

NEWSLETTER

October 2023

LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING

September and October were filled with lots of behind-the-scenes and administrative activities! These included:

- Identification of our Coalition's Co-Chairs (see info below)
- Development of a detailed milestone task list and timeline for our 2-year study
- Kick-off meeting with the NIH and Westat (the entity managing this grant)
- Contract documents for the award are in progress

Our first in-person Coalition meeting will be November 2nd, 2023 (see info at right). Together, we will decide what specific questions to ask moms, and things to understand about our communities.

Things to look forward to at this meeting...

- Choosing our VIBRANT MOMS logo!
- Determining questions to ask TX Panhandle moms
- Conversations with other Coalition members

Your participation in the VIBRANT MOMS Coalition is essential to understand and address maternal health disparities in the Texas Panhandle! Thank you for making a difference!

Each month we will highlight Coalition members. This month we want you to get to know our VIBRANT MOMS team leaders.

Coalition Co-Chairs



Jenifer Gregory
WIC Director, MPH, RD
Regence Health Network

As the WIC Director, I oversee clinic services in 10 counties in the Panhandle Region. I hold a Bachelor of Science in Food and Nutrition from Texas Tech University and a Master of Public Health from Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. I learned about WIC while taking a course in community nutrition during my undergraduate studies and immediately knew I wanted to pursue a career with the program.



Monica Sullivan
Director of Joseph's Project
Catholic Charities of the Texas Panhandle

Serving women and children of the Texas Panhandle for the past 8 years in a pregnancy center atmosphere. I was the abortion-minded client in Amarillo who chose life and gave birth to a beautiful daughter, so I share hope. Humbled to serve under the Catholic Charities of the Texas Panhandle to reach those in need of our services.

VIBRANT MOMS

Coalition Meeting

Date: Thursday, November 2nd

Time: 12:00-2:00 p.m.

Location: Harrington Library Consortium
413 SE 4th Ave., Amarillo, TX

- Lunch will be served.
- VIBRANT MOMS Coalition directory coming soon!

Maternal Health in Texas

In September, the March of Dimes released a report called *Where You Live Matters: Maternity Care in Texas*. They reported that in Texas 46.5% of counties in Texas are maternity care deserts, and more than 20% receive inadequate prenatal care. For more details see: <https://marchofdimes.org/mcdr-tx>.

Did you know?

VIBRANT MOMS serves 6 counties:

- Deaf Smith County
- Gray County
- Parmer County
- Potter County
- Randall County
- Swisher County

Spotlight Resource

Check out these resources for Moms and Moms-to-be at this Texas Health and Human Services Website: [Maternal Child Health](#)

Email: vibrantmoms@ttuhsc.edu



Phone: 806-414-9972

Executive Team



Christine Garner

PhD, RD, CLC

Assistant Professor | Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, Infant Risk Center
TTUHSC

Principle Investigator for VIBRANT MOMS

I am an Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Researcher in the InfantRisk Center, and Assistant Vice President of Research at TTUHSC in Amarillo. I have completed my Doctorate and Master's degrees in Maternal and Child Nutrition at Cornell University, and completed my Registered Dietitian training at UC San Francisco. My research focuses on maternal and child health during pregnancy, breastfeeding, infancy, and early childhood - the "first 1000 days" - vital life phases for improving health and well-being of our communities.



Casie Stoughton

Director of Public Health

Amarillo Public Health | Amarillo Area Public Health District
Amarillo Public Health for VIBRANT MOMS

I have been with the department for 20 years working in immunizations, TB control and epidemiology. I completed my Bachelor's degree in Nursing in 2004 at West Texas A&M University and Master's degree in Public Health in 2015 at the University of North Texas Health Science Center. I developed a passion for health care while working in a mission hospital in Honduras; public health was a natural extension of this work.



Liz Rascon-Alaniz

Executive Director

Amarillo Wesley Community Center, Inc.
Wesley Community Center for VIBRANT MOMS

I hold my Bachelor's and Masters degree in education from Angelo Sate University. I hold my Doctorate in Educational Leadership from West Texas A&M University. I am a community partner for VIBRANT MOMS project.



Julie St. John

DrPH, MPH, MA, CHWI

Associate Professor | Julia Jones Matthew School of Population and Public Health
TTUHSC

Public Health Academic Lead for VIBRANT MOMS

I am an Associate Professor in the Julia Jones Matthew School of Population and Public Health, TTUHSC, Abilene campus and tenured professor. I have served as the principal and co-investigator on various projects in rural and underserved areas that utilized community based participatory research approaches. I founded the National CHW Training Center at Texas A&M School of Public Health and I am a Texas certified CHW Instructor and have worked with CHWs over 20 years utilizing CBRP and community health development approaches. I also teach several public health courses.



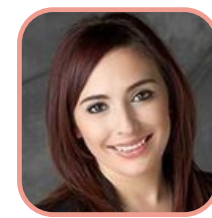
Stephanie Stroever

PhD, MPH

Director, Division of Biostatistics | Clinic Research Institute TTUHSC
Assistant Professor | Department of Medical Education TTUHSC

Lead Data Analyst for VIBRANT MOMS

I am an Assistant Professor in the School of Medicine and the Director for the Division of Biostatistics in the Clinical Research Institute at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. I have a doctoral degree in public health and experience working to promote maternal and child health across multiple fields including healthy eating, physical activity, and prevention of hospital-related maternal complications. I am thrilled to be part of the VIBRANT MOMS coalition.



Rosario Ortega

Business Coordinator

Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Infant Risk Center TTUHSC
Coordinator for VIBRANT MOMS

I hold my Bachelor and Master's degree in business from West Texas A&M University. I have been a business coordinator for the research department at TTUHSC for about a year now. I am the business coordinator for the VIBRANT MOMS project.

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VIBRANT MOMS: Verifying and Implementing evidence-Based pRograms for Addressing Needed Transformations
in Maternal Outcomes, Measures, and Support