Heart disease remains the number one cause of death in our country, and disparities in cardiovascular health are among the most serious public health problems in the US today. Racial and ethnic minorities continue to experience disproportionate morbidity and mortality related to heart disease and stroke. As Wake Forest University Health Sciences (WFUHS) President Richard Dean notes “Translating research findings into practice is critical, and discovering effective solutions is a challenge that we as an institution are proud to undertake.” These issues prompted the focal point of our second national conference, entitled “Cardiovascular Disease Disparities: Translating Research into Practice,” held September 8th and 9th at the Marriott Winston-Salem.

The conference focused on the diverse causes of cardiovascular disease (CVD) disparities, incorporating the influence of diabetes, hypertension, genetics, and other risk factors; socioeconomic determinants; spirituality; racial differences in CVD treatment; and the role of civil rights. There were over 120 participants, and a poster session showcased promising practices from across the country. The conference was also supported by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), the US Department of Health and Human Services, and the Northwest Area Health Education Center (NWAHEC).

Keynote presentations by distinguished speakers included: Drs. Sherman James and Eric Peterson, Duke University; Dr. James Reed, Morehouse School of Medicine; Dr. John Flack, Wayne State University School of Medicine; Dr. Waine Kong, Association of Black Cardiologists; Dr. Gregg Taliferro, Agency for Healthcare Quality and Research; Vernellia Randall, JD, Dayton University School of Law; & our own Dr. Ronny Bell. WFU School of Medicine (WFUSM) faculty discussed CVD risk factor guidelines and management during a panel session.

In addition, participants had an opportunity to choose from 6 workshops addressing various aspects of risk factor and CVD treatment. Workshop presenters included WFUSM faculty; Ms. Raquel Malo, LGE Performance Systems; Roosevelt Freeman, JD, OCR, & Dr. Rita Louard, Albert Einstein College of Medicine. During closing remarks, ARC national board member Levi Watkins, Jr., M.D., challenged participants to continue to address pervasive and critical minority health concerns such as those addressed at this meeting.
From the Director's Desk

The past four months have been an active and productive time for the faculty and staff of the Angelou Research Center (ARC). They have also been a time of great tragedy for hundreds of thousands of citizens whose lives and livelihoods were overwhelmed by natural disasters. The recent hurricanes remind us of the fragility of life and of the importance of having a safety net system for those most vulnerable in our society.

Recent findings from the Current Population Survey indicate that the numbers of people without health insurance continued to grow. As of 2004, there were more than 45.8 million uninsured Americans, and over the past five years this figure has grown by about 1 million per year. Impacting health & healthcare disparities requires a multifaceted approach involving not only the medical and public health communities, but also government and public policy.

The ARC at WFUSM recently received national recognition for our efforts to address health disparities from Prostate Net, a non-profit organization that promotes health education & cancer awareness to improve minority health. Our Center was among a distinguished group of recipients of Prostate Net's first annual “In the Know” Award for eliminating health disparities. The Fannie E. Rippel Foundation of Basking Ridge, NJ, nominated us for this honor. Their President & CEO, Barbara V. Gardner, cited the Center's creation of a unique collaborative relationship between an academic medical center and the local community. She lauded our pragmatic approach and establishment of ties with grassroots organizations to improve health literacy.

The award ceremony was held September 9th, 2005, at the Kimmel Center, New York University, New York, NY. As the time coincided with our national conference, Jeffrey Swaim, Director of Foundations for the Office of Development & Alumni Affairs accepted the award on our behalf. This recognition of our efforts is extremely encouraging at this early stage of our development.

National Advisory Board Focus

The third annual meeting of the National Advisory Board was held on September 17th at Graylyn International Conference Center in Winston-Salem, NC. This year, we were pleased to welcome four distinguished new board members: Julius Chambers, past Chancellor of NC Central University and founding partner of Ferguson, Stein, Chambers, Adkins, Gresham & Sumter, PA law firm in Charlotte, NC; Dr. Anna Cherie Epps, Senior Advisor to the President/Academic Affairs and Dean Emeritus, Meharry School of Medicine, Nashville, TN; Carla Harris, Managing Director, Global Capital Markets at Morgan Stanley, New York, NY; and Molly Ivins, nationally syndicated political columnist, Austin, TX.

