

# Community Connections



KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES CONNECTED AND ENGAGED

From The Director's Desk

Issue 16, July/August 2021

We are changing things up a bit this summer by presenting a combined July and August edition of the newsletter. This summer is already proving to be a busy one both inside the COE office and among our staff and partners throughout the region.

July is "Family Reunion Month," and "Park and Recreation Month." Let's use this to time breathe the fresh air and enjoy the sights and sounds of this season.

I certainly appreciate this season, even more, following the dark cloud of the pandemic that hovered over us for so long. Continue to be safe and follow health guidelines, but do enjoy this beautiful reprieve.

This is also a great time of year to talk to your family about cancer and other chronic diseases, many of which run in families. Learn your family's history of cancer. Knowing your cancer risk and being proactive about your health may help you take steps to prevent or address issues early.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers some great advice on



starting the conversation.

- Share with them that you have learned that cancers can run in families. Explain that you are creating a record of your family's history of cancer.
- Encourage family members to respond in a way that is most comfortable to them.
- Word your questions carefully, be a good listener, and respect their privacy.
- Write down who had cancer, age when diagnosed, and type of cancer.

Also, let's look at things we all can do to reduce our risk factors, such as keeping a healthy weight, avoiding tobacco, limiting the amount of alcohol you drink, and protecting your skin.

We appreciate each of you for your work and your partnership in engaging and educating our communities. Together, we are making a difference in eliminating the disparities.

– *Claudia*

**O'NEAL** COMPREHENSIVE  
CANCER CENTER

**UAB** THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

COMMUNITY  
OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

- **Claudia Hardy** – Director
- **Molly Richardson** – Scientist,  
Lead of Outreach and Education COE
- **Joseph D. Bryant** – Newsletter Editor

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205-975-0003



AUGUST 1

**WORLD  
LUNG CANCER  
DAY**

## OFFICE OF OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT WELCOME NEW TEAM MEMBERS

There are several new faces in the Office of Community Outreach and Engagement as we expand our team.

We welcome Katrina Edmond, Silvia Gisiger-Camata and Derrick Flowers Jr.

**Katrina Edmond** is the Program Administrator for OCOE, where she provides administrative support and operations management.

A major role of her job is serving as liaison between the office and the Community Advisory Board. She graduated from UAB in 2009 with a Bachelor's in Mass Communication with a concentration in Journalism and minors in English and Communication Management.

**Fun Fact:** One of Katrina's favorite quotes is from her aunt "Life isn't hard, it's the choices that we make that makes it hard."

**Silvia Gisiger-Camata** joins



**Katrina Edmond**

the team as the Program Lead for the Prevention and Care Navigation for OCOE. This is a newly created post to help our office to provide greater care coordination and access to care. Silvia will play an integral role in integrating COE with the Cancer Center Service Line and Clinical Trials Office.

"I look forward to connecting and navigating our community to existing resources and patient care services through O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center - Cancer Service Line," Silvia said. "I hope to help our community access services and patient care."

She is a registered Nurse with



**Silvia Gisiger-Camata**

a Bachelor's in Pharmacy and a Master's Degree in Public Health. Silvia has been involved in leadership and management of cancer survivorship initiatives. She has led the Young Breast Cancer Survivorship Network and Survive AL initiatives in the UAB School of Nursing that focus on improving the lives of women facing breast cancer throughout Alabama.

In addition, she has managed multiple research protocols, including development, planning, and delivery of community-engaged research.

**Fun Fact:** Silvia was raised in Brazil to Swiss parents and has



**Derrick Flowers Jr.**

lived in the U.S. for more than half of her life.

**Derrick Flowers Jr.** is Program Coordinator for Jefferson County.

For the past seven years he was employed with The University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. Derrick has experience in administrative support in educational public health, as well as corporate engagement, professional development and conference services.

**Fun Fact:** Derrick loves Japanese anime and classic TV sitcoms such as "I Love Lucy" and "The Golden Girls."

### COMMUNITY PROFILE

## BIDDING A FOND FAREWELL: OCOE SALUTES THE SERVICE OF GLENDA JAMES AND DELOIS WALTON

Community members, along with the Office of Community Outreach and Engagement, celebrated the service of two coordinators as they bid fond farewell to their posts.

