

Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

LHA Training Lights the Way to Good Health

Lay health advisors (LHAs) in Beaufort, Bertie and Martin Counties headed to the classroom last summer and fall to study new advising techniques and expand their knowledge about cancer risks and early detection. LHA trainees were full of praise for NC-BCSP's updated LHA curriculum. Barbara Council, a new Martin County LHA, said she highly recommends the training, and added, "Learning about ways to communicate with women was so informative. I apply it to everything."

The new training program includes activities designed so all the lay health advisors, ranging in ages from their 20's to their 80's, can participate fully. The curriculum also celebrates the strong commitment of NC-BCSP LHAs to spiritual health. Each training session opens and closes with a prayer. Then, after studying cancer statistics, risk factors and screening recommendations, the LHAs learn to practice stage-based advising strategies in a spiritual context. For women who have never had a mammogram, LHAs learn to *Witness* about the benefits. For women who know the benefits of screening but for one reason or

another are not complying with screening recommendations, LHAs *Light the Way* on how to overcome barriers. Finally, for women who are being screened routinely, LHAs offer encouragement and *Praise!* According to Martin County LHA Sennie Harrell, the new advising strategy "gives us a way to really put women at ease. I've been talking to this woman who's really reluctant. But, from the training, we know how to talk to someone like that!"



Retrained Bertie LHA Estella Simons shows off her educational necklace.

In Beaufort County, where the rate of mammography use remains low compared to surrounding counties, the training focused on honing LHAs' advising skills to promote mammography among "harder-to-reach" women. In Bertie and Martin Counties, however, the

training program was expanded to promote Pap testing as well as mammography. Black women are twice as likely as White women to develop cervical cancer and more than two times as likely to die from this cancer.

NC-BCSP's updated training program for Martin and Bertie County LHAs includes information about risk factors for breast and cervical cancer, how often women should be screened, and how to counsel women to get Pap smears and mammograms using the stages of change theory. The curriculum included information about female anatomy and a video of a Pap test being performed. Ms. Harrell described these aspects of the training as "absolutely necessary" and went on to explain, "Women are going to ask you questions, and you need to know what you're talking about."

LHA Training	1
Spotlight on Martin County	2-3
Mammography Users' Survey Results	4
Tell-A-Friend Campaigns	5
Blue Cross Blue Shield Survey	5
Dancers Fund NC-BCSP Outreach	6
Recent Publications	7
Students Focus on Provider Education	7
Announcing NC-BCSP Website	8

Spotlight on Martin County: Lay Health Advisors...

What do the numbers 71 and 70 mean in eastern North Carolina? In Martin County, 71 is the percentage of African American women who have had a mammogram in the past two years; 70 percent is the national goal of Healthy People 2010 for regular mammography screening. How has Martin County managed to exceed the Healthy People screening goal years ahead of schedule? Through the work of dedicated lay health advisors!

Shirley Respass is one LHA whose high levels of energy and enthusiasm are typical of Martin County's busy LHA groups. Martin County LHAs sponsor many events and Ms. Respass participates in all of them. According to Martin County Community Outreach Specialist Eva Hill, "If a function is going on in the county, Shirley always calls me to see if there is anything she can do."

Ms. Respass' untiring support doesn't come as a surprise to those who know her. As a member of Mount Zion Holiness Church, she serves in many ways. She is a church trustee, vice-president of the pastor aid club, secretary of the women's fellowship group, member and treasurer of the senior choir, and a member of the missionary and program committees. She's even the church's interior decorator!

Talking to women isn't a new skill for Ms. Respass. Since she retired as an operator at the telephone company, she has combined her soothing voice with her LHA knowledge to encourage many women to get mammograms.

Another remarkable woman is Ethel Blanks of Hamilton, NC. According to LHA Nellie Council,



Shirley Respass



Ethel Blanks

"Ethel has innovative ideas that are very good. We knew her outreach to touch her sisters with our message would be broad."

Ms. Blanks volunteers with the Hamilton Election Board and works as a nurse's aide at Hamilton Baptist retirement home. She is active at Sycamore Baptist Church, where she serves as chair of the Community Outreach and the Vacation Bible School, is co-superintendent of the Sunday School, and sings in the senior choir. She performs at LHA gatherings, bringing everyone to their feet. Ms. Blanks embodies a message from one of her favorite songs that says serving others "don't cost much."

