

SARVER HEART CENTER MINORITY OUTREACH

NEWSLETTER 2014



Members of the Community Coalition for Heart Health Education work with organizations in the community to deliver important health information to minority populations.

2 Family History Guides Involvement

3 Research Focused on Women of Color

10 Years of Focusing on Women and Heart Disease

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A True Community Coalition - Join the Team!

It's a major concern that women of color are at a much greater risk for developing heart disease and obesity than other groups of women. That's why members of the Sarver Heart Center Community Coalition for Heart Health Education for Women of Color (CCHHE aka Minority Outreach Committee) provide education and awareness on health issues, risk factors and their impact on women's heart health.

Chaired by Wanda F. Moore, the CCHHE includes members of the Sarver Heart Center Women's Heart Health Education Committee, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., and other collaborative community partners. "As advocates for health care for women, this coalition has chosen to make a difference. Through this process we are gaining more awareness of our health needs," said Wanda.

CCHHE Success By the Numbers:

- 119,000 volunteer hours
- 2,400 people trained in chest-compression-only CPR
- 25+ health presentations in the community
- 3 Investigative research awards focused on women and people of color
- 1 Endowment established to continue research for women of color

For more information, please visit the UA Sarver Heart Center website: heart.arizona.edu

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Governor's Volunteer Services Award Honors Dedication

Through dedicated leadership, thousands of people in Arizona, particularly in African-, Native- and Hispanic-American communities, are more aware of their health. For her years of dedicated leadership and service, Wanda received the Governor's Volunteer Services Award in April 2014. "She shares her passion to make a difference in the health of minority communities by building connections with community, corporations, our physicians and scientists," said Nancy K. Sweitzer, MD, PhD, director of the UA Sarver Heart Center.

Wanda has mutual respect for Dr. Sweitzer. "One of my greatest awards is the blessing of our renowned board-certified cardiologist, nationally recognized for her strong leadership. She is a visionary leader and a national collaborator on clinical research. Her focus is building upon the University of Arizona Sarver Heart Center's prestigious



Wanda Moore and Dr. Nancy Sweitzer during the Governor's Volunteer Services Award Ceremony.

history and providing excellence in patient-centered care with the best cardiac team nationwide," said Wanda. "An immediate example was my sister Joyce in Niceville, Florida, who was in the midst of a heart emergency. Dr. Sweitzer contacted her colleagues at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). She connected us with the best cardiac team at UAB. My sister received lifesaving surgery, personal care and concern during and after the surgery. It is evident that the Sarver Heart Center with Dr. Sweitzer will always strive to create a caring, responsive environment that will nurture individual growth, focus on teamwork and foster meaningful outreach nationwide. That is the most priceless award I

could have ever received," said Wanda.



Donna Liggins

Daughters' Heart Conditions and Family History Guide Involvement

Donna Liggins knows all too well that heart disease runs in families, including her mother and two daughters. Her younger daughter, who also has diabetes, is doing well with a pacemaker to regulate her heart rhythm and watches her weight to stay healthy.

Unfortunately, her older daughter, Annette Donzetta Pitts, lost her battle with heart disease in 2011 when she was only 46 years old. "She was diagnosed with heart failure when she was in her twenties. She had been tired and tests showed that her heart was operating at about 60 to 70 percent of its capacity. The doctors decided to watch the condition for a while. A few years later they implanted a pacemaker. With her heart working at only 25 percent, the doctors said her heart was very bad and put in an ICD (implantable cardioverter defibrillator) to enhance her life. She had a wonderful doctor," said Mrs. Liggins.



Annette Donzetta Pitts

A broken hip made Annette's condition take a turn for the worse. "She had two surgeries and developed MRSA in the hospital. She never got well after that," said Mrs. Liggins. She was evaluated for a heart transplant, but her infection risk was too great.

"You don't expect your children to pass before you. I miss her and love her," said Mrs. Liggins. "This is why I want to help. When you find something killing your family, you want to educate people and donate. I know that God is over all things."

Mrs. Liggins retired as a City of Tucson Parks and Recreation supervisor after 43 years of service and has a neighborhood center named in her honor.

