

Community Connections



KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES CONNECTED AND ENGAGED

From the Director's Desk

Issue 11, February 2021

NATIONAL CANCER PREVENTION MONTH

The Office of Community Outreach & Engagement remains busy this month as we continue our ongoing outreach, in addition to adding new programs and services. The urgency for cancer awareness, education and screening remains persistent. Working together, each of us continues to tackle that challenge with professionalism, with vigor, and with an ever-evolving creativity.

February is National Cancer Prevention Month, a time when we highlight cancer education, screening and prevention. Both cervical and colorectal cancers in particular can be prevented with early screening. Our office remains committed to breast cancer screening and early detection of lung cancer. This month underscores the essential nature of our work and why we exist as an office.

Feb. 4 is also World Cancer Day.



This global observance is designed to underscore the need for ongoing action to eradicate preventable cancer deaths by providing access to life-saving cancer treatment, regardless of where one lives. Here at the Office of Community Outreach & Engagement we are doing our part as we remain at the forefront as championing health equity.

As you look through this month's newsletter, please take a moment to

take note of our awareness events, in addition to our ongoing virtual series celebrating the 25th anniversary of our office. Please invite others to participate as well.

Lastly, please remain vigilant and safe during the pandemic.

Thanks for all that you do,

– *Claudia*

O'NEAL COMPREHENSIVE
CANCER CENTER
UAB THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

COMMUNITY
OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

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Cancer Prevention Month

1. ENENRICSG _____
2. VPH NECAVIC _____
3. TGILIAD RCALET AXME _____
4. SAP _____
5. MMMGOMRAA _____
6. OOOOCSLNCYP _____
7. PAP STTE _____
8. LWO SODE TC SNCA _____
9. HPV TSET _____
10. HCSAYLPI YTIACIVT _____
11. NO CCBOATO _____
12. TUF SIR _____
13. BEAVGT ELSE _____
14. YEALR TENECDOIT _____
15. CCKEH USP _____
16. DOTRCO _____

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY HEALTH ADVISORS REMAIN PIVOTAL ASSET TO CANCER AWARENESS, EDUCATION, SCREENING



OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT



In this archive photo from 2002, Claudia Hardy, Angela Williams and the late Velma Johnson use a model to lead a demonstration on breast self-exams during CHA training at the North Birmingham Library.

In two decades, the Office of Community Outreach & Engagement has trained more than 2,000 Community Health Advisors. Countless lives have been impacted by the work of CHAs who provide a link to essential health education and awareness in communities most in need of access.

As the Office of Community Outreach & Engagement celebrates its 25th anniversary this year, we look back at the founding, growth and evolution of its seminal asset, the Community Health Advisor Program.

Since its inception in

1995, OCOE has been dedicated to increasing cancer education and awareness in medically underserved populations and to addressing health disparities. CHAs have been pivotal in executing that mission.

“The impact of the Community Health Advisors can never be overstated,” said Program Director Claudia Hardy, who arrived at the office in 1998, just a few years after its creation. “The CHA model is an ideal approach to reaching medically underserved individuals because of our use of

trusted men and women from the targeted community who are ‘natural helpers.’ These community leaders in turn educate their families and neighbors about the need for cancer screenings.”

HOW IT ALL BEGAN:

Linda Goodson remembers the development of the CHA program. Edward Partridge, M.D., the former Cancer Center director and founder of OCOE, heard about a collaboration at UAB with Auburn University that paired health educators with county extension agents.

“The idea behind that project was, just like Auburn had a research center for agriculture, UAB would serve as the research center for human health,” said Goodson, who worked in the initiative through the School of Public Health. “We would train them in health education programs that they would implement locally.”

Intrigued, Partridge sought to take the model and use it to promote cancer education. He then recruited Goodson to his new team.

“He just took it and ran with it,” Goodson said.

“Without his leadership, we would never have had the impact that we had.”

The early days of the program involved collaborating with county extension systems to find local people who could serve as guides into rural communities. Likewise, pastors served as ambassadors to connect with more urban communities within the Birmingham and Jefferson County area.

While the office facilitated the program, Goodson said the CHA program was always led by and directed at the community level. It was the local residents who knew how to best address the needs.