Ms. Respass and Ms. Blanks are among the 49 inspired and energetic Martin County LHAs (turn to Page 6 for a complete list). As a group each year, Martin LHAs organize walking teams for the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life. In the past five years, they have raised \$20,000 for cancer research and public awareness. In 2001, Martin LHAs distributed 10,000 church bulletin

inserts with early detection messages to more than 24 area churches in recognition of Easter, Women's Day, Men's Day and National Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October. They take every opportunity to bring the

message of cancer awareness to their communities.

Exceeding the Healthy People goal by a percentage point isn't a place to stop, it's the beginning of their new goal — 100% of all women getting screened as recommended! 📌

LHAs take every opportunity to bring the message of cancer awareness to their communities.

...and Friends of NC-BCSP

"No woman is an island..." to paraphrase John Donne. The same holds true for the North Carolina Breast Cancer Screening Program. NC-BCSP successes have grown naturally from the strong bonds of connection between the project's network of caring, outgoing LHAs and all the women they know across five counties. Equally important are strong linkages between the LHA network and local agencies. Working in the background and giving the LHAs center-stage are organizations that provide services and assistance that sometimes go unnoticed. So, we take this opportunity to extend a public thank you.

Martin-Tyrrell-Washington District Health Department, most recently under the leadership of Health Director Keith Patton, has been a steady resource for our program since 1993. The health department has provided office space and material support for Community Outreach Specialists serving its three county district. Likewise, when the health department needs to get the word out about one of its public health initiatives, they know they can count on NC-BCSP lay health advisors to help them.

If the health department has been our project's right hand, then Pastor Lula Brown and **New Fellowship Christian Church (DOC)** in Williamston has been the left hand. This church provides meeting space for our large group gatherings, including monthly Make Today Count self-help groups and the Spring

Gala for breast cancer survivors. Pastor Brown, a trained LHA, has made it her mission to bring breast health into the public discussion.

A relatively new community-based organization that is promoting NC-BCSP's message is the **New Life Women's Leadership Project**, headed by Donna Dudley. *New Life* helps women enhance their spiritual, political, and economic development.

Several staff and volunteers from *New Life* participated in recent LHA trainings. After being trained as LHAs, they hosted "house parties" to pitch information about breast and cervical cancer risks and screening benefits. Ms. Dudley explains, "House parties are like the old Tupperware parties, except instead of selling Tupperware we're

providing education and support. Meeting people in an arena that they understand and feel comfortable in allows them to listen and really hear our message."

Other Martin County organizations we count on are: the **Senior Center** in Jamesville, **Williams Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church**, **New**

Technology and Business Center, and **Martin General Hospital**, all in Williamston. The **Bertie-Martin-Washington Community Development Corporation (CDC)** has also provided meeting space; their administrative assistant, Lynette Collins, serves on our Community Advisory Group and has been trained as an LHA. 🍷



Representatives of key Martin County organizations at a recent meeting on institutionalizing the LHA network, from left to right, Barbara Owens, Delsie Williams, Donna Dudley, Jo Anne Earp, Keith Patton, and Terry Botts.

Thank you to all the agencies and people who are helping Martin County women stay healthy!

Mammography Users' Survey Results

NC-BCSP recently completed a report describing the results of a survey it conducted at 10 eastern NC radiology centers in the winter of 2000. This was the third administration of the survey, which was carried out at the same radiology centers in 1997 and 1994. Here we present some of the major findings. To request a copy of the complete report, contact us by phone (919-966-7971) or email (bcsp@unc.edu).

Although Black women were still less likely in 2000 to have had a prior mammogram than White women, the gap between Black and White decreased over time. Since this survey is limited to women who have initiated mammography, the rate of past use reported by both groups is high. [Note: these numbers are not age-adjusted; N(1994) = 1111; N(1997) = 1345; N(2000) = 884.]

