



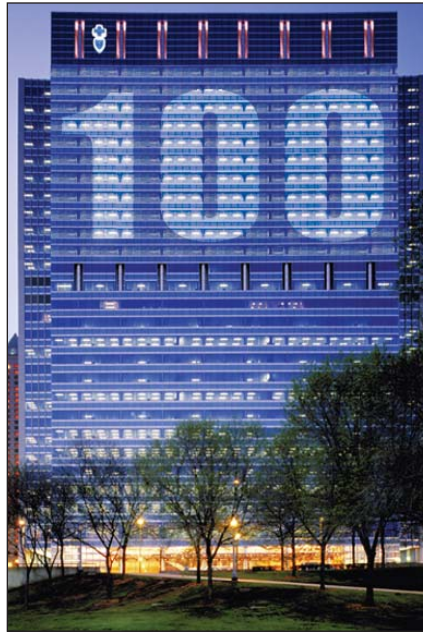
BlueCross BlueShield  
of Illinois

# Labor CONNECTION

## Labor accounts hit 100!

In November, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois celebrated its success with the addition of the 99<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> Labor customers – Mid South Iron Workers Health and Welfare Fund in Oklahoma and Pipe Trades Health and Welfare Fund in New Mexico.

The very first full service Labor customer, Sheet Metal Workers Local #73, joined Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) in 1965. As time passed, BCBSIL recognized there was a need to develop a process which allowed self-administrated Health and Welfare Funds to access the Blue Cross Blue Shield PPO provider network, and retain control of benefit determination, membership data and claims processing methods.



BCBSIL developed the Labor Shared Claim Processing Option more than 10 years ago, with UFCW Midwest Health Benefits Fund as the first customer. UFCW Midwest Health Benefits Fund shared with other Funds the positive experiences and cost savings achieved by working with BCBSIL. As a result, Plumbers and Pipefitters Local #23 and Central Laborers Pension Welfare and Annuity Fund soon came on board.

“We are proud to have worked with a variety of Funds who were instrumental in helping develop our Shared Claim Processing Option into what it is today. What we learned from our customers during this process is invaluable,” said Dick Quigley, BCBSIL Director of Labor Accounts. “I wish I could say the process was a smooth ride, but the reality is, developing the Shared Claim Processing Option was a very bumpy road. The end result is an online system that provides valuable bottom-line savings for Labor Funds.”

Over the past years, the Shared Claim Processing Option has greatly evolved through open communication between BCBSIL and the Funds. “We are proud that more than 400,000 Union members are carrying our card too,” said Quigley.

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ALL NEW!

DR. CUSTER'S  
CORNER

## New Faces in Labor – Derek Serbe

Derek Serbe joined the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois Labor Affairs team as a Principal Account Executive this winter. Derek began his career at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois in 1993 as an Underwriter in Standard Accounts. In 1994, Derek's underwriting position dovetailed into an internal consulting role assisting in a business process re-engineering project. Derek made a speculative decision to leave BCBSIL in 1995 and took a combined Underwriter/Account Executive position at CNA.

Derek returned to BCBSIL as an Account Executive in National Division Marketing in 1997. He's worked in National Division Marketing for the past eight years, with

responsibilities that included implementation of new accounts, maintenance of an existing block of business, and overall customer service, internal and external.

Derek is a graduate of The George Washington University, Washington, D.C., and resides in the northwest suburbs. He spends all his free time with his wife and four month old daughter, Katelyn.



## HCSC and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma announce merger

In November HCSC President and CEO, Ray McCaskey welcomed Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma, and its employees as the fourth division of the company – joining Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, New Mexico and Texas.

McCaskey said “The addition of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma – its 500,000 members, strong financials and commitment to its customers and communities – will enhance HCSC's stature as a major regional and national player in the health care industry.”

In addition, HCSC – with its state-of-the-art technology, track record of providing outstanding service and expertise in the large group market – will help Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oklahoma compete successfully against its national competitors and strengthen its position as the No. 1 health insurer in the state.



