

Community Connections



KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES CONNECTED AND ENGAGED

From The Director's Desk

Issue 5, August 2020

HEALTHY EATING

The “dog days of summer” are upon us. As we move into the month of August, we focus on healthy eating.

There are lots of fruits and vegetables ready for harvesting and from your local farmer’s market. The options are endless including: sweet peaches, peas, corn, squash and tomatoes. Fire up your grill with lean chicken and fish for a flavorful and healthier meal.

As we focus on healthy eating to keep our bodies well during these challenging times, let us continue to check on each other. Having a “buddy check” helps us to stay connected to loved ones, family and friends. More importantly, it lessens our feelings of loneliness and isolation



when we cannot physically be with each other.

The best thing about checking on each other is that we provide the social support needed to consistently have healthy habits such as regular check-ups, exercising and making

healthier eating choices.

Continue to practice safe, social distancing, eat well, exercise and see the beauty in each day.

Until next time,

– *Claudia*

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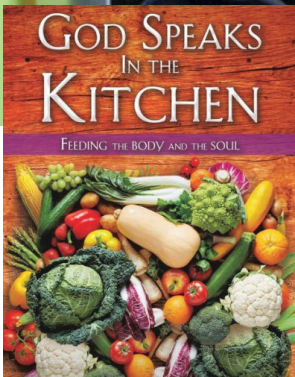
Healthy Choices

H	S	H	O	W	S	U	P	P	O	R	T	F	S
I	H	T	G	T	U	E	I	S	E	E	A	R	E
N	T	S	A	D	O	S	S	S	E	L	S	E	C
C	Y	A	S	L	W	H	H	T	M	R	E	S	I
R	L	F	H	E	I	R	H	E	S	H	S	H	O
E	S	T	A	R	H	L	O	T	V	Y	B	F	H
A	I	F	O	U	U	A	S	S	I	S	I	R	C
S	E	O	H	R	Y	U	V	I	E	L	F	U	Y
E	T	W	V	C	W	H	A	T	E	G	S	I	H
W	P	O	R	T	I	O	N	S	I	Z	E	T	T
A	W	H	O	L	E	G	R	A	I	N	S	S	L
T	R	S	L	I	M	I	T	S	U	G	A	R	A
E	V	E	G	E	T	A	B	L	E	S	L	A	E
R	T	H	G	I	E	W	Y	H	T	L	A	E	H

FRESH FRUITS
HEALTHY WEIGHT
LIMIT SUGAR
HEALTHY CHOICES
INCREASE WATER
PORTION SIZE
WHOLE GRAINS
LESS SODAS
SHOW SUPPORT
VEGETABLES

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/1264277/>

LESSONS IN FLAVOR: CHEF GLENDA JONES PRESENTS HEALTHY, EASY AND TASTY COOKING OPTIONS



Community Health Advisors and Outreach & Engagement staff members were recently given a front row seat to a lesson in healthy and easy gourmet cooking options from a career expert on the subject.

Glenda Jones, a kitchen coach and personal chef who specializes in healthy food options, invited dozens

of staff members into her kitchen via Zoom. Chef Jones stresses that healthy food options need not be bland, boring nor expensive. Jones is a member of the OCOE Community Advisory Board.

Jones' presentation was part of an ongoing series of virtual sessions designed to provide useful tips on

living more healthy and productively while social distancing. Jones is the author of "God Speaks in the Kitchen," a book that is both a cookbook and a devotional.

More information about Chef Jones and "God Speaks in the Kitchen" is available online at godspeaksinthekitchen.com.

GIFT TO SUPPORT COVID-19 AND CANCER RESPONSE IN ALABAMA'S BLACK BELT



Efforts to address the disparate impact of cancer and the COVID-19 pandemic on Alabama's most rural communities were strengthened with a gift from the Mike & Gillian Goodrich Foundation.

The O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center's Office of Community Outreach & Engagement was recently given a \$75,000 gift from the Mike & Gillian Goodrich Foundation to address health disparities by supporting cancer awareness and COVID-19 response in Alabama's Black Belt region.