Among the earliest CHA initiatives was the West Alabama Breast and Cervical Center Outreach Program.

“The people in those communities actually promoted and were responsible for the growth at the local level, and they made an impact,” Goodson said. “The communities had a lot of say because they were the ones who were really driving it. We provide the training and resources, and we allowed the communities to develop the approach.”

ANGELA WILLIAMS, COMING FULL CIRCLE:

Angela Williams is a veteran CHA with 21 years of service. What began as a way to channel her own grief brought on by cancer evolved into a personal and professional calling to promote cancer awareness and better health.

Williams lost her sister to ovarian cancer in April 2001, just months after her diagnosis. Both

Williams’ mother and father also both died of cancer 10 years earlier.

“I was facilitating my grief by overworking, overeating and oversteering,” Williams recalled.

Things changed when an email came across her computer seeking “natural helpers” to volunteer with the Cancer Center.

“The flier from UAB was like a godsend,” Williams said. “That was the first time I saw the names ‘Dr. Partridge’ and ‘Claudia Hardy.’ They just appeared on my screen, and it was like a light bulb went off.”

Williams said her work as a CHA helped channel her grief into productive activity to help others.

“It was a totally new experience for me, and I fell in love with helping people overcome barriers,” she said. “I fell in love with being out in my community.”

Williams said the invitation to serve as a CHA in what was then the Deep South Network program intrigued her in ways that other civic calls had not.

“Up until then, my response for any request to volunteer was to write a check,” she said. “I would gladly give you my money, but my time? No.”

This time was different.

“Because I was still in that grief, something inside said, ‘Here is your opportunity to channel that grief in a different type of way, get involved become a Community Health Advisor,’” Williams said.

Eventually Williams’ CHA work evolved into a full-fledged career change. She is now a patient navigator for the UAB Division of



The Deep South Network for Cancer Control brought together health professionals, researchers and volunteers from Alabama and Mississippi to eliminate cancer health disparities through community-based education, training and research.



Linda Goodson, a founder of the Cancer Center’s Community Health Advisor Program, conducts training in Marengo County.



Program Director Claudia Hardy (left) and County Coordinator Glenda James (right) share a moment during the early days of CHA training in West Alabama.

Preventive Medicine, where she links patients to community resources and support in clinical trials.

Williams also sits on the OCOE Community Advisory Board.

“This is an extension of the community health advisor model,” she said. “It is a natural progression for me.”

On Tuesday, Feb. 16, the Office of Community Outreach & Engagement

will present a virtual conversation, “Birth of the Community Health Advisor Program and Development of the CHA Model.” The event will be held at 5:30 p.m. CST on Zoom and conference call, and is open to the public.

PREVENTING CERVICAL CANCER:

A TALK ON THE HPV VACCINE

The HPV vaccination can be used to prevent cervical cancer. VAX 2 STOP CANCER is an organization that is educating the community about HPV vaccination.

JOIN VIA PHONE OR ZOOM:

12 P.M. (NOON)
FEBRUARY 22, 2021

REGISTER: [GO.UAB.EDU/COE-PREVENT](https://go.uab.edu/coe-prevent)



GUEST SPEAKER:

Barbara S. Schuler, MPH
Founder and Executive Director
VAX 2 STOP CANCER



ANSWER KEY

Cancer Prevention Month

1. ENENRICSG Screening
2. VPH NECAVIC HPV Vaccine
3. TGILIAD RCALET AXME Digital Rectal Exam
4. SAP PSA
5. MMMGOMRAA Mammogram
6. OOOOCSLNCYP Colonoscopy
7. PAP STTE Pap Test
8. LWO SODE TC SNCA Low Dose CT Scan
9. HPV TSET HPV Test
10. HCSAYLPI YTIACIVT Physical Activity
11. NO CCBOATO No Tobacco
12. TUF SIR Fruits
13. BEAVGTELSE Vegetables
14. YEALR TENECDOIT Early Detection
15. CCKEH USP Check Ups
16. DOTRCO Doctor