## Welcomel NEW LABOR CLIENTS

### **Ironworkers Local 843 Health & Welfare Fund**

Effective 6/1/05. Approximately 80 members

### **Texas Carpenters and Millwrights Health & Welfare Fund**

Effective 6/1/05. 1,395 members

### **Texas Iron Workers' Health Benefit Fund**

Effective 5/1/05. 1,146 members

### **UAPP Local Union No. 142 Welfare Fund**

Effective 5/1/05. 735 members

### **Pipe Fitters Local 211 Health & Welfare Fund**

BCBSIL's very first Texas based client. Effective 1/1/05. 1,247 members

### **Mid South Iron Workers Welfare Fund**

BCBSIL's very first Oklahoma based client. Effective 11/1/05. Approximately 350 members

### **Carpenters & Millwrights of Houston & Vicinity Health & Welfare Fund**

Effective 5/1/05. 801 members

### **Mountain West Regional Council of Carpenters/ New Mexico Health & Welfare Trust Fund**

One of BCBSIL's very first New Mexico based client. Effective 10/1/05. 1,372 members

### **Southwest Multi-Craft Health & Welfare Trust Fund**

One of BCBSIL's very first New Mexico based client. Effective 10/1/05. 1,792 members

### **New Mexico PipeTrades Health & Welfare Trust Fund**

Effective 11/1/05. 1,141 members

## BCBSIL employees show their support for schools

Earlier this year, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) partnered with the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) for the 2005 Back-to-School Supply Drive in support of an initiative called Kits for Kidz.

The *Operation Back-to-School* was started, as part of BCBSIL's Caring for Our Community Program, to help students begin their first day of classes well prepared and motivated to learn. The mission of the Caring for Our Community program is to demonstrate BCBSIL employees' commitment to the communities we serve through volunteer and financial support of local organizations in the spirit of service.

Donating approximately 7,000 items to CPS, the generosity of BCBSIL employees is helping numerous students return to school this fall with the supplies they need.

After hearing about *Operation Back-to-School*, Arne Duncan, the CEO of CPS wanted to be part of the campaign. On August 26, Duncan came to BCBSIL headquarters to meet HCSC President

and CEO Ray McCaskey, and some of the employees who helped plan and support *Operation Back-to-School*.

He was appreciative and impressed by the number of supplies donated. Employees also donated \$335 to help CPS buy additional supplies for its Kits for Kidz program.



Arne Duncan (left), Chicago Public School's CEO, accepts school supply donation from HCSC CEO Ray McCaskey

## HCSC responds to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Following the recent natural disasters of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, HCSC and its employees responded with heart-felt contributions as well as speed and efficiency.

HCSC gave \$100,000 toward the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association's donation drive. It also participated in the America's Health Insurance Plans effort — the Katrina Coverage Call Center — to link displaced people, who've lost their insurance card, with a telephone operator at their health plan to expedite service.

Both Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois and Texas have national account members in the affected Gulf Coast states. In response, HCSC temporarily relaxed procedures for access to medical care and prescription medications for members displaced by the hurricane.

To help meet the many needs of evacuees arriving in Illinois, BCBSIL coordinated a donation drive at the Chicago headquarters with the United Way, one of the major national supporters of the Katrina relief effort. In less than one day, the drive collected enough basic necessity items, such as shoes, clothes and nonperishable food, to nearly fill a semitrailer, which transported the donations to the new United Way warehouse for evacuees in Illinois.

“We received very little advance notice about the availability of the 18-wheeler,” said Tara Gurber, senior vice president of Audit, Compliance and Security, who helped organize the drive. “Despite the less-than-24-hour notice, our employees rallied to come through. It was another tremendous demonstration of the spirit, generosity and compassion of our great HCSC community.”

## Someone YOU SHOULD KNOW



Jose Colin

In this issue, *Labor Connection* would like you to meet **Jose Colin**, Fund Manager of Suburban Teamsters of Northern Illinois Welfare and Pension Fund.

Colin has been in the role of Fund Manager with Suburban Teamsters for over 2½ years. Prior to joining Suburban Teamsters, he was employed by William M. Mercer, where he worked for five years on the benefits administration

side, and held such roles as Senior Pension Specialist and Project Manager. He began his 23-year career with Zenith Administrators Inc. in Chicago part-time while attending college. He worked at Zenith Administrators for one of its biggest clients, the UFCW International Union Industry Pension Fund. He initially researched service histories for its members, and later advanced himself to Assistant Fund Manager.

Suburban Teamsters of Northern Illinois Welfare Fund was created in 1951 and currently services over 5,000 active members and over 900 retirees. Its members and retirees are made up of individuals from three Locals who participate in the Fund – Local 330 in Elgin, Local 673 in West Chicago and Local 179 in Joliet. Located in West Chicago, Suburban Teamster’s office staff of 14 individuals provide both administrative and member support for welfare and pension benefits.