Figure 1: Women who reported having a prior mammogram

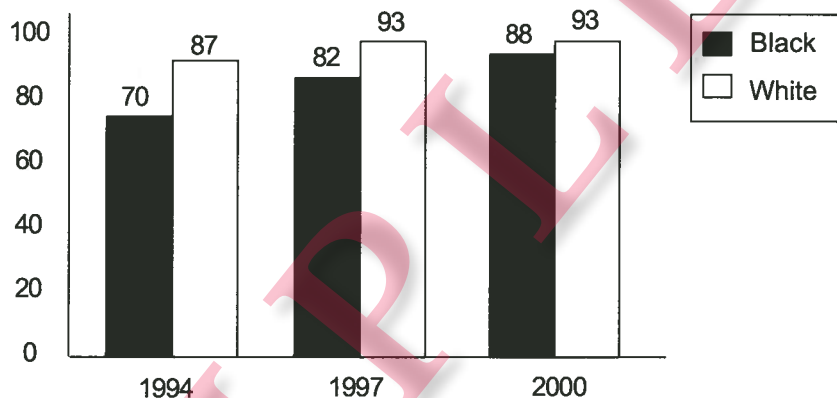
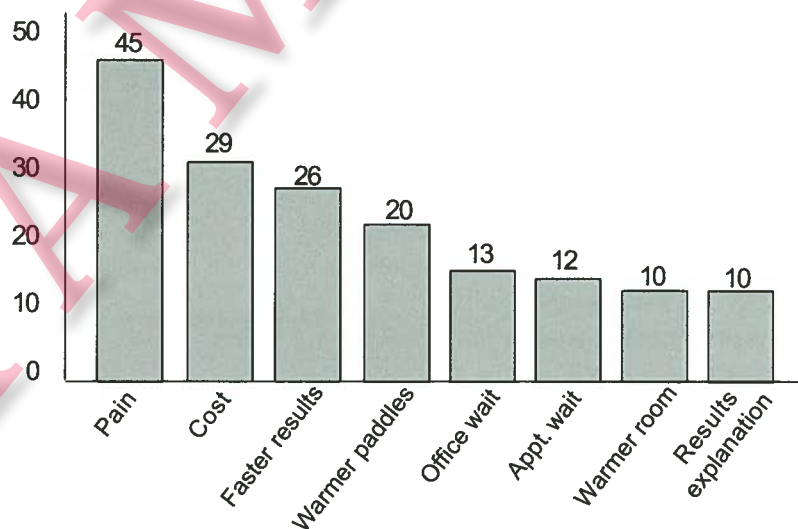


Figure 2: What women would change about getting a mammogram

Figure 2 shows results from all respondents; only small differences by race were observed. Those differences were: cost (26% Black vs. 31% White); having warmer paddles (26% Black vs. 17% White); shortening the wait time for an appointment (10% Black vs. 13% White); and having the room warmer (13% Black vs. 10% White).



Creative Ways to Spread the Word

NC-BCSP is always looking for creative ways to spread the word about cancer prevention and early detection through mammography and Pap testing. This year we created informational inserts for church bulletins. The fliers link health promotion messages to spirituality. During special health events and holidays, such as Minority Health Week, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and Women's Health Week, our LHAs and COSs distributed a total of 25,000 church bulletins in over 110 churches. 🙏

Beaufort County Tell-A-Friend Campaign a Success

The American Cancer Society (ACS), Beaufort County Health Department, and NC-BCSP teamed up last fall to give a boost to mammography rates in Beaufort County. Fifteen women, including many NC-BCSP community outreach specialists (COSs) and lay health advisors, trained to become volunteer coordinators for the ACS *Tell-A-Friend* project, a breast cancer education and outreach telephone campaign. Launched ten years ago, *Tell-A-Friend* now operates in every state, and has been carried out in housing projects, churches, women's service sororities and synagogues. Dawn Bergmire-Sweat, the Regional Cancer Control Director at ACS in Raleigh, says, "It has been interesting and a learning experience to see how the face of *Tell-A-Friend* is different from place to place. It's been successfully adapted to many different types of communities and enabled ACS to reach more diverse groups of women."

Tell-A-Friend volunteers are asked to call women they know to talk about the benefits of breast self-exam, clinical breast exam, and mammography. Callers are asked to set a personal goal of convincing at least five women over 40 years of age to have a mammogram. After making their initial calls, volunteers follow up with each woman by telephone to make sure she scheduled an appointment for screening. Finally, each caller submits a log of completed calls to ACS for mailing annual mammogram reminder letters to all *Tell-A-Friend* participants.

In September, 2001, about two weeks after being trained as a *Tell-A-Friend* coordinator, Beaufort County COS Mary Gurley organized NC-BCSP's first LHA-led *Tell-A-Friend* campaign. Ms. Gurley recruited and trained seven LHAs from Aurora, a

small town in Beaufort County, to be callers. These seven LHAs phoned a total of 92 women! By the end of the campaign, 43 of those women said they had gotten a mammogram. And, of those, 27 said it was their first mammogram.