Celebrations were recently held for both Glenda James, coordinator for Sumter County, and Delois Walton, coordinator for Marengo County.

The gatherings were bitter-sweet as longtime friends and coworkers shared memories and expressed appreciation for their work in cancer awareness and education.

James has the distinction of being the longest-serving

coordinator. She recalls the beginnings of the office when only a small team gathered in Sumter, Marengo and Choctaw counties to promote early detection of breast and cervical cancer. The initiative was funded by the Alabama Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program.

Program Director Claudia Hardy remembers James as the first person she hired after taking leadership in the early days of the office.

Both coordinators were praised for their dedication to forming partnerships and overcoming obstacles brought by the pandemic.



**Glenda James**

"We certainly appreciate the service that both Glenda and Delois have made to OCOE and our mission of addressing disparities throughout the state," Hardy said. "Coordinators and the community health advisors



**Delois Walton**

are the heart of our office. It is their knowledge and personal understanding of their communities that enable us to reach so many people with essential, life-enhancing and life-saving information."



# THE RESEARCH CORNER

## O'NEAL COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER AWARDS \$324,000 TO FOUR CATCHMENT-RELEVANT RESEARCH GRANTS

The Office of Community Outreach & Engagement and the Experimental Therapeutics Research Program at the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at UAB are collaborating on a yearlong pilot program to support the translational research continuum from basic science to community health.

As part of a National Cancer Institute supplement to the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center support grant, basic scientists complete four hours of training by OCOE staff on community-engaged research and co-facilitate a cancer education session with a local group before they become eligible to apply for research funds.

Four trainees completed the training program and submitted applications that were selected to receive funding.

Each research trainee was awarded an individual or research team grant, ranging from \$25,000 in supplementary funding to \$100,000 in pilot funding, to investigate various cancer-related topics with specific relevance to people who live in Alabama.

Grant applications were reviewed by members of the Office of Community Outreach and Engagement's Community Advisory Board and senior scientists



**Hope Amm, Ph.D.**

in the Cancer Center. "Establishing relationships between O'Neal scientists and community members is a critical step toward identifying and addressing the needs of the people we serve," said Monica L. Baskin, Ph.D., Associate Director for Community Outreach & Engagement at the O'Neal Cancer Center. "We congratulate this group of grant recipients, who are actively advancing the Cancer Center's mission to address and reduce the burden of health disparities in the state of Alabama and beyond."

Grant recipients are:

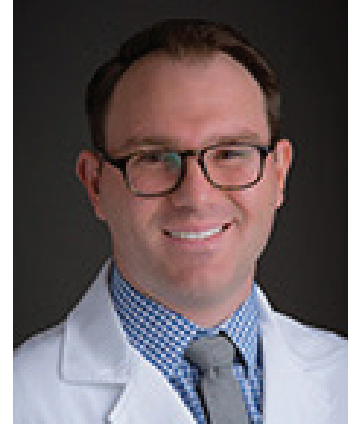
**HOPE AMM, PH.D.**  
Department of Otolaryngology and Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery  
Project title: Oral Microbiome Associations and Interactions with Oral and Oropharyngeal Cancer  
\$100,000 to collect pilot data.



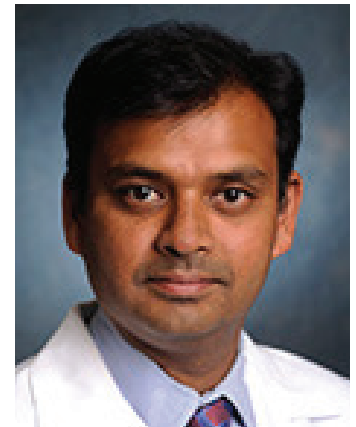
**Braden McFarland, Ph.D.**

**BRADEN MCFARLAND, PH.D.**  
Department of Cell, Developmental and Integrative Biology  
Project title: Determining the Role of the Human Gut Microbiome in a Mouse Model of Brain Tumors  
\$25,000 to supplement ongoing research.