Join us on **February 4**

 **World
Cancer Day**
4 February

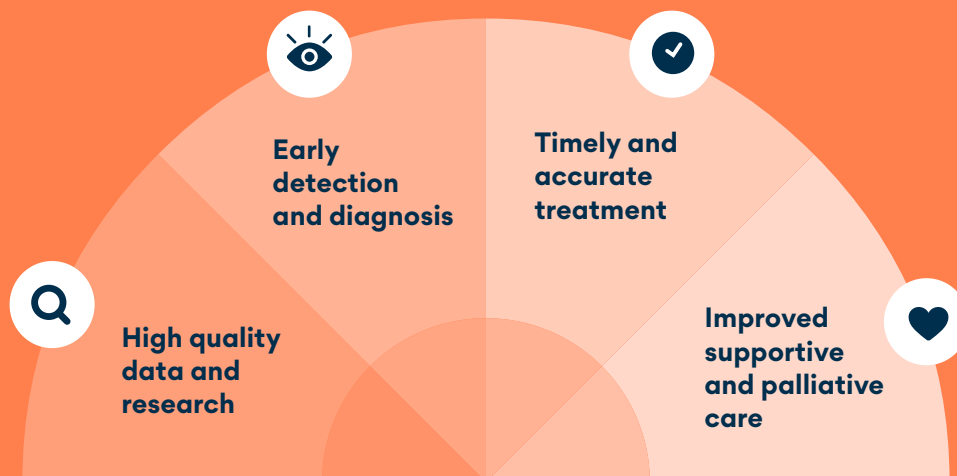


Our target



To reduce
**premature cancer
deaths** and deaths
from non-communicable
diseases by **25% by 2025.**

How do we get there?



**Progress
is possible.**

Today, there are 43.8 million people who are alive within 5 years of a cancer diagnosis. As investment, information, diagnostics and treatments improve, our chance of surviving cancer is getting better.

Wisdom

Join us to learn more about an innovative approach to screening for breast cancer through the WISDOM study.

TUESDAY
FEBRUARY 23, 2021
12 P.M. (NOON)

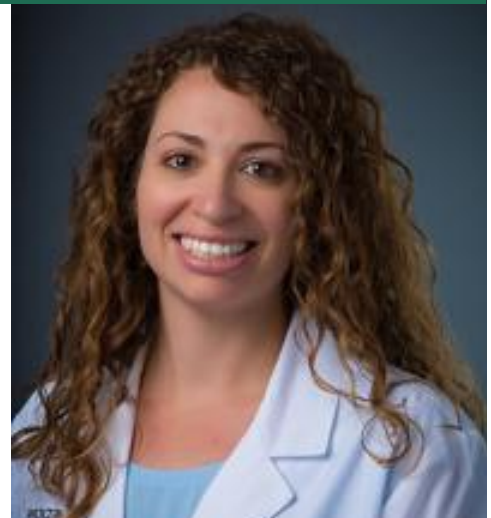
JOIN VIA PHONE OR ZOOM

REGISTER:

[GO.UAB.EDU/COE-PREVENT2](https://go.uab.edu/coe-prevent2)

GUEST SPEAKER:
DR. RACHAEL LANCASTER

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CANCER PREVENTION



DID YOU KNOW COLORECTAL AND CERVICAL CANCERS ARE PREVENTABLE?

HOW?

- Get your colonoscopy to screen for colorectal cancer.
- Get your Pap test or human papillomavirus (HPV) test regularly to screen for cervical cancer.
- If you're a pre-teen or young adult, get your HPV vaccine.

CANCER IS NO ONE'S FAULT.
IT IS A COMPLEX DISEASE WITH MANY CAUSES.

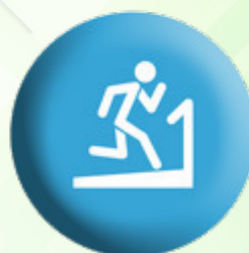
BUT YOU CAN REDUCE YOUR RISK FOR ALL CANCERS BY:



MAINTAINING A
HEALTHY WEIGHT



EATING LOTS OF
FRUITS AND VEGGIES



STAYING ACTIVE
OR EXERCISING



QUITTING
SMOKING

Stay up to date

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

ON THE WEB
go.uab.edu/oneal-coe-news



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