Dear Partners,

We are excited to share an update on some of the outreach and engagement activities of the VCU Massey Cancer Center (MCC) Office of Health Equity and Disparities Research (OHEDR). Two of our outstanding team members, Dr. Debbie L. Cadet, (Program Manager for Community Health Education and Research) and Ms. Teya J. Whitehead (Research Assistant) worked diligently to put together information that may be helpful to you and your constituents.

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Many of you may know that MCC was fortunate to recruit Dr. Robert Winn as its new cancer center director. Dr. Winn comes to VCU from the University of Illinois at Chicago where he has served as director of the University of Illinois Cancer Center (UIC) and as associate vice chancellor of health affairs for community-based practice at the University of Illinois Hospital and Health Science System.

At UIC, he built a community-to-bench integrated health model that brings together both the discovery and implementation sciences into one health delivery and research system. We are thrilled to expand our efforts and have MCC has the place where this model will be fully implemented.

Taking our Services to the Community: MCC has been at the forefront of pioneering efforts to have outreach and engagement activities co-located in the community. We serve the central and south eastern areas of Virginia with satellite offices in Petersburg, Danville, Lawrenceville, and Richmond. These offices have local experts who co-lead coalitions, serve on various local committees, and who develop and implement evidence-based outreach and health education programs to improve the health of local residents. Our future efforts will enhance partnerships with local providers and expand navigation to screening and healthcare.

Building Strong Partnerships. Community needs and priorities are central to the community outreach and engagement activities. Our partnerships have been developed by more than a decade of being present in various communities. We recognize that only by working together can we impact the burden of cancer. We want to learn how we can be of greater service to our partners (see contact numbers for more information).

Research that Matters. MCC does not believe in conducting research for the sake of research. We aim to produce research that matters to the residents of Virginia. Our community outreach and engagement activities facilitate research activities that address the high burden of cancer in our geographic area with an emphasis on reducing disparities. We know that achieving health equity will be impossible without the elimination of disparities. We look forward to making stronger connections between community residents and the MCC investigators.

Diverse Teams. I am fortunate to have a dedicated and diverse team to help implement community outreach and engagement activities. I look forward to highlighting our team members and partners in future issues. They are truly amazing.

2020 has been a year of excitement and more recently unprecedented challenges. We hope that your family and friends are safe and we thank you for your service. Please let us know how we may be able to help you and your organization during this time.

Safety and Health!

Dr. V. B. Sheppard
Associate Director, Community Outreach Engagement and Disparities Research
OHEDR Number: (804) 827 - 0000
National Cancer Control Month
The month of April highlights the goal of many cancer prevention organizations and governments. This is to bring awareness about this disease all over the world.

National Cancer Control Month was established by a Congressional Joint Resolution in 1938. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt first proclaimed April to be Cancer Control Month in 1940.

In many studies, researchers do not do experiments or test new treatments; they observe. Observational studies help researchers understand a situation and come up with hypotheses that can be put to the test in clinical trials. Observational studies can find associations between things, but can’t prove that one thing causes another.

In clinical trials, researchers test new ways to prevent, detect or treat disease. Treatments might be new drugs or combinations of drugs, new surgical procedures or devices, or new ways to use existing treatments. Clinical trials can also test other aspects of care, such as ways to improve the quality of life for people with chronic illnesses.

The year 2015 marked the 100-year anniversary of the establishment of Negro Health Week by Booker T. Washington, which led to the month-long initiative observed today.
The Office of Virginia Governor Ralph Northam hosts COVID-19 conference calls with faith and community leaders to discuss resources, concerns and answer questions about the economic and social effects of COVID-19 in Virginia.

Let us know if you would like to participate.
Virginia Department of Health link for Coronavirus (COVID-19) information

Infographics from WHO (The World Health Organization)
https://www.who.int/westernpacific/news/multimedia/infographics/covid-19

VCU online resources
https://guides.library.vcu.edu/diseaseoutbreaks/COVID-19
In the United States, we talk a lot about “equality.” But for all of us to have a fair and just opportunity to live our healthiest lives, we need to talk about “equity.” The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) provides the following definition: “Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.”
**Think nutrition.** The healthiest meals emphasize whole grains, vegetables and fruits. Serve them in the greatest amounts. Meat portions should be smaller. This will save money and help keep dietary saturated fat in check. For more information visit Nutrition.org.

**Practice positive stress management strategies.** Walk the dog, call a friend, soak in the tub or cuddle your kids. Skip the alcohol, tobacco and drugs.

**Stick with your routine as much as you can.** Go to bed and get up in the morning on your usual schedule. Eat meals at regular times. Find ways to exercise away from the gym. Do yoga in the living room, trim the hedge, have a scavenger hunt in the backyard with your kids toss a ball or play tag as a family. For more information visit Nutrition.org.

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**VCU Massey Cancer Center Outreach**

- Danville Outreach Office
- Lawrenceville Outreach Office
- Petersburg Outreach
- Richmond Office