Launched ten years ago, Tell-A-Friend now operates in every state, and has been carried out in housing projects, churches, women's service sororities and synagogues.

LHA Mary Michelle Hill, who is credited with calling 20 women, praised *Tell-A-Friend* as a natural way for LHAs to extend their outreach activities. "The phone is a good method," said Ms. Hill, "so are fliers. But, getting out among the people is the best." Yet despite the obvious advantages of face-to-face interaction, Ms. Hill

acknowledged that it is not always feasible. In large, sparsely populated counties such as Beaufort, *Tell-A-Friend* can be a powerful outreach tool. "More LHAs should do phone campaigns," Ms. Hill added, "We need to stress how imperative it is to get the word out." 📞

Blue Cross Blue Shield

Patient Survey Benefits NC-BCSP

Thank you Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC) and its members for the unexpected gift of \$1,552! The company's Department of Quality Management, responsible for encouraging the use of appropriate preventive health screening and health counseling services, noted that the rate of mammography use by its members had held steady at 80.4% for the past two years. Although this rate is fairly high compared to national statistics, BCBSNC wanted to find out what it would take to nudge mammography use a few percentage points higher. Plus, the company lacked information about what its members think about other women's health issues, such as menopause and osteoporosis.

Continued on Page 7

LHA Training, Continued from Page 1



Beaufort LHAs have fun while learning about the stages of change theory.

Returning LHAs were just as enthusiastic about the revised training as the newcomers. Goldie Evans, a long-time Bertie County LHA, said coming back for the updated training was definitely worthwhile. As a retired nurse, Ms. Evans is already knowledgeable about breast and cervical cancer. But she enjoyed learning how to counsel women more effectively. She also feels enthusiastic about the number of younger women being trained as LHAs; they add to the “energy, zeal and enthusiasm” that are trademarks of NC-BCSP lay health advisors. The LHA training manual will be available later this year through the NC-BCSP website: <http://bcsp.med.unc.edu>. 🌟

Pink Ribbons Dancers Bring Hope to NC Women

The 11th performance of the Pink Ribbons Project/ Dancers in Motion Against Breast Cancer played to a nearly full house last September at the historic Carolina Theater in Durham. Just nine days after September 11th, nationally renowned dancers from across the country found their way to the Triangle where they joined local dancers to deliver an evening of outstanding performances.

Fifty-seven thousand dollars were raised to benefit local organizations including the North Carolina Breast Cancer Screening Program and the Sentinel Lymph Node Program, both based at the University of North Carolina’s Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Since its first performance in 1995, the Pink Ribbons Project has raised nearly \$400,000 nationwide for breast cancer education, screening, and treatment. Their donation to NC-BCSP of \$12,000 will have a direct and positive impact on women in eastern North Carolina. This gift will help pay for transportation to mammograms and treatment, and help maintain NC-BCSP’s current level of outreach and education for another year. 🌟

Martin County LHAs

Mary Andrews	Barbara Council*	Sennie Harrell*	Naomi Robinson*
Minnie Andrews	Nellie Council	Delores Higgs	Emily Rogers
Eleanor Barber	Karen Daniels*	Joyce Hooper	Betty Simmons
Vivian Benjamin	Iris Davis	Patricia Horne*	Fannie Slade
Ethel Blanks	Marian Davis*	Laurie Irwin-Pinkley*	Louvenia Slade
Shirley Boston*	Juanita Downey	Rhoda James*	Joyce Smith*
Ann Brown*	Donna Dudley*	Brenda Moore*	Dillie Staton
Lula Brown	Gladys Duggins*	Marjorie Moore*	Eva Ward
Margaret Brown	Brenda Everett*	Lillie Mae Peele*	Mary Way
Jackie Carr	Geraldine Bell Frazier	Inez Pitt	Doris Whitehead*
Rudy Chandler	Gloria Gilliam*	Mary Raynard	Priscella Whitehurst*
Lynette Collins*	Carlean Govan*	Shirley Respass*	Jannie Whitfield
			Mary Woolard*

* Completed training in both breast and cervical health.

