

OFFICE OF CANCER
HEALTH DISPARITIES
RESEARCH

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

JANUARY 2009

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

**PROSTATE
CANCER EVENT** 2

**FIRST LADIES
GOSPEL EXPLO-
SION** 2

**WITNESS
PROJECT WIN-
NER** 2

**ESPERANZA Y
VIDA** 3

**A SURVIVOR
SPEAKS** 3

**A.R.T.S. IN
NIAGARA FALLS** 3

**NEWLY EX-
PANDED PA-
TIENT NAVIGA-
TOR PROGRAM** 4

**SCIENCE TO THE
SIDEWALK
EVENTS** 4

**PIONEERING
BUFFALO NURSE
HONORED** 5

**EVENTS TO
CELEBRATE
BLACK HISTORY
MONTH** 6

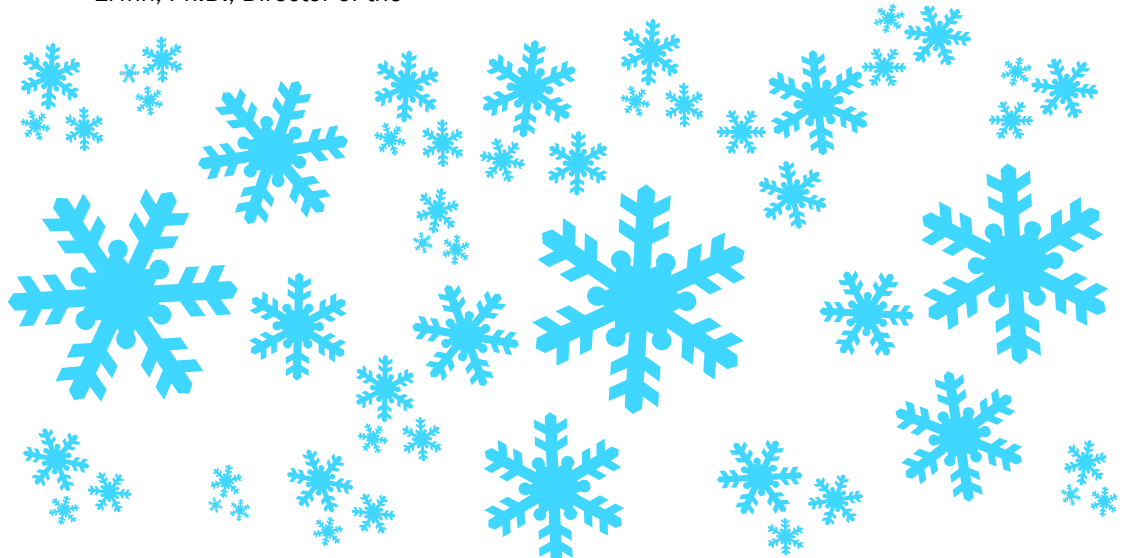
ROSWELL PARK CANCER INSTITUTE'S OFFICE OF CANCER HEALTH DISPARITIES RESEARCH LAUNCHES INFORMATIONAL NEWSLETTER

In an effort to keep all communities that comprise the WNY-region informed of its upcoming activities and initiatives, as well as attempting to better communicate with members of our community who are more apt to be negatively impacted by cancer, the Office of Cancer Health Disparities Research (OCHDR) has announced the creation of a new quarterly newsletter titled *Community Connections*. "Life expectancy for those diagnosed with cancer has improved in recent years, however, not everyone in our region has benefitted," said Deborah Erwin, Ph.D., Director of the

OCHDR. "African-Americans and Hispanics/Latinos are still more often diagnosed with cancers at later stages than their white counterparts. We hope that by routinely disseminating cancer awareness information like our *Community Connections* newsletter to local stakeholders and those who provide services to the community, we can increase communication and opportunities to participate in education, clinical progress, and research."

The Office of Cancer Health Disparities Research at Roswell Park Cancer Institute is

dedicated to research that advances understanding of all cancer disparities and to developing and offering integrated community-based services and educational programs tailored to the needs of various populations. For more information about either the OCHDR and its programs and initiatives, or about the *Community Connections* newsletter, please feel free to contact Terry Alford, OCHDR Community Relations coordinator, anytime at (716) 845-4557, or at his e-mail address, Terry.Alford@roswellpark.org



PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS EVENT

Several local African-American prostate cancer advocates came together to try to raise awareness about prostate cancer at historic Doris Records, located at 286 East Ferry St., the popular music store that has served the community on the eastside of Buffalo for over thirty years. "African-American men have the highest incidence of prostate cancer in the world and are twice as likely as Caucasian-American men to die from the disease," said Willie Underwood, M.D., a staff physi-

cian in the Surgical Oncology Department at Roswell Park.

