Senior Vice President for Public Policy and Research, files his last “Washington Update” column for the *Forum* as he prepares to move on to a new chapter in his life (*see page 29*). Over the years Dan, as a staunch health center advocate and policy leader, has played an invaluable role in helping to grow and strengthen the health center mission. He has logged thousands of miles visiting health centers, has hundreds of times testified before congressional committees and met with key legislators, delivered speeches and presentations to educate others about the work of health centers and mentored, and no doubt inspired, many new health center supporters. Having worked with him for more years than he nor I care to mention, I feel Dan is one of the most passionate and dedicated health center advocates I know and judging by his final column it’s clear he plans to remain so.

In closing 2018 and looking toward a challenging yet promising new year for community health centers, the folks here at NACHC thank you for your support and wish you and yours a wonderful holiday season and Happy New Year!

To your good health,

Claudia Green Gibson  
Executive Vice President for Communications  
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