

Community Connections



KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES CONNECTED AND ENGAGED

From The Director's Desk

Issue 15, June 2021

NATIONAL CANCER SURVIVORS DAY

The “lazy days of summer” clearly are anything but when it comes to activity here at the Office of Community Outreach and Engagement.

Activity remains constant with ongoing programs and the development of new partnerships and initiatives.

Our work is relational. We are in the people business. Even with the physical limitations of the past year, we were able to work together to give our communities the outreach and information that is so essential.

Our team of committed staff and partner agencies adjusted their pre-pandemic way of doing things to remain connected.

We have changed our model to adjust to the times, and persevered in spite of it all. Our programs will continue to grow in response to the needs of our community.



And now better days are indeed arriving with improving conditions and a gradual opening up of the things that we once took for granted.

In this new season, we remain committed to constant learning, improvement and intentional evolution to meet the needs of our communities. In the month of June we also take time to honor cancer survivors during National Cancer Survivors Day. The survival rate for some cancers is much

higher when detected early. This underscores the essential nature of our work to urge people to get annual or recommended cancer screenings. There is always hope.

Finally, take time to enjoy this beautiful weather, bask in the sunshine and appreciate all the natural colors that are now on full display.

– Claudia

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

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June Health Awareness Focus

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

Awareness
Early Detection
Physical Activity
Stop Smoking
Obesity Risk
Factors
Family Medical
History Screening
Digital Rectal
Exam PSA Test

COMMUNITY PROFILE

DARLENE ROBINSON: A CHAMPION FOR SURVIVORSHIP AND CELEBRATING LIFE

June is officially National Cancer Survivors Month, but for Darlene Robinson, every day is a day of celebration and encouragement.

For years Robinson, a coordinator for Greene and Hale Counties, has found creative ways to engage her community and keep her group of cancer survivors connected and encouraged. Not even the pandemic was enough to stop her work to unite survivors in two counties.

“They look forward to even just getting out to come and seeing each other,” Robinson said. “They can relate to each other because they have gone through the same struggle.”

Robinson recently hosted a drive-through lunch for survivors and community health advisors. About 50 people participated. “They would drive up and we would fist bump and elbow bump because we had not seen one another,” Robinson said. “It was just like a fellowship to let them know that they are appreciated. Sometimes you just have to tell people ‘thank you.’”

Robinson went even further and delivered the lunches to healthcare workers and senior citizens who were unable to attend. She was surprised by how much the group enjoyed being together in person – even if at a distance.

“It was awesome, Robinson said. “I even got text



Coordinator Darlene Robinson, standing, recently hosted a drive through lunch for survivors and CHAs in Greene and Hale Counties.

messages about how good the lunch was. It was just a sandwich but it's just the idea that someone gave it to you.”

Although Robinson convenes the group of women united by their shared experience, the word “cancer” might not even come up during their regular gatherings.

Each member is united by a shared struggle and victory that set the foundation for strong friendships.

“If you were to come to our meeting you would never know it was a survivors meeting,” Robinson said.

“They have a common bond. They look forward to even just getting out to come and seeing each other. This is one meeting that you will come to, and when you leave, you feel invigorated.”

Robinson is always in a planning mode, thinking about the next event and ways to keep the group

connected. Shortly after the successful drive through event, Robinson was on to the next.

“I have a talkative group. On Zoom you are limited because you are talking over each other and some of my people are just on the phone and they can't see everybody,” she explained. “This was an opportunity for us to see each other and just to let them know that it is going to be alright.”

Community Connections



About 50 CHAs and cancer survivors in Greene and Hale Counties participated in a drive through lunch presented by Coordinator Darlene Robinson.





THE RESEARCH CORNER

ALCASE: A SIMPLE TEST DELIVERS MAJOR PEACE OF MIND IN LUNG CANCER SCREENING OUTREACH EFFORTS

James “Buddy” Chess is a master fisherman who finds his greatest relaxation along the waterfront waiting for the next ‘big one’ to take his line.

Still, he remembers that his most recent peace of mind came in the form of a simple, yet important test regarding his health.

“I’ve never had a million dollars, but it was just like I had won the lottery,” Chess said.

Chess recently underwent a simple screening for lung cancer through the Alabama Lung Cancer Awareness Screening and Education (ALCASE) program.