Members of the Roswell Park Prostate Cancer Advocates Committee, which includes Mack Luchey, Charley Ferguson, John Williams, Rudolphus Boans, the Rev. Louis Spencer, Otis Cowart, Ramon Luciano, and Gilbert Hargrave, along with Dr. Underwood, were all on hand at the event passing out pertinent educational materials or answering questions of men seeking more information about prostate cancer. A local radio sta-

tion, WUFO AM, broadcasted the event live.

"Men need to be educated about this disease," said Mack Luchey, the owner of Doris Records who himself is a prostate cancer survivor.

"Simply by talking to my family doctor and getting tested early, I was better able to make an informed decision as to my treatment when I was diagnosed with the disease."

For more information, about prostate cancer, call 1-877-ASK-RPCI (or 1-877-275-7724).



Dr. Willie Underwood (left) and Mack Luchey (right), owner of Doris Records, were both interviewed live by WUFO-AM during the two-hour event.

FIRST LADIES GOSPEL EXPLOSION

The First Ladies of WNY Health Initiative, representing several local churches, along with the Witness Project of Buffalo, hosted the "First Ladies of WNY Women's Gospel Explosion" at Greater Emmanuel Temple in Buffalo. "The purpose of the event was to make African-American women aware that breast cancer is the most common

cancer amongst them and the second most common cause of death," said Dee Johnson, Director of the Witness Project of Buffalo out of Roswell Park's Office of Cancer Health Disparities Research. Several of the First Ladies, who are also breast cancer survivors, and the churches each represents, that assisted on this event included, Denise Hurst, (Greater Emmanuel Temple)

Kandice Drayton, Narseary Harris (Prince of Peace COGIC), Connie Robinson (St. Tabernacle COGIC), Charlotte Spight (Holy Temple COGIC) and Erma Wallace (Cold Spring Church of Christ Jesus). Over 200 people attended the event, which also featured national recording artist Henry "Hank" Reed, Sr., as well as other local gospel artists.

"The purpose of the event was to make African-American women aware that breast cancer is the most common cancer amongst them and the second most common cause of death." -Dee Johnson

WITNESS PROJECT WINNER

In observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the Witness Project of Buffalo announced Felicia Coit of Buffalo as its first Witness Project Contest winner. Women who got screened for a clinical breast exam and mammogram, or who registered with the project's early breast cancer screenings, called "One Stop Shops", which were done in partnership with the Sheehan

Health Network in Buffalo, were entered into the contest with the chance to win \$250. In early October, Ms. Coit was randomly selected. The 46-year-old mother of three, who has a history of cancer in her family, had no medical insurance when she decided to get an early breast exam.

"I feel blessed in so many ways," said Ms. Coit. "Not only did I get tested early, which came back negative, I

won \$250. I was treated very well. The testing was convenient and a very good experience. They even provided lunch. I would recommend that any woman in need of a breast cancer screening contact the Witness Project."

For more information, call (716) 845-3383.



Felicia Coit

ESPERANZA Y VIDA (HOPE & LIFE)

The Esperanza y Vida Project, funded in part by the American Cancer Society and the John R. Oishei Foundation, is a program aimed at increasing breast and cervical cancer in Hispanic women living in rural and urban areas. The project also investigates barriers to cancer care for this particular population. The project consists of two culturally competent, commu-

nity-based health education programs: a breast and cervical program and a diabetes program. Both programs have been designed to reach out to the Hispanic community in churches and community centers across WNY. Both programs feature a group of Hispanic women and men who speak about their triumph over breast cancer, cervical cancer, and diabetes to in-

crease knowledge and screening in the Hispanic community.

If you are interested in having an Esperanza y Vida presentation at your organization, please contact the Project Coordinator, Jody Matos, at (716) 845-4622, or send her an e-mail at Jody.Matos@roswellpark.org



Esperanza y Vida staff, along with members of its Community Advisory Board, pictured at a recent training workshop.