The Latest NC-BCSP Publications

- ★ Earp, J.A., Eng, E., O'Malley, M.S., Altpeter, M., Rauscher, G., Mayne, L., Mathews, H.F., Lynch, K.S., and Qaqish, B. (2002). "Increasing use of mammography among older, rural African American women: Results from a community trial." *American Journal of Public Health*, 92(4): 646-654.
- ★ Bishop, C.M., Earp, J.A., Eng, E., Lynch, K.S. (2002). "Implementing a natural helper lay health advisor program: Lessons learned from unplanned events." *Health Promotion Practice*, 3(2):233-244.
- ★ Cummings, D.M., Earp, J.A., and Mayne, L. (2002). "Disparities in mammography screening in rural areas: Analysis of county differences." *The Journal of Rural Health*.
- ★ Rauscher, G., Earp, J.A., and O'Malley, M. S. (2002). "How consistently do women report lifetime mammograms at successive interviews?" *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 22(1): 8-14.
- ★ Moyer, C.A., Lennartz, H., Moore, A., Earp, J.A., and Viadro, C.I. (2001). "Expanding the role of mammographers: A training strategy to enhance the mammography experiences of older, rural low-income women." *Breast Disease*, 13: 13-19.

Blue Cross Blue Shield, Continued from Page 5

To answer these questions, the company mailed a survey to over 3,400 women, a sample of its adult female managed care members. Instead of enclosing the usual key chain or refrigerator magnet as an incentive, Blue Cross Blue Shield offered to donate \$1 to NC-BCSP for every survey that was turned in. BCBSNC will use the data from 1,552 women who responded to upgrade services and

patient education. The survey will reveal what sources of health information and communication channels BCBSNC female members prefer and how the company can encourage mammography use by women who are not currently being screened. NC-BCSP will use the funds generated by the survey to continue development of an educational curriculum for physicians about counseling patients for mammography. 📌

Grad Students Focus on Provider Education



Jenny Koenig

Jenny Koenig is a graduate student in the Department of Health Behavior and Health Education in UNC's School of Public Health. Since joining the NC-BCSP team last year, the focus of Jenny's work has been on developing educational materials to promote effective physician counseling about mammography. Her work will contribute to a three-phase curriculum, including a brochure, presentation, and audiotape, that will be pretested with physicians this summer. Jenny also led LHA training sessions in Beaufort and Bertie Counties.

Ingrid H. Morris, also a UNC graduate student in Health Behavior and Health Education, is assisting with the development of training materials for health care providers and with the analysis of NC-BCSP's cohort data. Prior to working with NC-BCSP, Ingrid was a health educator at Kaiser Permanente in northern California. At Kaiser she led classes and offered individual counseling on chronic diseases, including diabetes, high cholesterol, and asthma. She also assisted people with weight management, quitting smoking, and stress management. 📌



Ingrid Morris

Visit us on-line!

The North Carolina Breast Cancer Screening Program launched its website this past fall. The site contains information about the project, our lay health advisors, past newsletter issues, publications, and links to other cancer resources.

One fun and educational aspect of the website is an interactive version of our beaded necklace, where people can learn the significance of different size beads simply by pointing at them on the screen!

Check us out at
<http://bcsp.med.unc.edu>

The **NC-BCSP Newsletter** is a publication of the North Carolina Breast Cancer Screening Program at the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center. **Editor: Karen Toll.** For more information about NC-BCSP, contact Dr. Jo Anne Earp or Alexis Moore at (919)966-7971; NC-BCSP, CB#7295, Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, UNC, Chapel Hill, NC, 27599-7295; email: bcsp@unc.edu.

North Carolina Breast Cancer Screening Program
Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center
CB #7295
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-7295

Address Service Requested

Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Eastern Carolina Agencies Lead LHAs after NC-BCSP Study Ends

From start to finish, helping people stay healthy has been the main goal of the North Carolina Breast Cancer Screening Program. With strong ties to several eastern North Carolina communities, NC-BCSP has never confined its mission to a set of research aims. The research project has been occupied with the important job of translating scientific knowledge into practical recommendations and feasible programs that can bring lasting health benefits, especially to rural African American women.

As an important part of its study, NC-BCSP has recruited and trained more than 200 LHAs in Beaufort, Bertie, Martin, Washington and Tyrrell Counties. These LHAs have helped African American women become better informed about breast and cervical cancer and more involved in seeking appropriate screening. LHA-led outreach and education have paved the way to earlier cancer detection, diagnosis and treatment in these counties.

Local leaders have applauded the LHAs' success in increasing breast cancer screening rates. Positive results from the LHA initiative have also prompted others to start similar programs elsewhere. Today countless independent LHA groups are active across the U.S. addressing a broad range of health issues. Lay

health advising has become recognized as one of the most effective and culturally-appropriate strategies for increasing access to health care and promoting new health behaviors in communities that have not received adequate care in the past.