ALCASE is a partnership between the O’Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center and the GO2 Foundation that uses the Community Health Advisor model to persuade smokers and former smokers in Jefferson, Macon, Choctaw, Greene, Hale, Sumter and Dallas Counties to seek screening for lung cancer. Chess, a former smoker who quit five years ago, said he wasn’t nervous about the test. Still, he admitted that a lingering doubt hovered until the final results came in. Health officials asked him to take second test, which was also negative.

“Everything went fine. It wasn’t bad at all,” Chess said regarding the screening process. “It went so smoothly



CHA James “Buddy” Chess of Choctaw County, Ala. is an avid fisherman in his free time. Chess is also an advocate for lung cancer screening through ALCASE.

and it wasn’t a long wait.” Coordinators and Community Health Advisors at the O’Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center’s Office of Community Outreach and Engagement support the goals of ALCASE by addressing disparities in lung cancer awareness and education in underserved communities. Chess himself is a Community Health Advisor in Choctaw County who works to educate neighbors about lung cancer, eliminate fear and present options for screening. The teams encourage people to agree to screenings, which are low dose CT scans. The process takes about 15 minutes.

“If you smoke or smoked a couple of years back, take my advice and get it done,”

Chess said. “It’s not going to hurt anything. If you’re scared of taking it, don’t be. Just go ahead and do it.”

Chess and ALCASE advocates stress that early detection is essential. While lung cancer screening provides the greatest chance for finding and treating the disease early, only 4 percent of people nationally are screened each year. “If I could tell every person that has a history of smoking a simple statement, it would be to get screened for lung cancer since, it is the leading cause of cancer death in the United States,” said Kathy Levy project manager for ALCASE. “Many people with lung cancer don’t show any signs or symptoms, so it is important to get screened at the age appropriate time.

Getting a low dose CT scan to detect lung cancer is easy and fast. It doesn’t take long at all.”

Men and women who are 55 and older, and are current or former smokers, are urged to get a low dose CT to screen for lung cancer. Ask your provider for a referral today.

“Your insurance will cover the low dose CT Scan, but if you are not insured, please contact us so you can be screened,” Levy said. “We are here to help you to live a long healthy life.”

ALCASE is accepting new participants for screenings. Call (205) 975-0003 or email coeinfo@uab.edu to learn more and join.



ENGAGING THE GENERATIONS: O'NEAL CANCER CENTER JOINS FORCES AS A FOUNDING PARTNER FOR NATIONAL BLACK FAMILY CANCER AWARENESS WEEK

The Office of Community Outreach and Engagement at the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center is a founding partner in the first ever National Black Family Cancer Awareness Week, June 17-23.

The initiative sponsored by the US Food and Drug Administration, Oncology Center of Excellence, Project Community, is 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.

"This is an opportunity for the office of Community Outreach and Engagement to capitalize on its ability to reach black communities in a number of ways unique to the communities," said Program Director Claudia Hardy.

"Our office will be participating and hosting a number of local events, such as a county-wide family reunion in Hale and Greene Counties, drive-by family reunions at seven churches in Panola County, Miss., and participation in the Juneteenth Festival in Selma, Ala."



Organizers have reached out to National Cancer Institute-designated cancer centers, cancer advocacy groups, patients, social and community organizers, families and friends. National Black Family Cancer Awareness Week

will unite community-based stakeholders to increase cancer awareness and to build knowledge regarding cancer clinical trial participation as well specimen donations for cancer research.



COE AND RESEARCH

CAREER DEVELOPMENT, PART 1: BASIC SCIENCE

Join us as Dr. Leslie Cooper and Dr. Tiffany Carson discuss the role of the Office of Community Outreach & Engagement in scientific career development.



Leslie Cooper, RN, BSN, MPH, Ph.D., FAAN

JUNE 28, 2021
5:30 PM



Tiffany L. Carson, PhD, MPH

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Phone: (205) 975-0003

Email: coeinfo@uab.edu



CONGREGATIONS UNITE IN MESSAGES OF BETTER HEALTH DURING ANNUAL “NO MENTHOL SUNDAY” EVENT



More than 150 churches and community organizations partnered with the O’Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center to present the annual “No Menthol Sunday.”

The May 17 event is a longtime effort of the Office of Community Outreach & Engagement in conjunction with the National African American Tobacco Prevention Network (NAATPN).

The campaign engages faith leaders, churches and their communities in a discussion about the

dangers of tobacco and its link to cancer.

The day is set aside to encourage congregations to take some time during their service to educate members about the dangers of cigarette use, and the disproportionate impact tobacco use has on historically black communities. This year’s event was mix of phone, live streaming and in-person services. Regardless of the platform, messages were heard throughout the state.