In addition to Executive Chair Maya Angelou, Co-chairs Redge Hanes and Bob Brown, and WFUHS Liaison Dr. Richard Dean were present. Mr. Karl Yena served as the meeting facilitator. Board members approved standing committees and accepted committee assignments to facilitate their work throughout the year on behalf of the Center. The four standing committees will meet at least quarterly via conference call; Center Director and staff will provide coordination and logistical support, as needed. Committee Chairs for FY 2006 are: Crandall C. Bowles, Fund Development/Special Events; Dr. Richard Janeway, Program Development; Dr. Levi Watkins, Advocacy & PR/Board Recruitment; and Dr. Edward Haponik, Strategic Planning.

Board members identified priority areas for the upcoming year which include primary support of the endowment initiative and its development. The board has also targeted long term strategic planning for the Center and efforts to address the devastation to minority communities in the Gulf States impacted by the recent hurricanes. With the engagement, commitment, and full support of this National Advisory Board, the Center continues to progress.

National Advisory Board:

- Maya Angelou
- Robert J. Brown
- Crandall C. Bowles
- Julius Chambers, JD*
- Henry Cisneros
- Richard H. Dean, MD
- Anna Epps, PhD*
- Clarissa Pinkola Estés, PhD
- Eldridge C. Hanes
- Edward Haponik, MD
- Carla Harris, MBA*
- Molly Ivins*
- Richard Janeway, MD
- Peter Jannetta, MD
- Coretta Scott King
- Charles A. Sanders, MD
- Levi Watkins, Jr., MD
- Honorable Andrew Young

Ex-Officio Members:

- William Applegate, MD, MPH
- Kristy F. Woods, MD, MPH

*indicates new members
Research Update

Winston-Salem Chronicle Partnership

The partnership between the Angelou Research Center and the Winston-Salem Chronicle, one of the largest black newspapers in the Triad area of NC (Winston-Salem, Greensboro, and High Point), was solidified with the first edition of our weekly health education & promotion column in July 2005. The column, entitled *The People’s Clinic*, targets the regional African American community to provide scientifically-sound health information. Specifically, this project seeks to enhance community knowledge of racial and ethnic health disparities, improve health literacy, and provide knowledge of health concepts that can be translated into practical applications.

The weekly column focuses on the 6 major & 2 minor minority health disparity areas defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in *Healthy People 2010*: cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, immunizations, & infant mortality, plus mental health, & asthma. It also includes features on healthcare quality, healthcare utilization/access, & research ethics. Topics rotate in an 11-week cycle to reinforce these themes & include contributions from ARC faculty, staff, and medical students. To date, topics have included hypertension, physical activity, depression, cancer, choosing a primary care provider, & diabetes guidelines.

Hispanic Health Media Project

*La Clinica del Pueblo* (The People’s Clinic), a statewide Hispanic health education initiative, is currently in the second year of funding from the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust. This collaborative effort between the Angelou Research Center and Que Pasa Media, Inc., continues to develop and provide relevant and practical health information to Hispanic communities across the state. More than 50 consecutive weeks of programming have been completed via a Spanish-language radio health program and corresponding newspaper column. Over the past three months, topics have included listeriosis, drowning prevention, teen pregnancy, immunizations, diabetes, and domestic violence.

Radio hosts Jorge Calles, MD, and Eva Gomez, RN, continue to invite guest experts from WFUSM faculty and the community to participate. Over 240 calls during radio programming have been logged, and a “1-800 hot-line” offers another opportunity for Hispanic audiences to obtain health and resource information. A survey was developed and administered to measure reach within the target population and to assess health literacy in the four thematic areas. Data is currently being analyzed, and two subsequent administrations are planned. An abstract and poster were presented at the Angelou Research Center 2005 National Conference (Model for Academic-Media Collaboration for Hispanic Health Promotion: JCalles, EGómez, VDuren-Winfeld, SFahey, JIsasi, AMi- kra, KWoods).

Commonwealth Fund

The Angelou Research Center’s Commonwealth Fund (CWF) team spent the past few months compiling data related to health status and healthcare access, utilization, and quality in minority and non-minority communities. This process was guided by the project’s overarching goal of a chartbook development: to provide a user-friendly, easily accessible, and current summary of disparities in health status, accessibility, utilization, and healthcare quality in the US according to race and ethnicity. The team used the Table of Contents, compiled in the early months, to inform preliminary analyses. It includes five chapters: *Chapter 1: Introduction to Minority Health and Health Disparities; Chapter 2: Health Insurance; Chapter 3: Healthcare Access and Utilization; Chapter 4: Healthcare Quality; and Chapter 5: Promising Practices for Minimizing Healthcare Disparities.* A comprehensive list of proposed charts has been created and approved by the CWF.

