

## GLBHI's 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference is a Healthy Success

JUNE 2010 - The Great Lakes Border Health Initiative (GLBHI) held its 6<sup>th</sup> annual conference in Plymouth, Michigan on May 18, 2010. Attendance was up over recent meetings, with 151 attendees, which was especially remarkable given the current economic situation. The conference received rave reviews, and it was obvious that there were plenty of interactions between presenters, conference attendees and GLBHI committee members, leading to a very productive meeting.

GLBHI is comprised of seven U.S. states and one Canadian province (Indiana Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Ontario, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin) in the Great Lakes region that share a common goal: enhancing early warning infectious disease surveillance at our international borders. GLBHI is funded through the Early Warning Infectious Disease Surveillance (EWIDS) cooperative agreement provided by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention.

Each year, GLBHI organizes a face-to-face meeting, inviting local, regional, state and federal representatives from both Canada and the United States to participate as a means of introducing and further cementing relationships established across the borders. This year's conference, *Connections in Cross-Border Health Partnerships*, featured many high profile speakers from the governmental and private sectors in topics ranging from plenary sessions on the review of progress of Great Lakes region cross-border collaborations and development of a Canada/U.S. border coalition, a comparison of Canadian and U.S. disease surveillance systems, and a tool to assess regional public health preparedness; to breakout sessions on topics such as the health sector support at the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, quarantine and disease activities and surveillances at border crossings, foodborne illness investigation and risk planning, and laboratory cross-border preparedness initiatives. Post-conference meetings on May 19 were very productive, including meetings of the GLBHI Steering Committee and its four primary subcommittees.

PowerPoint presentations and videos of select conference presentations will be available soon. Check the GLBHI website at <http://www.michigan.gov/borderhealth> (click on the link titled "2010 GLBHI Annual Conference Information" within the News and Updates box, lower right) to download and peruse at your convenience. More information regarding the Great Lakes Border Health Initiative, including a list of the participating state/provincial leads and their contact information, is available on the GLBHI website.

If you did not attend this year and would like to be notified about future GLBHI conferences, please contact Diane Krueger (517-335-6533 or [kruegerd@michigan.gov](mailto:kruegerd@michigan.gov)).