TROY — The Whitney M. Young Jr. Health Services Center celebrated five years of providing services to Troy residents with a community health fair Saturday. The fair, held at the Health Center at 6 102nd Street, featured health and wellness information for area community groups and agencies as well as food, music and activities for children and families.

“We try to get people to come in and see the facility,” said Vicki Junco, office manager of the Health Center. Junco said she is happy that the community seems to have responded to their presence in the neighborhood. “We’ve gone from 500 patients our first year to over 4,000 patients this year.”

At the fair, staff members, their families and neighborhood residents danced to music, took pictures with Whitney M. Young Jr. mascot Dr. C. Bear and participated in activities like face painting and jewelry making. Representatives from organizations like the National Kidney Foundation and the American Cancer Society were also there to provide information about services and upcoming events.

“Any way we can, we get out and interact with the community,” said Jessica Giles of the American Cancer Society. “It’s a great opportunity.” According to Shavina Richardson, the ACS merged with the former Gilda’s Club this month to form the Hope Club. Located in Latham, the Hope Club provides emotional and social support to those affected by cancer. For more information, visit www.cancer.org/hopeclub.

Whitney M. Young Jr. Health Services, which has a main office located in Albany, opened the Troy location five years ago to provide medical services to anyone in need, regardless of income or insurance status. Two years ago, the western end of the site was renovated to expand the facility and add dental services.

Dental hygienist Monica Belle was an employee at the Seton Health before they closed down their dental facility. Belle said that Whitney M. Young Jr. asked Belle and her fellow displaced employees to work at the Health Center, bringing their patients along with them.

“That was a no-brainer,” said Belle. “We all signed on.” The renovated facility features new equipment and features, including three rooms for hygienists and two rooms for dentists, as well as a new reception area. Belle said she has worked in Troy for more than 20 years and enjoys the people that live in the area.

“It’s very rewarding work for us, being able to provide services to the people,” said Belle. “And they don’t get treated any differently than at a private facility.” The dental services portion of the Health Center treats approximately 600 patients per month, said one hygienist.

The Health Center provides a variety of medical and dental services, including primary care, prenatal care and even...
alcohol and substance abuse treatment. The not-for-profit organization was founded in 1971 and served more than 21,000 patients in the Capital District last year. Many staff members also speak Spanish to serve the diverse residents in the community, said Belle.

For more information, contact the Health Center at 833-6900 or visit www.wmyhealth.org.

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