A SURVIVOR SPEAKS

MARIA RIVERA

Buffalo, New York

I was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1998. I am happy to say that I have been cancer-free for ten years and counting. I have to say that God placed me in good hands with my cancer specialists. My strong faith in God, along with the support of my children, gave me the strength to overcome my

cancer.

My advice to people is to take time out of their busy schedules and get screened early. It could save your life. I know if I had decided not to get this done, I probably would not be here today sharing my story with you.

For more information regarding early cancer screenings, call 1-877-ASK-RPCI (or 1-877-275-7724).



Maria Rivera



“My advice to people is to take time out of their busy schedules and get screened early. It could save your life.”
-Maria Rivera

A.R.T.S. IN NIAGARA FALLS

Roswell Park Cancer Institute and the Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center, under the guidance of Dr. Deborah Erwin and Charles Walker, are creating power-neutral collaborations to meet the needs of vulnerable Niagara Falls communities in order to reduce cancer disparities and improve cancer research. The two-year study, titled “ARTS” (Arts, Research, T-

cells & Socio demographics), creates a collaborative opportunity linking a diverse, relatively low income population with an NCI Comprehensive Cancer Center to test the feasibility of studying the relationship among various contributing factors (e.g., poverty and race/ethnicity) to health disparities (e.g., immune function). The goal of this study is to investigate

strategies to engage residents in the Niagara Falls region with scientists at Roswell Park to increase mutual understanding of each other and participation in cancer prevention research, and to obtain pilot data on variations in T-cell levels. The ARTS study utilizes the methods of CBPR (Community-Based Participatory Research), which is a process that in-

in all phases of the research process. There will be a need to conduct more educational programs throughout the Niagara Falls area this year. If you or your organization are interested in participating, please contact the ARTS project coordinator Nikia Clark at (716) 845-4888.



AREA CANCER PATIENTS TO BENEFIT FROM EXPANSION OF THE PATIENT NAVIGATOR PROGRAM AT ROSWELL PARK

The American Cancer Society officially launched its Patient Navigator Program at Roswell Park in December, thanks to support received from AstraZeneca, one of the world’s leading pharmaceutical companies. This is the first site to launch in Upstate New York as part of its nationwide effort to significantly extend the reach of this innovative program and assist individual cancer patients in negotiating the health care system. “Roswell Park was the first hospital in WNY to offer its patients a patient navigation program,” said Rosa Scrivani, Senior Patient Advocate at Roswell Park. “This collaborative effort will enhance our existing program, which began in 2005, and help ensure that underserved patients obtain appropriate early detection, treatment and follow-up cancer care.” AstraZeneca’s support will enable the development of a full-time American Cancer Society Patient Navigator Program at Roswell Park. “A cancer diagnosis can be a life changing experience for patients,”

said Joy Marlinski, the newly hired Patient Navigator made possible with funds provided to the American Cancer Society from AstraZeneca. “As a Patient Navigator, I will be able to provide support every step of the way, from explaining what to expect with chemotherapy, to helping patients find transportation to appointments and even linking them with free temporary housing.” Joy joins three other Patient Navigators at Roswell Park: Mildred Kelly, who has navigated newly diagnosed breast and cervical cancer patients since 2005, as well as newly hired Otis Cowart and Raymond Caruana, who will work directly with newly diagnosed prostate cancer patients. Both Otis and Raymond are prostate cancer survivors themselves, thus bringing unique, but real-life experiences and perspective to the Patient Navigator Program. For more information regarding the program, contact Rosa Scrivani at (716) 845-2981.



Members of the RPCI Patient Navigator Program (from left to right): Rosa Scrivani, RPCI Senior Patient Advocate; Raymond Caruana, RPCI Clinical Navigator; Mildred Kelly, RPCI Clinical Navigator; Joy Marlinski, American Cancer Society Clinical Navigator; and Otis Cowart, RPCI Clinical Navigator.



