

Community Connections



KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES CONNECTED AND ENGAGED

Director's Note

Issue 3, June 2020

HELLO CHAS

AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

June is upon us and it is starting to look and feel like summer. We have longer days with early sunrises and later sunsets to get out and enjoy.

Over the past few months, the Office of Community Outreach and Engagement has transformed much of our work to virtual and electronic settings to continue to provide you with cancer prevention, early detection and other health information that you can use to share with your family, friends and neighbors.

June is National Men's Health Month, so this month newsletter is dedicated to the "Fellas." Men have the highest risks for many chronic diseases, which is why we work hard



to provide you with useful information designed to encourage men to live healthier lives.

Finally, we celebrate National Cancer Survivor's Day on June 7. Individuals are surviving cancer more than ever. The survivor rate for

many cancers is greater than 95 percent when detected early. So, continue to get annual or recommended cancer screenings.

Remember: Even with cancer, there is hope.

– Claudia

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

COMMUNITY
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National Cancer Survivors Day

S	E	R	T	C	T	R	T	G	N	C	C	P	M
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O	M	E	N	E	I	O	A	L	H	T	I	I	I
R	E	I	E	E	K	S	N	O	M	A	C	E	E
T	T	D	M	N	O	T	A	N	A	O	A	D	X
T	N	Y	T	I	M	A	A	O	R	U	L	U	E
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C	I	L	R	U	I	E	G	O	M	I	I	T	I
S	M	A	T	A	U	X	E	P	M	R	A	I	S
P	I	E	A	E	Q	A	M	Y	A	I	L	O	E
E	G	H	P	N	U	M	E	C	M	T	S	N	G

COLONOSCOPY
SCREENING
CLINICAL TRIALS
MAMMOGRAM
EDUCATION
EXERCISE
PROSTATE EXAM
HEALTHY DIET
TREATMENT
QUIT SMOKING
SUPPORT

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/1182117/>

LOWERING CANCER RISKS

DID YOU KNOW?? YOU CAN LOWER CANCER RISKS BY LEADING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Statistics show approximately 40% of cancer cases could be prevented each year by certain lifestyle change, including following physical activity, diet, and weight management recommendations.

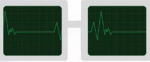


REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Protects against obesity and against cancer, independently
- Can improve overall quality of life, reduce fatigue and relieve depressive symptoms
- Can improve cancer survivorship (including decreasing adverse side effects of treatment)

For cancer prevention and weight loss, strive for 45-60 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity daily and reduce sedentary behaviors.

FOLLOW SCREENING GUIDELINES



- Early detection saves lives!
- Risk factors may influence the onset and frequency of screenings
- There are multiple screening tests available for cancer detection.
- Many are covered by health insurance



EAT HEALTHY FOOD

- Plant foods should be at least 2/3 of your plate
- Limit "fast foods" and other processed foods high in fat, starches or sugars
- Limit red and processed meats
Consume no more than 12-18 ounces (cooked) per week of red meat; If possible, avoid processed meats
- Limit sugar-sweetened drinks
Drink mostly water and unsweetened drinks



TOBACCO CONTROL

- Tobacco is the leading cause of cancer worldwide, causing almost 6 million deaths per year. All of these deaths could be prevented if people did not smoke.
- All forms of tobacco cause cancer no matter if it is chewed, smoked, inhaled, etc.
- E-cigarettes ("vaping") don't contain tobacco, but there is not enough data yet to know the long-term impacts on health

JUNE EVENT



NATIONAL CANCER SURVIVORS DAY®

A CELEBRATION OF LIFE

2020

June 7 is National Cancer Survivors Day.

This is a day to celebrate survivors, inspire those recently diagnosed and encourage those affected families. America's more than 16.9 million cancer survivors are living proof that there is hope and life after a diagnosis.

No Menthol SUNDAY

To all of our Coordinators, CHAs, and
Community Partners

THANK YOU!

