

## National Tobacco Control Leader Speaks at Jefferson

March 25, 2011

Rosie Henson, MSSW, MPH, Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary for Health at the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), gave a special presentation at Jefferson as part of the *Get Healthy Philly* Tobacco Policy and Control Speaker Series sponsored by the Philadelphia Department of Public Health. Ms. Henson oversees the National Tobacco Control Strategy of DHHS.

For many years Ms. Henson directed the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) where she launched the state-based National Network of Tobacco Cessation Quitlines, which provided access to telephone counseling and follow-up for all US smoking. She also played a pivotal role in leading the CDC's efforts to establish youth tobacco surveillance activity globally. During her tenure with the CDC, Ms. Henson directed multiple disease prevention and health promotion programs.

Ms. Henson provided a concise overview of the historical context of tobacco control and the current state of tobacco use in the US. She discussed several initiatives and challenges in the effort to curtail cigarette smoking. Ms. Henson emphasized youth-targeted mass media campaigns as one of the most effective interventions to reduce tobacco use. Other evidence-based interventions include smoke-free laws; accessible and affordable tobacco cessation options; increase in the retail price of tobacco products; and restriction of tobacco advertising and promotion.

Simon McNabb, Senior Policy Advisor to the CDC's Office on Smoking and Health, added to



Rosie Henson, Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary for Health, US Department of Health and Human Services

Ms. Henson's discussion by outlining current and future activities developed by the HHS Tobacco Control Strategic Plan. For example, one strategy, "Lead By Example" focuses on the implementation of model tobacco control policies that would include expansion of coverage for tobacco cessation benefits in Medicaid and Medicare.

Another strategy, "Improve the Public Health: Accelerate State and Community Control Efforts," builds on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) by expanding evidence-based tobacco control programs and developing a coordinated cessation strategy.

Ms. Henson is very optimistic about the future and is particularly impressed with the leadership and public health initiatives of the City of Philadelphia. ■

To download a copy of *Ending the Tobacco Epidemic, A Tobacco Control Strategic Action Plan for the US Department of Health and Human Services*, visit: <http://www.hhs.gov/ash/initiatives/tobacco/tobaccostrategicplan2010.pdf>

To learn more about *Get Healthy Philly's* tobacco policy and control program visit: <http://www.phila.gov/health/Commissioner/Tobacco.html>