As Fund Manager, Colin finds one of his biggest challenges is trying to maintain a high level of benefits for their members and retirees. “When contracts are negotiated, the most important issue is benefits, not pay raises,” Colin says. He adds, “Raises have definitely taken a back seat to benefits. A pay raise means nothing to members if their benefits are not good. Members see any raise as a moot point, as that additional income would be eaten up by paying higher medical bills.”

As with other labor groups and employers, recruiting is another challenging factor. Colin and his Fund are constantly challenged with creating attractive benefits plans, which the three Locals can leverage as a recruitment tool. Colin says, “We’re definitely trying to modify our benefits plans or create new ones to meet the needs of our members.” One area Colin and his Fund saw an immediate need was for their seasonal employees. Colin explains, “In the winter months, when our seasonal employees are not working, they still need benefit coverage, which is very expensive to continue when there’s no paycheck. What we’ve done is created a plan where, when the

member is not working, benefits are reduced but the cost of the plan is considerably lower. For example, a member can now make self-payment at a rate of \$99 a week during the off-season to maintain coverage.” This new program, which began in October of this year, has been very well received by the members.

When Colin joined Suburban Teamsters over 2½ years ago, the Fund was with another PPO provider. Since making the move to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois in January 2004, Colin shares some of the benefits and advantages the Fund has found being part of the Blues plans.

“What we immediately liked about Blue Cross was that the Blue Cross name has much prestige and is welcome all around. This was a strong and important factor for our members when seeking care.” He continues, “We also found Blue Cross had, and continues to have, extremely strong provider networks and consistent provider contracting. This was an especially important change from our previous provider. In the past, our members faced problems when they used a network hospital, but the doctor or specialist they were seen by was not part of the network. Because of this, many members encountered higher deductibles. Besides not serving our members well, the Fund received a high amount of appeals, which took much time for our staff to research and address. With Blue Cross, our members were extremely happy to find that the Blue Cross networks include both the hospitals and the doctors, so that it made it easier on our members and reduced the number of appeals the office received.”

Most impressive to Colin has been the savings his Fund has recognized. “The savings with Blue Cross have been superb” he says. “What excites us is as the fund saves more money, we can increase the benefits for our members.”

For the future, the Fund would love to afford more benefits for both members and especially their retirees. Colin says “You hear a lot in the news about companies considering cutting benefits for their retired insurees, or not covering them altogether. By working closely with Blue Cross, and with their help, we feel confident that we won’t have to let that happen at our Fund.”

Colin was born in Mexico and came to the United States when he was 8 years old. He graduated from Loyola University in Chicago in 1984, with a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology and a minor in Computer Sciences. Colin resides in Porter, Indiana with his wife and their two dogs, who they refer to as their “girls.” Colin and his wife greatly enjoy the outdoors, where they like to walk, hike and take country drives, never leaving their girls far behind.

## >Welcome! STEVE KLISTER



### **New head of DNoA brings wealth of experience**

Steve Klister, age 39, is President and Chief Executive Officer of Dental Network of America (DNoA), a wholly owned subsidiary of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL). Mr. Klister brings 12 years experience in the dental line of business, including product development and provider network formation.

As President and Chief Executive Officer for Dental Network of America, he is responsible for the operational, service and financial performance of this division. Mr. Klister's experience in the development and execution of a product revitalization plan will facilitate the growth of Fort Dearborn Life's dental line and the operational expansion of DNoA. Dental Network of America functions as a third party administrator (TPA) for all HCSC dental programs.

Prior to joining DNoA, Mr. Klister served as Dental Program Director for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Tennessee. Mr. Klister received a BS in marketing from Illinois State University.

## **Benefits for Reconstructive surgery and mammograms**

### **Annual Notification of Health Coverage for Reconstructive Surgery Following Mastectomy**

Federal and state of Illinois legislation require that individuals covered by a group health plan be notified yearly of the provisions of the Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act. Please note that it is the responsibility of group administrators and producers to provide this notice or a similar version to all Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) PPO and indemnity members. Also, this notice must be added to enrollment materials if a group does not use enrollment materials produced by BCBSIL. To assist, BCBSIL has prepared a sample notice, which explains the law's provisions. To obtain the notice electronically, contact [waldenb@bcbsil.com](mailto:waldenb@bcbsil.com). For more information on this law, contact your BCBSIL account executive.