To-date, data for Chapter 1 have been compiled and mock-ups of charts have been sent to the advisory board for review. The charts in Chapter 1 focus on changes in distribution of the US population over the past forty years and census projections by race and ethnicity. It also analyzes current racial trends in lead causes of mortality, immunization rates, HIV incidence, infant mortality, obesity and sedentariness. We anticipate completion of preliminary data on Chapters 2 – 5 by early winter.

Adjunct Faculty

- Shari Barkin, MD, MSHS
  Associate Professor, Pediatrics
- Ronny Bell, PhD, MS
  Associate Professor, PHS, Epidemiology
- Alan Bertoni, MD, MPH
  Assistant Professor, PHS Epidemiology 
- William Blackstock, Jr. MD
  Associate Professor, Radiation Oncology
- Jorge Calles, MD
  Associate Professor, Endocrinology
- Sonia Crandall, PhD, MS
  Professor, Family 
- John H. Stewart, IV, MD
  Asst. Prof., Community Med.
- Brenda Latham-Sadler, MD
  Asst. Prof., Family 
- Michael P. Lischke, EdD, MPH
  Asst. Prof., Community Med.
- William Blackstock, Jr. MD
  Associate Professor, Radiation Oncology
- Brenda Latham-Sadler, MD
  Asst. Prof., Family 
- Michele Sale, PhD
  Asst. Professor, Center for Human Genomics
- John H. Stewart, IV, MD
  Instructor, Surgery, Surgical Oncology
- Ramon Velez, MD
  Professor, Internal Medicine, GIM
- Gretchen Wells, MD, PhD
  Asst. Prof., Internal Medicine, Cardiology

Center Affiliates

- Stephanie Conkley (pending), MEd
  Patient & Family Services Coord., Pediatrics
- Deborah Farmer, PhD
  Post-Doctoral Fellow, PHS, Social Science 
- Eva Gómez, RN, MSN
  Hispanic Patient Educator
- Granada Neil, MD
  Community Physician
Welcome!

The Angelou Research Center is delighted to welcome several new members to our ever-growing family! Beginning October 3rd, David Mount, Psy.D., will join the Center full-time as Instructor, Department of Internal Medicine. Dr. Mount is designated as an NIH Health Disparities Scholar, and his research interests are in the cognitive reserve theory and its impact on minorities with chronic disease. Four students have also joined the team: Leigh Ellen Floyd (PA-I), Nails Frye (Postgraduate Research Education Program; PREP), Catherine Staplefoot (PA-I), and Mercedes Zimmerman (PA-II). Nails will assist with the Commonwealth Fund project, while others will work on various aspects of community health education initiatives.

Development Corner

Hallelujah: The Welcome Table

The Angelou Research Center, in conjunction with National Advisory Board member Crandall C. Bowles, hosted a fundraiser at Noble’s Restaurant in Charlotte on Wednesday, June 1st, 2003. Restauranteur Jim Noble and his chefs prepared a three-course meal featuring recipes from Maya Angelou’s most recent book, Hallelujah! The Welcome Table.

During the meal, Dr. Angelou read from the book and shared her life experiences as they related to each dish. Three hundred guests at two seatings participated in this intimate evening with Dr. Angelou. All proceeds went to the Angelou Research Center’s endowment initiative.

Craig Marberry

Cuttin’ Up

Cuttin’ Up, is a book of essays and photographs by African-American barbers, their businesses, and their customers. “For years, the barber shop has been a community meeting place for African Americans, and not just a place to get a hair cut,” said Kristy F. Woods, M.D., director of the Angelou Research Center. “Health educators have found barber shops to be an invaluable resource for sharing information on health and wellness to hard-to-reach segments of the African American community. We feel honored that Mr. Marberry has chosen to support the center as a major benefactor.”

On September 8th during the 2005 National Conference, the Center hosted a reception and book signing for Mr. Marberry at the Marriott Inn Winston-Salem. The Twin City Choristers sang in the barber shop tradition (acappella), and Mr. Marberry read from Cuttin’ Up. Craig Marberry is also the author of Crowns: Portraits of Black Women in Church Hats and Spirit of Harlem.

2nd Annual Evening of Healing Through Song

Maya Angelou and the Angelou Research Center will host the Second Annual Evening of Healing through Song on Friday, November 23, 2005, at 7:00 PM in Winston-Salem’s Reynolds Auditorium. This year’s annual endowment event will feature performing artists Roberta Flack, Nick Ashford & Valerie Simpson, and CeCe Winans. The evening is dedicated to local Hurricane Katrina and Rita evacuees. For ticket information, please contact the Center at (336) 713-7600.