At age 70, she said that she watches her weight and manages her diabetes. "Everyone should see their doctor, get a check up and if anything seems strange, advocate for your health! The body tells you when something is out of whack. Please understand that a heart attack can happen."

Research Focused on Women of Color

One of the missions of the Sarver Heart Center Community Coalition for Heart Health Education for Women of Color is to support research focused on minority populations. People of color have higher risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes and obesity. A **Women of Color Endowment** has been established to support this research. In order to compete for national funding, researchers need to obtain preliminary data to show their ideas have merit. Sarver Heart Center Investigator Awards provide funding for this purpose.

CCHHE funded an investigators award to obtain a better understanding of the



Theresa Wadas, DNP, FNP-BC, ACNP-BC, CCRN

relationships among inflammatory risk factors in African Americans with stroke. Leslie Ritter, PhD, RN, the Sarver Heart Center's *William M. Feinberg, MD, Endowed Chair in Stroke Research*, is mentoring UA College of Nursing doctoral candidate, Theresa Wadas, DNP, FNP-BC, ACNP-BC, CCRN. To begin to understand possible biologic variations in African Americans with stroke, Dr. Wadas conducted a physiologic study examining the relationships among APOE4 genotypes, inflammatory markers and risk factors among 25 African Americans with stroke who contributed blood samples within three days of stroke onset. The research continues.



Tribute to Anna Jolivet

The Tucson community lost a deeply respected leader when Anna Jolivet, Ed.D., passed away earlier this year at age 85. She achieved so many firsts in her lifetime – one of three African-American women to graduate from the University of Arizona in 1950, first African-American woman to be appointed principal of a Tucson Unified School District school, named Woman of the Year by the Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce in 1996, and one of the first members of the Sarver Heart Center Community Coalition for Heart Health Education for Women of Color. While we miss her many contributions to our community, we celebrate her legacy.

10 Years of Focusing on Women and Heart Disease

The Community Coalition is part of the Sarver Heart Center Women's Heart Health Education Committee, which is celebrating 10 years of focusing on women under the leadership of Mary Anne Fay, who also serves on the SHC Advisory Board, along with Wanda Moore.

Wanda Moore, Chair of the Minority Outreach Program with Mary Anne Fay, Chair of the Women's Committee for Heart Health Education.



New Faculty Members

Two new members with a focus on heart disease, stroke and minority populations recently joined the Sarver Heart Center.

Chelsea S. Kidwell, MD, is a professor of Neurology and Medical Imaging and vice chair of research, Department of Neurology. She specializes in prevention and treatment

of stroke and has special interests in medical imaging and stroke as well as ethnic and racial disparities among stroke patients. She has maintained National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding since 1999.

Ankit Desai, MD, an assistant professor of clinical medicine at the UA College of Medicine - Tucson and Sarver Heart Center, is board certified in internal medicine and cardiology. His research on cardiovascular disparities in minorities with heart failure and pulmonary hypertension is funded by the NIH and the American Heart Association.



**SARVER
HEART
CENTER**

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A Life Saving Heart Challenge

We challenge you to help save a life! As a committed public service organization addressing the needs of health care for minority women in our community, we know that each of you are advocates for impacting the health disparities we face. As advocates, you know that cardiovascular disease is the #1 killer of women. Yet it is very evident how many wives, sisters, mothers, aunts, daughters and friends are not aware of this startling fact. Thus, they take no action to educate themselves! Women tend to take care of everyone else first. We can no longer afford to do this. Therefore, with your help and support, we are taking action and we challenge your members to join us in this effort. Together let's envision a healthier lifestyle for Women of Color in our community. Meet the

challenge! For more information, please contact the UA Sarver Heart Center at 520-626-4146 or heart@u.arizona.edu.



The Delta Sigma Theta Sorority presented a \$10,000 check to the UA Sarver Heart Center in 2012 to establish an endowment to support research on heart disease and women of color.

Schedule A ▶
Chest-Compression-Only CPR ▶
Training or Health Presentation ▶

Please contact the Sarver Heart Center CCHHE to arrange a heart health education presentation or chest-compression-only CPR training.
Visit heart.arizona.edu and select the "Contact Us" tab.