

By Sallie Neillie,  
Executive Director

## Health care reform begins; challenges still exist

### The good news:

Medicaid Expansion will provide the most significant coverage opportunity for low-income Washington residents for many years. In just a few months, more than 250,000 individuals below 138 percent of Federal Poverty Level (\$32,499 per year for a family of four) become eligible to enroll in no-cost Medicaid coverage, effective January 2014.

### The challenging news:

There will still be large numbers of individuals who will be left uninsured. Undocumented immigrants, certain religious groups, Native American tribes and incarcerated individuals are not eligible. Immigrants here legally for five years are eligible for Medicaid; those here less than five years are eligible for the Health Benefit Exchange.

Unfortunately, insurance coverage doesn't equal health care access. Specialty care access will continue to be a challenge. Low reimbursement rates and other challenges related to the Medicaid patient will continue to limit the number of specialty providers who will provide care to Medicaid patients as part of their regular practice.

The affordability for patients who purchase

insurance in the Health Benefit Exchange is still unknown. The pricing of plans with the Exchange is expected soon, but even with subsidies, plans may still be unaffordable for many.

Changes in life circumstances — e.g., income, employment status, pregnancy — can cause movement from being Medicaid eligible to not being eligible as well as movement from one Medicaid insurance plan to another. Differing eligibility levels can split families across different plans and provider networks. For example, Medicaid will cover a pregnant mother and child, but the father would need to get coverage through the Health Benefit Exchange.

### What does this mean for Project Access Northwest?

While challenges remain, we are excited about the coming changes for patients in our community and we stand ready to help. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) and Medicaid expansion go a long way in helping our low-income neighbors, but we know the ACA won't solve the whole problem. Innovative solutions proposed by Project Access Northwest will be an essential part of successfully implementing these changes in the Puget Sound area.

Project Access NW has been working with partners in the community to expand our case management model to patients covered by Medicaid as well as the uninsured. In 2014, many of these patients will have health

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## SOLUTION: Donors who believe in the mission

### Philanthropy as a family value

When families teach philanthropy and giving to their children, the commitment to giving is deeply grounded. **Craig Darling** and **Gary Davis** both learned to give back to their communities when they were children; today, there is no doubt in either of their minds of the importance of sharing their talents and treasure with our neighbors. It's as if they were hard-wired to make charitable giving a major part of their lives.

Craig and Gary are friends and colleagues at **Companis**, a nonprofit organization that provides other nonprofits full-time professionals to fill staffing gaps and allow them to maximize their services to the community. They learned about Project Access Northwest through their work with Companis and both are our champions and donors who support our mission.

"I donate to Project Access NW because I have personally been helped by nonprofit organizations that fill gaps in our social services safety net," says Gary. "I see up close the innovative ways Project Access NW helps solve health care problems, and I am grateful I can make a monthly contribution so easily through my bank's automatic debit system."

Craig has been a friend of and donor to Project Access NW since its beginning. "I met Sallie Neillie when Companis staffed the Mother Joseph Clinic (now part of Swedish Community Specialty Clinic). I saw what limited resources there were for people who needed specialty medical care and couldn't afford it. To me it's a 'no brainer' that what Project Access NW does is critical to our neighbors in crisis with specialty health care needs and deserves my support."



*Gary Davis and Craig Darling at their Companis offices.*

Both Craig and Gary believe that affordable access to health care is a fundamental right of everyone—they believe that donating to Project Access NW is as close as they can get to helping make that right a reality for all.

## SOLUTION: Raising funds and cutting expenses

### GiveBIG donations double in two years!



Seattle Foundation's GiveBIG was a success for everyone, and this year Project Access Northwest received more than \$15,000—nearly double of what we received

in 2011, and a 25 percent increase from 2012. Thanks to everyone who donated to us through GiveBIG. Your gift truly makes a difference to all of our clients.

### Did you know that email can save money?

For Project Access Northwest, sending this newsletter via email will help us save thousands of dollars in printing and mailing costs, and it's good for the environment. If you're willing to help support our work and lessen your recycling load, let us know.

### It just takes a minute... and we'll take care of the rest.

Call Aileen Delansig, **206-496-1593**, and let her know you want to receive this newsletter via email.

OR

Email [info@projectaccessnw.org](mailto:info@projectaccessnw.org) and let us know your preferred email address.

### Thanks for your help with this important step!

*We're 100 percent committed to protecting your privacy. Your email will never be used for any other purpose than communication from Project Access Northwest.*

## Welcome Jennifer Freeman, CPA

In June, **Jennifer Freeman, CPA**, Vice President of Finance at Coordinated Care, a division of Centene Corporation, joined the Project Access Northwest board of directors. Formerly Chief Financial Officer of Qualis Health, she brings a wealth of strategic planning, accounting and financial management experience to help us fulfill our mission.



*Jennifer Freeman, CPA*

### Project Access Northwest Board of Directors

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**Ex Officio Member:**  
**Kristina Larson**  
*Executive Director & COO  
King County Medical Society*

**Sallie Neillie**  
*Executive Director  
Project Access Northwest*

## Welcome to Project Access Northwest’s new staff members!



*Project Access Northwest  
welcomes (L to R)  
Amy Mumpower, RN,  
Christina Lawrence,  
Areej Zaitoun-Romero,  
Juan Orr and Liza  
Greene who squeezed in  
a quick outdoor break  
to enjoy our beautiful  
Seattle summer.*

## Best wishes to summer intern Zoe Brown



**Zoe Brown**, soon to be a junior at Pitzer College in Los Angeles, Calif, has spent July–August 2013 as a summer intern at Project Access Northwest.