**J. BART ROSE, M.D. AND SUSHANTH REDDY, M.D.**  
Department of Surgery  
Project title: Using Digital Health Care to Eliminate Pancreatic Cancer



**J. Bart Rose, M.D.**

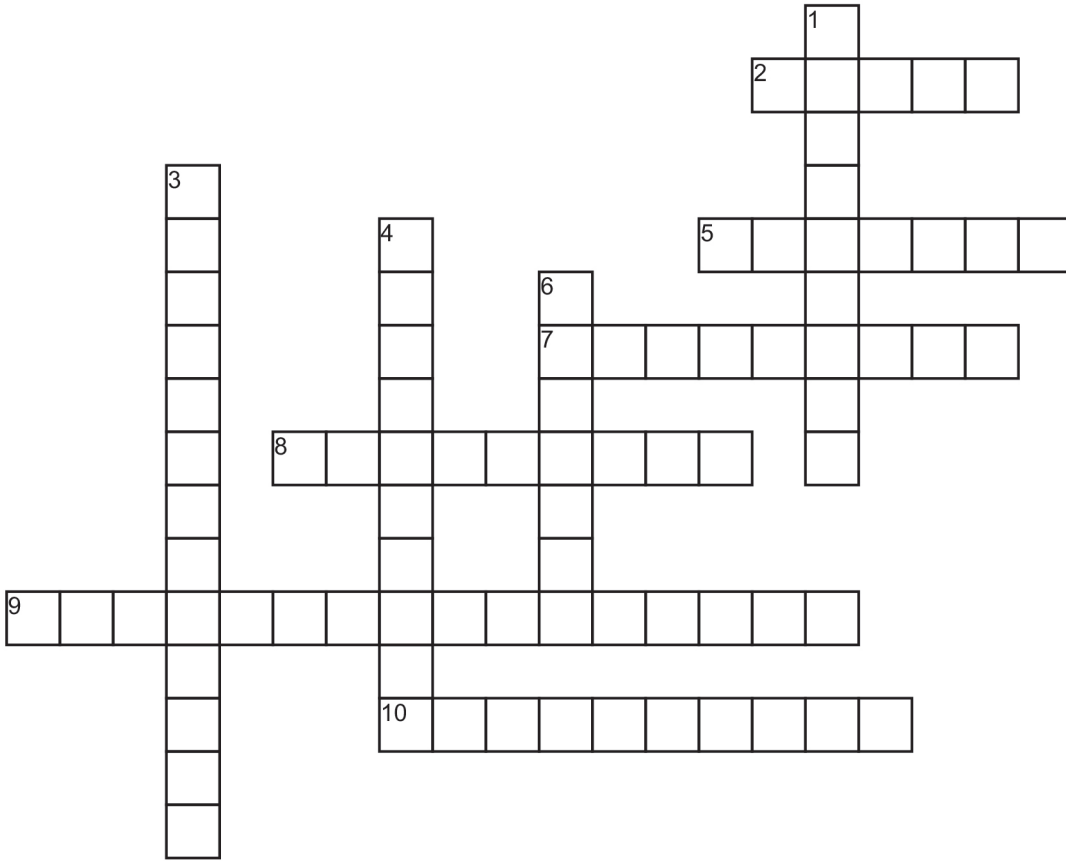


**Sunil Sudarshan, M.D.**

Survivorship Disparities  
\$99,000 to collect pilot data.

**SUNIL SUDARSHAN, M.D.**  
Department of Urology  
Project title: Alterations of Fructose Metabolism in ObesityRelated Cancer  
\$100,000 to collect pilot data.

# July Health Awareness



**Across**

- 2. To stay hydrated, drink plenty of \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. A leading cause of cancer and other diseases. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. Using \_\_\_\_\_ can help lower the risk of developing skin cancer.
- 8. Early \_\_\_\_\_ saves lives
- 9. Don't be a couch potato. Get at least 150 minutes of moderate \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. Visit your doctor and get appropriate \_\_\_\_\_ regularly.

**Down**

- 1. Screening used to detect breast cancer. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Age, race, and \_\_\_\_\_ are risk factors we can not change.
- 4. Avoid processed foods and eat more fruits and \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. Screening used to detect prostate cancer. \_\_\_\_\_

Crossword Answers  
 Across  
 2. water  
 5. smoking  
 7. sunscreen  
 8. detection  
 10. screening  
 Down  
 1. mammogram  
 3. family history  
 4. vegetables  
 6. PSA test

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND RESEARCH CAREERS

Please join the Office of Community Outreach and Engagement as 3 of its former young investigators share the impact that the Office of Community Outreach played in their research careers



**Michelle Martin, PhD**  
Founding Director  
Center for Innovation in Health  
Equity Research at The University of  
Tennessee HSC



**Dori Pekmezi, PhD**  
Associate Professor/Scientist  
Department of Health Behavior at UAB



**Wendy White, PhD**  
Principal Investigator  
Undergraduate Training & Education  
Center at Tougaloo College

**JULY 26, 2021**  
5:30 PM CST

JOIN VIA ZOOM OR CONFERENCE CALL

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

**O'NEAL** COMPREHENSIVE  
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## COE and Research Career Development, Part 3 Our silver anniversary celebration continues in August.

