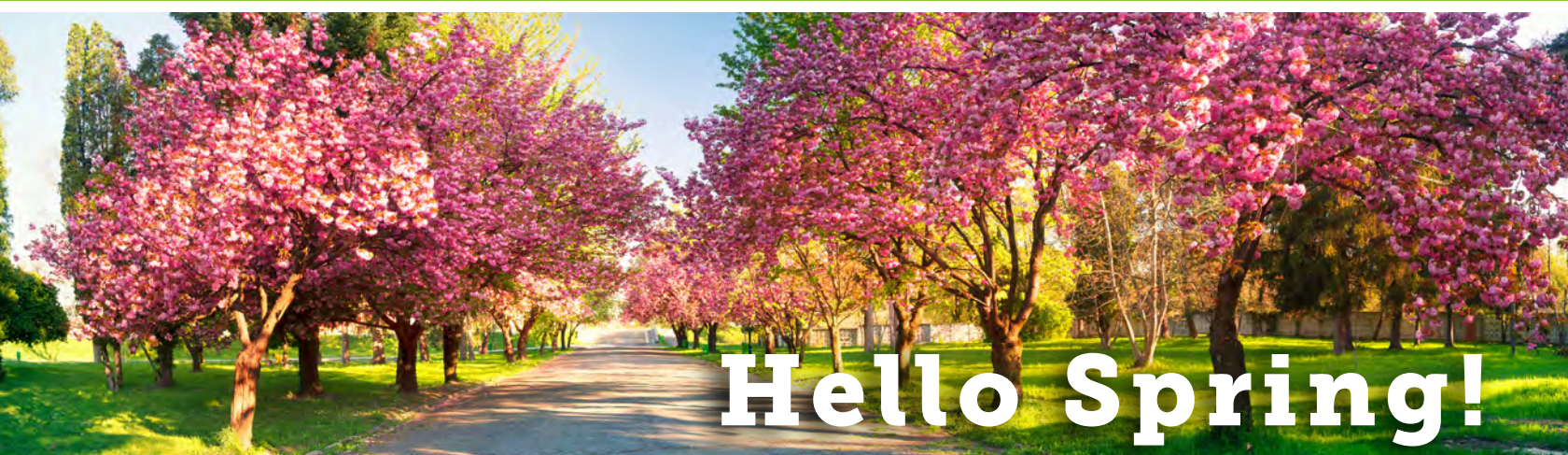


COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES CONNECTED AND ENGAGED

From the Director of Community Outreach & Education

Issue 32, April 2023



The O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center recognizes April as National Minority Health Month. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." Ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to achieve optimal health matters. We must continue to do all we can as a cancer center, partner, neighbor, friend or family member to provide opportunities for cancer screening, quality care, tobacco-free living, active lifestyles and access to healthy foods and the HPV vaccine.

As we enter a new season, let's commit to becoming more vocal about things that matter, including providing lifesaving cancer information and connecting people to the services they need to reduce the burden of cancer in all communities, especially medically underserved communities.

This edition of the Community Outreach & Engagement newsletter will highlight an amazing staff member, new CHAs, ongoing research and one of our new programs. Enjoy!

Francine

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Word Cloud from January's Colorectal Cancer Health Equity Webinar

What words come to mind when you think about ensuring health equity as it relates to colorectal cancer?



Welcome New Community Health Advisors!

The Office of Community Outreach & Engagement held its first Community Health Advisor graduation since 2020 on Tuesday, November 29, 2022.

Marcia Walton, a four-time cancer survivor who received most of her treatments at UAB, was the keynote speaker. CHA training took place virtually by Zoom on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from October 13 to November 17. O'Neal Cancer Center clinicians, researchers and other experts

presented information on breast, cervical, colorectal, lung and prostate cancers, HPV, tobacco 101, clinical trials and screening referrals. Fifty-one men and women from Barbour, Butler, Chilton, Macon and Shelby counties are now trained to provide programs, information and resources to help lower cancer risk in their communities. Congratulations to all our new CHAs!