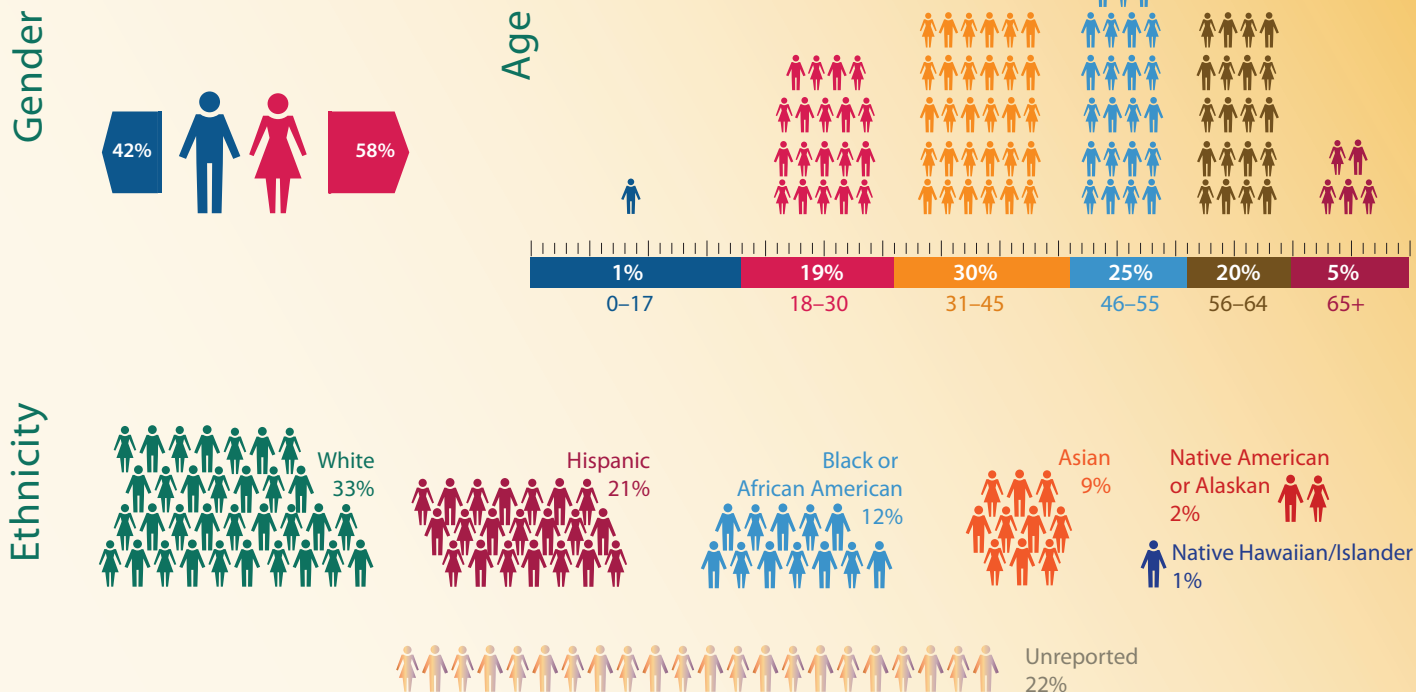
“I took a couple of courses in public health and found it fascinating,” she says. “I am really interested in the disparities in access to resources in different communities. I feel passionately that people deserve health care.”

Zoe spent the summer researching primary care providers and clinics in the King County area to add information to the Project Access NW database. She plans to complete her undergraduate education and possibly pursue a dual master’s degree in business and public health.

### ARE YOU INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?

CALL US AT 206-496-1593. We have ongoing needs for medical and dental clinicians, RNs, case managers and other administrative support.

## AT A GLANCE: Who do we serve?



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insurance for the first time and may be unfamiliar with how to navigate access to health care services. Even for patients with coverage, specialty care access will still be limited, depending on Medicaid reimbursement rates for providers and capacity issues. The bottom line is that despite this expansion in health insurance coverage for our state, there will still be thousands of low-income patients who will require assistance in getting the care they need. Some of these patients will continue to be uninsured, and some will be covered by Medicaid.

To do this work, we will continue to help patients access specialty medical and dental services appropriately and

efficiently. It is our core competence, and our providers and partners value that work (and our less than 5 percent no-show rate!). In addition, we will be piloting an effort with two local emergency departments to help patients who are frequent users to find a more appropriate primary care home. Watch for more information in our newsletters and on our website as these plans unfold in the next few months.

Thank you to our sponsors, partners and volunteer providers for making this work possible. We are grateful for your vision and support as we move forward into this next exciting chapter in health care.

This newsletter is published by:



1111 Harvard Avenue ■ Seattle, WA 98122  
 Tel: 206.788.4204 ■ Fax: 206.382.3507  
[info@projectaccessnw.org](mailto:info@projectaccessnw.org)

**Sallie Neillie**, Executive Director  
**Dav'ne R. Stahley, CFRE**,  
 Development & Marketing Director

**We invite your comments and questions.**  
 Visit [www.projectaccessnw.org](http://www.projectaccessnw.org) to learn more.

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