### **BCBSIL Provides Coverage for Reconstructive Surgery After Mastectomy**

The Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act requires group health plans and insurers to provide coverage for reconstructive surgery following a mastectomy. The law states that health plans that cover mastectomies must also provide coverage in a manner determined in consultation with the attending physician and patient for:

- Reconstruction of the breast on which the mastectomy has been performed
- Surgery and reconstruction of the other breast to produce a symmetrical appearance
- Prosthesis and treatment for physical complications for all stages of mastectomy including lymphedemas

*Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois provided this coverage before it was required. We are pleased to continue providing coverage for mastectomies and the above procedures, subject to the terms of the member's applicable health care benefit coverage.*

## **Save the Date**

Mark your calendars for the Labor Affairs and Municipal Department's Annual St. Patrick's Day Luncheon on March 10, 2006, held at Plumber's Hall.



## Dr. Custer's CORNER



Welcome to *Labor Connection's* new feature "Dr. Custer's Corner." Dr. Tim Custer is the Dental Director of Dental Network of America (DNoA), a wholly owned subsidiary of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL).

In his role as Dental Director, Dr. Custer

is responsible for the oversight of Health Care Service Corporation's dental line of business, which includes Professional Review, DNoA's Provider Continuing Education Program, Provider Services and Network Management for HCSC. He has more than 23 years of diverse experience in the dental industry. Dr. Custer received a Bachelor of Science degree from St. Norbert College, Doctor of Dental Surgery from Loyola University School of Dentistry and a Masters in Business Administration from Benedictine University.

This feature will appear regularly in *Labor Connections* and will include tips from Dr. Custer for good dental health as well as responses to frequently asked questions. The Labor Affairs department has set up a special e-mail, [labordental@dnoa.com](mailto:labordental@dnoa.com), to receive your questions about our new dental product or just dental health in general. Most questions will be responded to within 48 hours of submission and the most frequently asked questions will appear with responses in future issues of *Labor Connection*.

### Tips for Dealing with Dental Emergencies

- **Knocked Out Tooth**

Hold the tooth by the crown and rinse off the root of the tooth in water if it's dirty. Do not scrub it or remove any attached tissue fragments. If possible, gently insert and hold the tooth in its socket. If that isn't possible, put the tooth in a cup of milk and get to the dentist as quickly as possible.

- **Toothache**

Rinse your mouth with warm water to clean it out and gently use dental floss to ensure that there is no food or other debris caught between the teeth. Never put aspirin or any other painkiller against the gums near the aching tooth because it may burn the gum tissue. If the pain persists, contact your dentist.

- **Bitten Lip or Tongue**

Clean the area gently with a cloth and apply cold compresses to reduce any swelling. If the bleeding doesn't stop, go to a hospital emergency room immediately.

### Infection Control

#### What are the things to look for?

- Is the dental office clean and orderly?
- Do the dentist and staff wear gloves and other appropriate protective gear during all actual patient treatment?
- Do the dentist and staff wash their hands before donning a clean pair of gloves?
- Do all surfaces and equipment in the treatment room appear clean?
- Are needles and other sharp items disposed of in special puncture-resistant containers?
- Is everything that is used in the patient's mouth either heat sterilized or disposable?



The 15th Annual **Rerum Novarum** Awards Reception and Dinner saluting individuals from Labor, Business and Government who have made a difference was held November 10 at Plumbers Hall. The awards were presented by his **Eminence Francis Cardinal George, Archbishop of Chicago**. The 2005 award recipients were, **William Hite**, General President, United Association of Journeyman and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitter Industry of the U.S. and Canada; **Ms. Desirée Rogers**, President Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas and **Ms. Mary A. Dempsey**, Commissioner, Chicago Public Library. The Blue Cross Labor Affairs Department salutes our own **Frank Harmon** on his sixth year of chairing the event, which was the biggest yet with over 900 people in attendance. We congratulate the honorees and look forward to the 16<sup>th</sup> annual seminary salutes, next year on November 28, 2006, at the Plumbers Hall.

Congratulations to **Jim McNally** of **Operating Engineers Local 150**. He was appointed Assistant to the President on November 1 by **Bill Dugan**, president of **Local 150**. Good Luck, Jim!

The **Chicago Federation of Labor** picked **Tom Faul** to chair its Judicial Selection Committee, for the next election. This committee will interview prospective candidates in the near future as they announce their intention to run.

**Sherryl Reeves** has been hired as the new Fund Manager of **Beverage Industry Local Union No. 744 Health and Welfare Fund**. Congratulations Sherryl!

Our best wishes to **Mike Quigley, Operating Engineers Local 150**, who announced his retirement this year. Mike will be enjoying time with his family, fishing and golf. We wish him many happy and healthy years.