Barbour County – Jeanette Anglin, Coordinator

Brenda Austin	Rosie King
Ruby Curry	Charles Rogers
Doris Farmer	Gwendolyn Rogers
Michael Farmer	Aleane Scarver
Elaine Glover	Julia Stewart
Patricia Gullette	Mikie Thomas
Gaylen Henderson	Barbara Williams
Magnolia Jackson	

Butler County – Denise Baity, Coordinator

James Baity	Helen Oliver
Sonya Blankenship	Margaret Palmer
Mary Crenshaw	Lamar Patton
Gloria Crosby	Ruby Simmons
Jacqueline Davison	Barbara Sims
Linda Johnson	Olivia Smith
Stephanie Merriweather	Shirley Scott

Chilton County – Carla Harrell, Coordinator

Yvonne W. Mitchell	Queen Ester Morrow
Glinda Morrow	Alicia Smitherman
Ola Morrow	Jacqueline Sullivan

Macon County – Patricia Gullette, Coordinator

Delores Calhoun	Gloria Sharpe
Joe Calloway	Penny Walters
Tanya Campbell	Marjorie Watson
Fartima Clark	Diane White
Jan Fountain	Gwendolyn White

Shelby County - Carla Harrell, Coordinator

Carolyn Branch	LaKeidrian Govan	Joyce Patterson-Agee
Tonya Chatman	Wanda King	Angela Pierce

Staff Highlight: Gretel Holston



Gretel Holston has been the county coordinator in Walker County, Alabama, since October 2020.

Being a breast cancer survivor with family members and friends affected by cancer and other diseases, Holston feels that she can relate to the people in her county and provide programs and information to help lower their cancer risks. Her favorite part of working with the O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center is

working alongside the OCOE staff because they are knowledgeable, hardworking and caring. "The camaraderie there is the best ever," said Holston.

Holston's key cancer message is "do what is necessary to be and remain healthy. Keep medical appointments, get annual and age-appropriate cancer screenings and know your family history."

Research Corner: The Lack of Follow-Up to Abnormal Cervical Cancer Screening and Barriers Faced by Women

In 2023, there will be an estimated 14,000 new cases of cervical cancer and more than 4,000 deaths. Cervical cancer is largely a preventable disease, yet the number of cervical cancer cases has not decreased. The cervical cancer death rate has only decreased by less than 1% each year. There has also been an increase in death rates in some states, including Alabama.

Cervical cancer screening has decreased the rate of new cervical cancer cases worldwide through detection of pre-cancerous lesions. The primary goal of screening is to detect and treat precancers and reduce the incidence of cervical cancer. Approximately 80% of women in Alabama are up to date with cervical cancer screening, which is consistent with the national average.

However, despite the high rate of initial screening, there remains a large disparity in women diagnosed with cervical cancer. Research has shown that lack of health insurance, lower socioeconomic status and psychosocial barriers contribute to women not showing up for cervical cancer screening appointments, which increases their risk for developing cervical cancer. Even more alarming is the low rate of follow-up for women after abnormal cervical cancer screening results, which ranges from 20-70%.

Research at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) has shown that African American patients are less likely to follow up after abnormal cervical cancer screening results than white patients, and up to 40% of all patients do not show up at all.



Teresa K.L. Boitano, M.D.

Gynecologic Oncology Fellow, PGY7
Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology
University of Alabama at Birmingham

This is important because participating in follow-up care for abnormal cervical cancer screening allows for prevention of cancer or successful treatment for early-stage cervical cancer.

The most common barriers that prevented women in the study from following up after abnormal screening results were competing priorities, avoidance or procrastination, fear, lack of insurance, feeling embarrassed or uncomfortable and the lack of knowledge. Healthcare systems need to address these barriers to decrease the rate of cervical cancer in Alabama and the United States.

Good News!

Regular cervical cancer screening and follow-up care after abnormal screening results can prevent cervical cancer and save lives.

The Office of Community Outreach & Engagement is looking for 50 African American breast cancer survivors to participate in a program called “A Family Affair”. This program will provide supportive care information and tools to improve the quality of life of African American women living in rural, underserved communities in Alabama and Mississippi. Breast cancer survivors are asked to include at least two to three female family members (mothers, daughters, sisters, cousins or friends) to join us in a breast health educational session in which we can provide navigation and other services related to breast cancer screening.

Claudia Hardy is the program leader for “A Family Affair.” For more information on how to enroll in this education and screening program, please use the link or QR code on the flyer or contact Kim Hannon at 205.975-0864. Deadline for enrollment for the first group is April 30, 2023.

A Family Affair
A program for rural Black breast cancer survivors and their female family members.

- Early Detection
 - Breast Cancer Screening
 - Navigation
 - Supportive Care

<p>Breast Cancer Survivor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to 1 year • Receive supportive care education & resources • Attend 2 ½ day retreat • Include at least 2 female family members 	<p>Family Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daughters, sisters, mothers, aunts, nieces and cousins are eligible to participate • Attend 1 breast health education session • Commit to age appropriate screening
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O'NEAL COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER
 UAB THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

For more information please call Kim at 205.975.0864
 To register please visit: <http://bit.ly/3lrktcn>



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