

Countywide Services Agency

Department of  
Health and Human Services

Division of Public Health

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **INFANT HEALTH PROGRAM LEADER IS “HEALTH HERO”**

***Sharon Saffold honored for efforts to reduce  
infant mortality in the African-American community***

**SACRAMENTO, CA** – The coordinator of a Sacramento County Public Health program which works to reduce infant mortality in the African-American community is being honored as a 2010 “Health Hero” by the *Sacramento Observer* newspaper.

Sharon Saffold, program coordinator for the Black Infant Health program, is one of 10 outstanding healthcare and medical practitioners and volunteers who will be recognized during a ceremony at the newspaper’s Health Fair and Forum event taking place Saturday, Feb. 19 in Sacramento.

African-American infants die at more than twice the rate of other racial and ethnic groups in the United States, a statistic that holds true in Sacramento County and in California. The Black Infant Health program aims to reduce the rate of infant mortality and to improve prenatal care by offering case management, social support and public health nursing services to African-American women who are pregnant or who have infants up to three months of age.

The Black Infant Health Program has been in existence in Sacramento County since 1992.

Saffold was nominated by numerous individuals for her advocacy of health, education, and children’s issues, said Deborah Grimes, project coordinator for the health fair.

In her 25-year career in Sacramento County, Saffold has served as the ombudsman for the Department of Health and Human Services, program manager and social worker with Child Protective Services, and mental health coordinator with the Division of Mental Health. She has also worked with the National Council of Negro Women and the Division of Public Health’s Perinatal Child Health Advisory Committee.

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