“A cancer diagnosis can be a life-changing experience for patients and their families. As a Patient Navigator, I will be able to provide support every step of the way..”—Joy Marlinski

SCIENCE-TO-THE-SIDEWALK PRESENTATIONS

The Office of Cancer Health Disparities (OCHDR) continues to develop forums that it calls “*Science to the Sidewalk*”. The goal of this initiative is to present these forums, in layman’s terms, on pertinent cancer research to community-serving organizations, neighborhood block clubs, and churches throughout the year. This program attempts to move the sci-

ence of Roswell Park into the community through dialogue at a local venue, engaging our research program leaders and scientists to share their passion about their research in community settings, and to disseminate the importance of these studies to minority and under-served communities

To date, a number of these events focusing on breast, cervical and prostate cancer

have taken place at the Sheehan Health Network located in Buffalo, New York. Events have been well attended by members of the community.

The OCHDR would like to increase these events that would focus on latest in research other cancer-related topics, like lung cancer, colon cancer, and cancers of the head & neck.

If you are looking for more information on the “*Science to the Sidewalk*” program, or on upcoming presentations in 2009, please feel free to contact Terry Alford, the OCHDR Community Relations Coordinator, or call (716) 845-4557. He is in the process of developing a calendar of when and where *Science to the Sidewalk* events will occur throughout WNY.

PIONEERING BUFFALO NURSE HONORED

Eva Malinda Noles was born in Cleveland, Ohio on April 15, 1919. Her family settled in Buffalo, NY in 1928. When she graduated from Hutchinson Central, on a dare from a friend, she courageously applied and was accepted to the E.J. Meyer Memorial Hospital School of Nursing (now Erie County Medical Center).

In 1940, she finished at the top of her class and became the first African-American woman to be trained as a registered nurse in Buffalo. On Wednesday, November 19th, more than 150 community and health care leaders gathered to honor Eva Noles with the first annual “Eva Noles Recognition Breakfast”. The event took place at Kleinhan’s Music Hall in Buffalo.

“Ms. Noles served the Western New York community as a registered nurse and nursing educator for more than 30 years”, said Terry Alford, a Community Relations Coordinator at Roswell Park Cancer Institute who chaired the committee that planned the event. “The

former Director of Nursing at Roswell Park devoted her career to caring for cancer patients, training nurses’ aides and educating more than one-hundred family nurse practitioners.”

Ms. Noles began her career at Meyer Memorial, Sisters and Columbus Hospitals before she was hired as a staff nurse at Roswell Park in 1945. She became Director of Nursing in 1971. She retired in 1974.

Over the years, Ms. Noles has received many awards and honors, including the Uncrowned Queens Institute’s *Culture Keepers Award* for outstanding contributions to African-American culture in WNY. Ms. Noles is also the author of several publications, including “Buffalo’s Blacks: Talking Proud”.

During the recognition breakfast, a college scholarship in her name was formally announced., and Roswell Park unveiled a portrait of Eve Noles,

which will be installed in a nursing training room at Roswell Park that will be dedicated in her honor.

“I am very happy and proud for the honors being bestowed on me,” said Ms. Noles. “It’s not everyday one is recognized for their contributions and I would like to thank everyone involved.”

If you would like more information about the Eva M. Noles Scholarship Program, or are interested in donating to the scholarship fund in her honor, please contact Reggie Clark, Roswell Park Director of Diversity at (716) 845-4567, or e-mail him at

Reggie.Clark@roswellpark.org.

You can also get additional information by going to www.roswellpark.org.



Ms. Eva Noles (left) meets with Dr. Donald “Skip” Trump, Roswell Park President & CEO (right).



Ms. Eva Noles meets with well-wishers after the Eva Noles Recognition Breakfast..



OFFICE OF CANCER HEALTH DISPARITIES RESEARCH

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS TO CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH & THE FUTURE OF BLACK HEALTH