With your assistance, our No Menthol Sunday 2020
Campaign was a huge success!



Nicole Rodgers is busy making masks with her family. Rodgers, standing, is joined by her niece and sister.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

STITCHING FOR A CAUSE: CHAS IN ALABAMA AND MISSISSIPPI LEND LONG-HELD SKILLS TO AID COMMUNITIES DURING HEALTH CRISIS

Dens, kitchens and living rooms in communities across Alabama and Mississippi have turned into home bases for a cottage industry as health advocates dust off sewing machines to help fight the spread of Covid-19.

At least a half a dozen Community Health Advisors and Coordinators are using their sewing skills to make masks and ensure that their neighbors, relatives, friends and even strangers have access to proper face coverings.

For long-time CHA Mamie Curry of Birmingham, making masks is both an extension of her health advocacy and a demonstration of her faith.

"When you serve, you serve," she said. "I was instructed by the Holy Spirit to make five masks a day, and I've been making them ever since."

Around the same time, Curry, a former health care professional herself, was approached by a former co-worker who asked for 12 masks. That order then doubled to 24, Curry said, and the requests keep coming.

So far, she's given away about 200 face coverings.

"Once I realized that I was really helping, it didn't bother me. I'm grateful that I'm able to help in the little way that I'm doing it."

For her, Curry said sewing is relaxing and is a pleasant distraction to the news of the pandemic.

In Bolivar County, Mississippi, Nicole Rodgers estimates making 500 masks since health officials advised individuals to begin wearing them. Sewing is a family affair for Rodgers, a county coordinator. Her mother also assists in the process.

"We were all saying, 'What can we do?'" Rodgers recalled in the early days of the pandemic. "Four of my siblings work in health care. It kicked off from there and it's still going."

People quickly learned about Rodgers' work through word of mouth and social media, and requests began to pour in.

"It's important because it's about the health and welfare of the family and the community in which I live," Rodgers explained. "This is something that I need to be doing. If I can fall in and do my part, then I'm just glad to be doing it."

Nearly 230 miles away in Choctaw County, Alabama, there is similar activity. There, CHAs Margaree Ruffin and Linda Fluker each operate one-woman mask factories, designed to ensure the safety of their community.

"When this coronavirus started, nobody had masks," Ruffin said. "Then I remembered that, 15 years ago, I bought a sewing machine to make curtains for my living room."

The women don't charge for the masks. This new industry is not about money but is a public service, each said.



"I don't know, some things you just don't charge for," Ruffin said of her more than 200 masks so far. "I won't charge for masks. As long as I have a piece of material, I'll make them one."

By giving away the masks, Ruffin said she is also able to educate her neighbors about the importance of wearing them. She recalls going into a dollar store where no employees were wearing masks. So, she returned to the store a few days later with handmade face coverings for each of them.

"If I make the masks and give it to them, they'll wear them," Ruffin said. "They just need somebody to explain it. Some people just don't understand."

The activities of the CHAs occurred naturally. They saw a need in their communities and took action to promote better health, said Claudia Hardy, program director of the Office of Community Outreach & Engagement.

"These ladies are exceptional examples of how people can give of themselves and lend their talents for the betterment of their communities," Hardy said. "The impact they are having by educating and equipping their neighbors for the current conditions is immeasurable."

"Each is an asset to both their local communities and to the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center as a whole."

Community Connections

COMMUNITY OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT



(Top left) Margaree Ruffin sits at her sewing machine preparing her latest batch of handmade masks.

(Top right) Naomi King models one of her handmade masks.

(Bottom left) Linda Fluker showcases her masks creations that sit on her cutting board.

(Bottom right) One of Victoria Lacey's handmade creations is on display at her home in Sumter County, Alabama.

CONTINUED

In a bit of irony, several mask makers, including Rodgers, Ruffin and Fluker, have experience in the textile industry but admit to not really enjoying the sewing process under normal circumstance. But now they do it for the greater good.