The annual Blue Cross Blue Shield Holiday Luncheon held on Friday, December 2 was another tremendous gathering of Government, Labor and business friends. Thanks to all who attended and we look forward to seeing you at the annual St. Patrick's Day Luncheon this March. We also wish to thank the **Plumbers Local 130** for all their help in providing a great location and beautiful hall.



This Halloween, the Blue Cross Blue Shield Labor Team spent Time distributing Trick-or-Treat bags with children's toothbrushes to many of their Labor Funds to help promote our new dental product. The bags were a big hit with all of the Fund's office staff and their families!

The AFL-CIO Winter meetings have been relocated to the Coronado Hotel in San Diego, California, February 25 through March 2, 2006. The Blue Cross Labor luncheon sponsored in conjunction with the AFL-CIO and Chicago Federation of Labor is scheduled for Monday, February 27.

The **Chicago Federation of Labor** reports their new building scheduled to be constructed in 2006 has been put on hold.

The **Greater Chicago & Vicinity Port Council, Maritimes Trades Department** presented their Annual Persons of the Year Award to **Frank Christensen**, International Union of Elevator Constructors Local 2 and

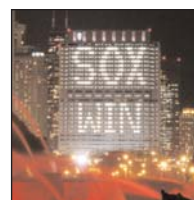
**Bud Sullivan, Bansley and Keiner, L.L.P.** Certified Public Accounts. *Labor Connection* sends our congratulations!

*Labor Connection* extends a warm welcome to all the new little additions to our Labor Affairs family – Account Executives **Jyoti Bhatia Peters's** son Rohan, **Anne Vauk's** son Conner, and **Derek Serbe's** daughter Katelyn. Be watching in the next couple months for a few more little additions. Congratulations to all!



This spring, the Blue Cross Blue Shield eSolutions Department ran an online campaign to ask members

to help save paper by turning off their paper EOBs. For every 2,500 who did (which corresponded to a paper savings of one full tree) we committed to planting a tree in Illinois, Texas, or New Mexico. Based on the Illinois participation in the campaign, BCBS saved enough paper to plant seven large trees in underserved neighborhoods of Chicago and worked with the City of Chicago Forestry Department to do so. **Al Nolan**, BCBS's Divisional Vice President of Government and Labor Accounts, took part in the planting ceremony.



This past October, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois' headquarters showed it's support of Chicago's World

Series Champion White Sox. The building, located at 300 E. Randolph, was lit with the words "SOX PRIDE" throughout the playoffs and "SOX WIN" following the team's championship game.

## Fabulous Fiber

Did you know that you need a minimum of 20 grams of fiber per day? Fiber lowers cholesterol, stabilizes blood sugar and helps us stay trim. Yet most of us don't get anywhere near the recommended amount because many high-fiber foods are lacking in flavor. The good news is: You can get all the fiber you need without sacrificing taste. Consider adding a serving of avocado to your meal and enjoy the 12 grams of fiber—33 percent more than a serving of shredded wheat cereal. While you're at it, pick up some raspberries (8 grams), blackberries (8 grams), mangoes (4 grams) and apples (3 grams). As for the veggie aisle, load up on acorn squash (6 grams), black beans (8 grams), artichokes (8 grams) and sweet potatoes (5 grams).

– *Bottom Line Health*

## Winter Smoothie

For a great wintertime treat, blend low-fat milk, a ripe banana and a handful of frozen blueberries. Blueberries rank No. 1 on many top 10 food lists and provide a powerful nutritional boost during the winter when fruit consumption slows down.

– *Nutrition Action Health Letter*



## Vitamin C and Colds?

For years, people have rushed for vitamin C at the first sign of a sniffle. Does it work? Researchers have concluded that taking high doses of vitamin C (1,000 mg.) won't prevent a cold, but it does seem to shorten the duration and relieves some of the associated misery. So reach for the vitamin C... just don't expect miracles.

– *Nutrition Action Health Letter*

## Tea Time

There's a lot of research on the positive health effects associated with tea. Does it matter if it's hot or iced? Apparently not, as long as it's brewed. Powdered, canned and bottled teas do not have as many of the antioxidants and other beneficial compounds found in tea leaves or tea bags. Caffeinated teas may have slightly more antioxidants than the decaffeinated variety. Adding milk, sugar, lemon or honey doesn't seem to affect the nutritional value of tea. Look for green, black or oolong teas. Herbal teas don't provide the same health benefits.

– *Food and Fitness Self Healing*



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