

**Ash Institute Summer Fellowship in Urban Policy
Project Description | 2009**

**Orange County, Florida
Primary Care Access Network**

Organization

Orange County, Florida is the fifth largest county in the state with a population of over 1 million. It is governed by a 7 member Board of County Commissioners consisting of 6 members elected from single-member districts and a Mayor elected countywide who serves as the ceremonial and operational head of the county. The County is home to one of the top 10 research parks in the United States; the University of Central Florida; Burnham Institute; and internationally recognized attractions and theme parks. The County has an annual budget of \$3.4 billion and a workforce of approximately 8000 employees. Besides providing traditional municipal services such as water, wastewater, transportation, garbage pickup, drainage, parks, code enforcement, environmental protection and fire protection, the County also provides a variety of health and family services to its citizens, is home to one of the largest convention centers in the country and operates one of the largest urban jails in the state.

Detailed Project Description

The Fellow hosted by the County will work with staff members from the Primary Care Access Network (PCAN). PCAN is a unique program, spearheaded by the County over eight years ago, in which a variety of organizations have joined together to tackle our community's healthcare crisis.

PCAN's core mission is to increase access to healthcare services. In eight years, the network has placed eleven clinics throughout Orange County and increased services to over 100,000 uninsured and underinsured patients. Services have expanded beyond the basic primary care to include secondary care, behavioral health, dental care and diagnostics. The network also includes a volunteer physician component which offsets costs for acute and specialty care. In addition, PCAN's Public Education efforts bring awareness of available services to county residents. PCAN is not dependent on a dedicated tax structure or an insurance model. Instead, it leverages existing resources and utilizes its partner's strengths and in-kind support to sustain its operations. This is done by combining County, State and Federal funding with local dollars from the member agencies.

List of Duties and Responsibilities

The summer fellowship is expected to last 8 to 10 weeks and will involve 40 hour workweek with a flexible start date. The selected Fellow will work closely with PCAN staff, many of whom are a part of the County's Health & Family Services Department. The Fellow will work in two primary areas. The first involves evaluating and recommending improvements to the public education and outreach initiatives for PCAN. The second involves evaluating the feasibility of expanding the program in a fashion that would allow area employers to offer PCAN services to their employees as a health care benefit. The Fellow will be provided an office space with computer. Field visits to PCAN clinics and other community groups/employers will be required. Selected candidates should have strong communication skills and knowledge/interest in the provision of health care services.