"This timely and generous gift will give our locally based Community Health Advisors (CHAs) additional training tools and resources needed to better assist residents of the Black Belt who remain at the highest risk for both cancer and COVID-19," said Monica Baskin, Ph.D., associate director for Community Outreach & Engagement at the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at UAB.

"These activities represent the essence of our department and our charge to empower medically underserved com-

munities through education, research and service." The gift will fund cancer prevention and awareness activities, along with action to address health disparities that are compounded by the pandemic.

Activities include staff training on the management of stress and anxiety during the pandemic and coaching community members to better care for themselves regarding the health emergency.



COMMUNITY PROFILE

'I'LL NEVER QUIT': RETIRED NURSE CONTINUES HEALTH CARE CALLING AS COMMUNITY HEALTH ADVISOR



Ms. Edward Oates

LINDEN, Alabama — Groups of young men socializing outside without facemasks often get a visit from Ms. Edward Oates as she drives by, pulls over and offers a motherly word of medical wisdom.

"I need you to survive," Oates, a retired nurse, says as she hands out several facemasks from her front seat. "It's going to help all of us. I'm helping you so you can help me."

Oates might consider herself to be retired, but her daily schedule contradicts that. Oates is a community health advisor (CHA) in the Office of Community Outreach & Engagement. Her advocacy activity

has only intensified after returning to her native Linden in Marengo County at the conclusion of a career in New York and New Jersey.

Community needs back home were compounded by the pandemic, and Oates was ready to jump to action with food distribution, COVID-19 screenings and ongoing education activities.

"We are still learning about what's going on, but we need to follow the science about the things we know that are working," Oates said, taking a break between appointments and phone calls on a recent weekday. "If you get an opportunity to educate somebody, you shouldn't miss that opportunity."

Oates even passed out masks during a graveside funeral service, subtly reminding neighbors that the pandemic has no respect for person or ceremony.

Oates' assignment as a CHA gives her a broader audience to promote multiple issues regarding better health, cancer awareness and COVID-19 prevention. Her major goal is to debunk myths surrounding the pandemic and other health issues.

"Having the background that I have, being a health care professional, it has always been about education, because you can't change what you don't know," Oates explained. "This has given me a greater point of contact to be able to touch as many people as I have."

When Oates noticed a shortage of available COVID-19 testing, she partnered with a health care provider to establish five sites throughout Marengo County.

As part COVID-19 response, Oates also helps coordinate distribution of produce and milk to county residents each Thursday. An old National Guard armory nearby serves as a staging area where 840 boxes of food are given to all who need them. Even the distribution days provide Oates opportunities to discuss general health and COVID-19 awareness — all while wearing a mask and gloves.

"I still have people who call me because a lot of people know I'm a nurse, and I'm steering them to go see their health care provider and encouraging them to be honest with their provider," she said.

While Oates is quick to take on a

project, she hesitates to take credit for any success that results. Service is both a duty and a privilege, she says.

"We are all here to serve," she said. "We could all use a lot more humility in life and just love one another and look out for each other."

It is Oates' strong sense of duty and commitment to community that makes her an exemplary CHA, said Delois Walton, the CHA coordinator for Choctaw and Marengo counties.

"You couldn't ask for a better person to work in the communities because she's all about helping, not just in Marengo County, but in any community that she can," Walton said. "Ask her, and if she can be of assistance, Ms. Oates is going to do it."

How long will Oates continue her daily mission of health advocacy and awareness?

"I'll never quit. It's just been my whole life's work," she said. "I'm a firm believer that we are here to serve. We were made to be loving to each other."



It's National Girlfriends Day

August 1 is National Girlfriends Day. Honor your favorite girlfriends all month with a reminder to live healthy, eat healthy and make healthy life choices. Celebrate friendship and support your girlfriends by helping them stay safe and live well.

GIRLFRIEND CHECKLIST:

- ✓ Get 30 minutes of physical activity daily
- ✓ Eat plenty of fresh fruits and veggies
- ✓ Limit alcohol intake
- ✓ Schedule appropriate health screenings
- ✓ Limit stress ([cdc.gov/women/girlfriends](https://www.cdc.gov/women/girlfriends))

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Stay up to date

with all the activities and news at the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at UAB and the Office of Community Outreach & Engagement. Follow us:

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