Texas to Host Third Center Event

In January 2004, board member Henry Cisneros & the Hon. Ron Kirk, former mayor of Dallas, hosted the Center’s first national public awareness event in Dallas, TX. In May of this year, Ron & Paula Parker and Ron & Matrice Kirk hosted a benefit dinner at the Glen Eagles Country Club in Plano, TX. Dr. Angelou will be in attendance in Dallas at yet another fundraising event on November 10, 2005. Texas hosts will be Ron Kirk and Ron Parker, a Senior Executive at Frito Lay. KUDOS and many thanks to our Texas partners!

Upcoming Events

Forsyth County Health Summit: Policies That Support a Healthy Community. Forsyth County Healthy Community Coalition. Tuesday, November 1, 2005; Benton Convention Center, Winston-Salem, NC.


Angelou Research Center Fall Lecture Series. Changing Physician Behaviors. Wally R. Smith, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine, Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine. Thursday, November 17, 2005; Wake Forest University School of Medicine, Winston-Salem, NC.

Congress on the Treatment of Cardiovascular Disease: Defining the State of the Art in High-Risk Populations. Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc (ABC). Saturday, November 12, 2005; Dallas, Texas.


Angelou Research Center Journal Club. 12:00 PM on Tuesdays, October 18th, November 15th, December 20th, 2005; Angelou Research Center Conference Room.
In May 2005, the WFUSM SNMA chapter hosted keynote speaker Congresswoman Dr. Donna Christensen to honor graduating seniors at the annual SNMA Medical Excellence Weekend Banquet. This fall, they are looking forward to another productive year & hoping to build upon traditional programs.

Last year, SNMA received a grant from the Friends of the Congressional Glaucoma Foundation as part of its Student Sight Savers Program. They are now beginning their 2nd year of providing free, student-run glaucoma screenings to the community. Members also serve in a variety of other ways including mentoring pre-medical undergraduate students at Winston-Salem State University through their Minority Association of Pre-Medical Students (MAPS) chapter & weekly tutoring of elementary through high school students via a program at Shiloh Baptist Church.

The SNMA also hopes to create a strong network with minority faculty, physicians, and other medical student organizations in the region through gatherings with the Twin City Medical Society and meetings such as the SNMA Region IV Conference scheduled for late this semester at the Medical University of South Carolina. Members of the SNMA enjoyed a time of food and fellowship with minority faculty at the home of Dr. Kristy Woods & also helped sponsor the Black Graduate Student Association Barbeque in September.

Dr. Blackstock continued at UNC to complete a three-year National Cancer Institute (NCI) fellowship focused on pre-clinical and clinical research in radiation modifiers. Since that time, he has developed considerable experience as a translational clinical scientist, educator, and mentor. Dr. Blackstock returned to Wake Forest University School of Medicine in 1997 as a faculty member in the Department of Radiation Oncology. That year, his second daughter, Ansley, was born.

While continuing to manage an active NCI-funded laboratory, Dr. Blackstock is the principal investigator of multiple national and international clinical trials. He currently serves on the Executive Committee of the NIH Cancer and Leukemia Group B (CALGB) and as Vice Chair of the Radiation Oncology and Gastrointestinal Committees within CALGB. At UNC and more recently at WFUSM, he has been involved in the training of medical students, residents, fellows, and doctoral students in Cancer Biology.

Dr. Blackstock continues to serve on NCI Advisory Boards as it relates to chemoradiation drug development and clinical trial design.

He was a member of the internal steering committee that laid the foundation for the Angelou Research Center. As an adjunct faculty, Dr. Blackstock is actively involved in Center activities consistent with its mission and continues to work to improve cancer care for underserved and minority populations.

From the Student National Medical Association

In May 2005, the WFUSM SNMA chapter hosted keynote speaker Congresswoman Dr. Donna Christensen to honor graduating seniors at the annual SNMA Medical Excellence Weekend Banquet. This fall, they are looking forward to another productive year & hoping to build upon traditional programs.

2005-06 WFUSM Officers

Co-Presidents: Natasha Fontaine, Jennifer Stanislaus
Vice President: Danielle Chukwumah
Secretary: Holly Tyler
Treasurer: Bronwyn Young
Committee Chairpersons
MAPS/Post Baccalaurate: Jerona A. Thomas
Fundraising: Jaleema Nanton
Banquet: Kimberly Holmes
Social: Candace Wilson

For more information, please visit www.wfusm-snma.org

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