Please make plans to join us as we continue our virtual series with a conversation with investigators who began their careers right here in the Office of Community Outreach and Engagement. This event will be on Zoom and available by telephone dial in.

**AUG. 23 AT 5:30 P.M.**  
REGISTER: [GO.UAB.EDU/COE-RCD3](https://go.uab.edu/coe-rcd3)

**Coming in September**

Helpful information and stories of inspiration in efforts to screen, treat and survive prostate cancer.

# O'NEAL CANCER CENTER JOINS FDA FOR INAUGURAL NATIONAL BLACK FAMILY CANCER AWARENESS WEEK

The Office of Community Outreach and Engagement joined with US Food and Drug Administration's Oncology Center of Excellence for the first-ever National Black Family Cancer Awareness Week June 17-23.

Team members held a series of awareness activities throughout Alabama and Mississippi.

OCOE team members were creative in spreading messages of cancer awareness and education in

their communities.

The initiative was designed to increase cancer awareness in one of the most vulnerable segments of the U.S. population. Black families are among the most vulnerable and hardest hit

for cancer risk, diagnoses and poor outcomes.

Research has shown that cancer awareness can help lower cancer mortality rates and increase life expectancy for all racial and ethnic groups.



Panola County Miss. Coordinator Annie Perry-Smith, along with county CHARPS and area officials, marked National Black Family Cancer Awareness Week June 19 with several activities, including a walk around Como Park in Como, Miss.

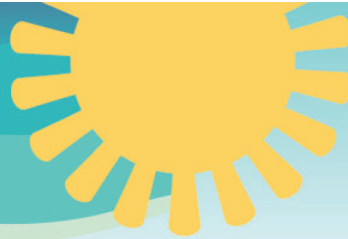


Several Panola County Miss. CHARPS marked National Black Family Cancer Awareness Week by traveling to Atlanta, Ga. to march in the Juneteenth Parade.



Rochelle Wallace, OCOE Health Initiatives Manager, joined with other team members to share information about National Black Family Cancer Awareness Week and other educational materials during the inaugural observance of the event.

# PROTECT ALL THE SKIN YOU'RE IN



## Enjoy the Outdoors!

Being physically active outside is healthy and can help prevent conditions like obesity. But it's important to be sun smart when playing and working outdoors.



CS277180

# PROTECT ALL THE SKIN YOU'RE IN



## Use a Layered Approach for Sun Protection.



Sunscreen works best when used with shade or clothes, and it must be re-applied every 2 hours and after swimming, sweating, or toweling off.



Use broad spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF 15 to protect exposed skin.



Wear a hat, sunglasses, and protective clothing to shield skin.



Seek shade, especially during midday hours.

CS277180

Exposure to **ultraviolet (UV) rays**—from the sun or from artificial sources like tanning beds—is the most common cause of skin cancer.

*Anyone, no matter their skin tone, can get skin cancer.*



U.S. Department of  
Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention

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## FACE TO FACE: OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT STAFF MEET IN TUSCALOOSA FOR DAYLONG RETREAT

It was reunion for some and an introduction for many others as the Office of Community Outreach and Engagement held its first in-person retreat in more than a year. Team members from Alabama and Mississippi

converged from all corners to meet in downtown Tuscaloosa for a day of training, comradery and motivation. There was even a bit of friendly competition as staff members prepared tables to highlight the services of

OCO. Coworkers made the rounds as table hosts delivered their presentations, just as they would during other public gatherings. Dr. Monica Baskin, associate director for Community Outreach and Engagement,

recognized the exceptional work of several team members. Certificates were awarded to Kathy Levy, Patricia Gullette, Angelia Walker, Carla Harrell, Molly Richardson and Tara Bowman.