- **Tuesday, February 3rd**, 11 AM– 2 PM, *Healthy Juicing for Healthier Lives Demonstrations*, presented by Prudence Fuller, Program Coordinator, the Healing Zone through Group Ministries, Inc.; Reduce obesity and risk factors that lead to chronic diseases by learning how to make your own creative juice beverages that promote health; Where: Conference Rooms B & C, Sunflower Café, Roswell Park Hospital.
- **Wednesday, February 4th**, 11 AM-1:30 PM, *NAACP: 1909-2009—One Hundred Years of Civil Rights*, presented by Frank B. Mesiah, President, Buffalo, New York Branch of the NAACP; presentation on how the African-American Civil Rights Movement became the blueprint for all Americans rights; Where: Conference Rooms B & C, Sunflower Café, Roswell Park Hospital.
- **Wednesday, February 18th**, 6 PM–7:30 PM, *Distinguished Speakers Presentation*, featuring Willie Underwood, M.D., Staff Physician Surgical Oncology, Roswell Park; Where: Gaylord Cary Room in the Research Studies Center at Roswell Park. Sponsored by Roswell Park Cancer Institute and the Erie-Niagara Area Health Education Center.
- **Thursday, February 19th**, 11 AM-1:30 PM, *African Dance & Drum Presentation*, featuring the Kakilambi African Dance & Drum Troupe, African-American Cultural Center; Dance & drum is a universal language of healing and celebration. Where: The Hohn Lecture Hall, inside the Research Studies Center at Roswell Park Cancer Institute.
- **Friday, February 20th**, 10 AM-12 PM, *Research Cures Cancer—Don't Be Left Out!*, presented by Nikia Clark, Health Education Specialist, Office of Cancer Health Disparities Research; Discussion on how being involved in clinical trials and research studies assists all populations in ultimately finding cures for various cancers; Where: Conference Rooms B & C, Sunflower Café, Roswell Park Hospital.
- **Saturday, February 21st**, 9 AM-11 AM, *Men's Fellowship Breakfast & Prostate Awareness Presentation*, presented by Levi Ross, Ph.D., Assistant Member, Office of Cancer Health Disparities Research, Roswell Park; Sponsored by Rev. Brown, Pastor, New Covenant Church of God; Presentation on the importance of informed decision-making made by men, under the counsel of their physicians, once they have received pertinent prostate cancer awareness education; Where: New Covenant Church of God, 472 Clinton St., Buffalo; All you can eat breakfast, Cost: \$5.00; no RSVP needed.
- **Saturday, February 21st**, 9 AM– 2 PM, *"One Stop Shop" Early Clinical Breast Exams*, sponsored by the Witness Project of Buffalo; Where: Sheehan Health Network, 425 Michigan Ave., Buffalo; If interested in getting an exam, MUST pre-register at least one week before scheduled exam date by calling (716) 845-4381.
- **Saturday, February 21st**, 2:45 PM-4:45 PM, *Conversations on Cancer: A Talk on Cancer in the Urban Environment*, presented by Dr. Wesley Hicks, MD, DDS, Staff Physician, Roswell Park; Where: Michigan Street Baptist Church, 511 Michigan Ave., Buffalo; Sponsored by the Buffalo Niagara Freedom Station Coalition; please call Mr. Rose at (347) 482-6980, to RSVP.
- **Monday, February 23rd**, 11 AM-2 PM, *Prostate Awareness Presentations*, presented by Levi Ross, Ph.D., Assistant Member, Office of Cancer Health Disparities Research, Roswell Park; Presentation on the importance of informed decision-making made by men, under the counsel of their physicians, once they have received pertinent prostate cancer awareness education; Where: Conference Rooms B & C, Sunflower Café, Roswell Park Hospital.
- **Tuesday, February 24th**, 11 AM-2 PM, *Witness Project Presentations*, presented by Detric Johnson, Director, Witness Project of Buffalo, as well as breast cancer survivors; Presentation on the importance of women getting early clinical breast exams; Where: Conference Rooms B & C, Sunflower Café, Roswell Park Hospital.
- **Wednesday, February 25th**, 11 AM-12:30 PM, *Buffalo Urban League Presentation*, by Brenda W. McDuffie, President & CEO of the Buffalo Urban League, discussing the variety of activities and initiatives the Buffalo Urban League has provided in its 80+ years of service to our community; Where: The Hohn Lecture Hall, inside the Research Studies Center at Roswell Park Cancer Institute.
- **Saturday, February 28th**, 9 AM– 2 PM, *"One Stop Shop" Early Clinical Breast Exams*, sponsored by the Witness Project of Buffalo; Where: Sheehan Health Network, 425 Michigan Ave., Buffalo; If interested in getting an exam, MUST pre-register at least one week before scheduled exam date by calling (716) 845-4381.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR ARE IN NEED OF MORE INFORMATION REGARDING EVENTS LISTED ABOVE, CONTACT:

TERRY ALFORD, OCHDR COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR, (716) 845-4557; Terry.Alford@roswellpark.org