"My cousin said, 'You better get that machine out and start sewing because you know you can sew!'" Fluker said with a laugh. "I had fabric at home already, so I just went back and unpacked it and started making them. We just started out small and it just escalated. I can't count how many I've made."

While it ranks among Alabama's smallest counties, Choctaw County is a leader among volunteers making masks to protect its citizens. Naomi King is another Choctaw County CHA who is busy making masks.

King's masks resemble the medical and commercial types, complete with pleats in the front.

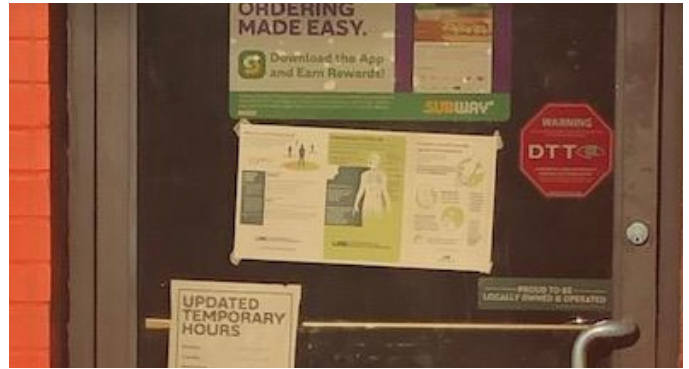
Mask making also comes second nature for Victoria Lacey. The CHA from Sumter County is a trained

seamstress and quickly decided to lend her skills to the cause of public health.

"I felt like people who really can't afford to buy some needed some, so I stepped in to help," Lacey said. "It's sad and hard to understand, but I guess that's life for us. If I can help someone, I don't mind helping." Each maker has added her own flair to the masks to make them practical and fashionable enough to encourage widespread use. Fluker even designed a mask made of soft denim to appeal to men.

Lacey approaches each mask with the same skill and creativity as she would when designing a full dress or outfit. Her styles vary, from modest colors, the sports-themed Alabama Crimson Tide, to colorful patterns with monogramming, suitable for any occasion. "Everybody is making them in different ways," Lacey said.

Asked how long they will continue to stock material, search for elastic, and spend hours at the sewing table, each volunteer gave nearly an identical answer: "As long as there is a need."



Spreading The Word

CHAs and coordinators throughout our service area remain busy educating their communities about healthy living and how to stay safe during the pandemic.

In Sunflower County, Mississippi, Pearline Day asked businesses to post useful tips on their doors for patrons to easily view.

She and others have posted and shared fliers in grocery stores, city halls other public places.



COME ZOOM WITH US! JUNE MONTHLY MAINTENANCE MEETING

Calling all Community Health Advisors (CHAs)!

Join us for our **SECOND** virtual gathering CHAs in SEVEN counties for the ALCASE Project using ZOOM meeting technology.

HEAR project updates!

MEET other CHAs in other counties!

DISCOVER what is new in the Office of Community Outreach and Engagement.

MEETING DATES: (Select only one)

MONDAY, JUNE 1ST FROM 5:00- 6:00 PM

TUESDAY, JUNE 9TH FROM 12:00-1:00 PM

TUESDAY, JUNE 16TH FROM 5:00-6:00 PM

TUESDAY, JUNE 23RD FROM 5:30- 6:30 PM

PLEASE LET YOUR COUNTY COORDINATOR KNOW WHICH ZOOM MEETING YOU WILL BE PARTICIPATING IN.

JOIN US

- From wherever you are
- With your own device
- Alone or Social Distancing

ZOOM INFORMATION

Go to [ZOOM.US](https://zoom.us) or call in to **1-646-558-8656**

CLICK "Join a Meeting"

Meeting ID : 648 929 8654

❖ If you need further assistance, please contact your county coordinator.