Pastors and other speakers devoted some time during their gatherings to talk about the dangers of smoking and offer tips on quitting.



Thayer Dortch Truss, a Talladega County CHARP, wore her No Menthol Sunday mask at the ceremony for the 2020 doctoral graduates at Clark Atlanta University on May 15.



Coordinator Floretta James Dortch, Ed. D., stands with the Rev. Jerrell C. Hicks at Jacobs Chapel CME Church in Talladega, Ala during No Menthol Sunday.



No Menthol Sunday was observed at Old Mt. Silla Baptist Church in Barbour County, Ala., where Coordinator Jeanette Anglin provided information.



Members of Jacobs Chapel CME Church in Talladega, Ala. celebrate No Menthol Sunday.
 (Left image) Bruce Calloway, Clara Thompson and Donald Morgan share a moment in solidarity. (Right image) Tre Smoot, Milton Brown (seated) and Couvier Terry Jr. also show their No Menthol Sunday masks during church service.



Attendees at Old Mt. Silla Baptist Church in Barbour County, Ala. observed No Menthol Sunday, where Coordinator Jeanette Anglin provided information about the national effort.



No Menthol Sunday was observed in churches both live and virtual. Solomon Crenshaw, a deacon at Broad Street Missionary Baptist Church in Birmingham, spoke about the program during online service using a virtual background.

ANSWER KEY

June Health Awareness Focus

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

Awareness
 Early Detection
 Physical Activity
 Stop Smoking
 Obesity Risk
 Factors
 Family Medical
 History Screening
 Digital Rectal
 Exam PSA Test

O'NEAL CANCER CENTER JOINS NATIONAL EFFORT TO COMBAT RACIAL INEQUITY AND BIAS IN CANCER CARE

The O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Alabama at Birmingham is among three groups nationwide selected for a pilot initiative designed to reduce racial disparities and bias in cancer care for communities of color.

The initiative, Co-Creating Solutions to Address Racism and Disparities in Oncology, is a national project coordinated by the Center for Health Care Strategies. The project will identify ways to improve partnerships between health care systems and community agencies to address racial and ethnic disparities in cancer care.

The program will also highlight ways that health care systems may lessen the impact of institutional bias and racism in cancer care that negatively affects communities of color. Progress on these goals will be measured. The 18-month project is funded by Genentech. Institutions will develop or strengthen their existing work to reduce racial and ethnic disparities.

The O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center will partner with local organization the Jefferson County Faith Based Alliance for the Advancement of Health Equity.

"We are pleased to be selected to join this initiative that speaks



(l-r) Rev. Robert A. Sellers, pastor of Friendship Baptist Church in Homewood, and Rev. Dr. Michael Wesley Sr. of Greater Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church in Birmingham.

to the heart of our existing commitment to eliminating racial and ethnic disparities on the continuum of cancer care," said Monica L. Baskin, Ph.D., professor and associate director for Community Outreach and Engagement at the O'Neal Cancer Center.

The Jefferson County Faith Based Alliance for the Advancement of Health Equity was created in a partnership with the Jefferson County Commission to bring together a broad group of religious and community leaders to address health disparities.

County leaders believed that a community based partnership was key to understanding the needs of communities and linking

people to the resources that exist.

The group is chaired by the Rev. Robert A. Sellers, pastor of Friendship Baptist Church in Homewood, and co-chaired by the Rev. Dr. Michael Wesley Sr. of Greater Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church in Birmingham.

"It is imperative that health care providers join with community partners to collectively understand the needs of diverse populations in order to create effective strategies that mitigate cancer-related health disparities by addressing the core issues that drive these inequities," Baskin said.

Other nationally selected organizations are:

- Cierra Sisters and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Seattle, Washington
 - The Chrysalis Initiative and MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper Health, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Camden, New Jersey
- Grant funding up to \$70,000 will be available to the three pilot sites.

Additionally, the Center for Health Care Strategies will provide technical assistance, including the opportunity to regularly work with an equity consultant.

The consultant will help partners develop accountability plans to track progress and long-term success.

I'M WITH MIKE VIRTUAL



5K

////////// In Memory of Mike Slive //////////

Father's Day Weekend June 18-20, 2021

1 IN 8 MEN will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime. Together, we can change those numbers by supporting research and early detection. **RUN, WALK, RIDE OR CHEER** with us on Father's Day Weekend to help **END PROSTATE CANCER.**

For more details and to register, visit
ImWithMike5k.com



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