NC-BCSP's ten-year study of LHAs' effectiveness for increasing mammography use among rural African American women ended March 31, 2003. Most of the



Martin and Washington County LHAs continue with New Life

LHAs have decided to carry on the mission of NC-BCSP under the leadership of new organizations. Several lay health advisor groups that originated as part of the NC-BCSP study are now being administered by two agencies in eastern North Carolina. Albemarle Regional Health Services, a district health department, has embraced NC-BCSP's lay health advisors in Bertie County. Martin and

Washington County lay health advisors will be led by New Life Women's Leadership Project, a private non-profit agency dedicated to helping low-income, rural Black women gain more clout to shape health and economic policies in North Carolina.

At both agencies, the LHA program is expected to be a comfortable fit with community outreach and education programs that are already in place and aimed at eliminating racial disparities in health. Albemarle Regional Health Services has appointed two health educators, Tashara James and LaKeisha Johnson, to lead the Bertie County LHAs starting April 1, 2003. To help them prepare for their new responsibilities, the two health educators worked closely with NC-BCSP Community Outreach Specialists Lucille Bazemore and

New Agencies Lead LHAs.....	1
From the Desk of the Principal Investigator.....	2
Working with Physicians	3
Community Outreach Specialists	4-7



Jo Anne Earp, ScD

From the Desk of the Principal Investigator...

NC-BCSP: A True Example of Teamwork

In 1992, I set out with several researchers from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and from East Carolina University to accomplish a challenging goal: to rigorously evaluate a theory-based community intervention designed to improve breast cancer screening rates and change community norms surrounding breast cancer. Ultimately, we wanted to improve the health of African American women in eastern North Carolina. Ten years later, this goal is only one of the many accomplishments of the North Carolina Breast Cancer Screening Program, which has grown to be much more than a research project.

NC-BCSP originated as a partnership between the communities of eastern North Carolina and two universities. Blending the existing strengths of the community with the expertise of University researchers, together we created a lay health advisor program to break the silence around breast cancer that existed in the early 1990s among older African Americans. Volunteer lay health advisors, who generously gave their time and energy to help others, provided the womanpower for this effort. These LHAs, strong

women intertwined in their community, found joy and pride in helping others.

Bolstering the LHAs were the Community Outreach Specialists, true champions of our cause. These women identified, recruited, and trained new LHAs and kept existing volunteers motivated and well-supported.

As with any project, we had to overcome administrative obstacles and, at times, retrace our steps; like any volunteers, NC-BCSP advisors faced setbacks and were sometimes discouraged. But none of us ever gave up. Because of this perseverance, NC-BCSP has been transformed, ten years later, from a research project to a community program, embraced by the volunteer LHAs as their own and carried forward by community-based organizations. Overall the program has demonstrated that teamwork makes it possible to create a sustainable community resource. I would like to personally thank all the volunteers and community organizations as well as the many students and faculty at UNC and ECU who learned from, and contributed to, this project. Although I am nostalgic as the "on the ground" research aspect of NC-BCSP comes to a close, I'm excited to see what its second decade, as a service delivery program, will bring to the women "down east" whose program this now becomes. 🌹

Thank You Funders

American Cancer Society
Avon Breast Health Access
Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust
Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center
National Cancer Institute
Pittsburg Foundation
Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation
Triangle Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Foundation

Working with Physicians to Make a Difference

"I need a mammogram? My doctor never told me I did!" is a frequent refrain heard by many NC-BCSP lay health advisors. Lack of physician recommendation – whether perceived or real – is the number one reason reported by women for not having a mammogram. Research indicates that the single most compelling factor associated with mammography use is physician recommendation.

Boosting breast cancer screening rates is a complex challenge. Not only is it important to inform women of the need for mammography and to help them overcome barriers such as fear of the procedure, it is also important to tackle institutional barriers to breast cancer screening. One of those barriers is lack of a clear recommendation from a physician. "How a physician counsels a patient for mammography is extremely important," explains Dr. Jo Anne Earp, NC-BCSP Principal Investigator. "Physicians are pressed for time in the current era of insurance requirements and reduced reimbursements. There are new, effective counseling techniques physicians and other health care providers can learn. These strategies will enable them to compress effective counseling into a minute or two of the patient visit."

Nearly 40 physicians, researchers, and public health professionals gathered at UNC's Lineberger Cancer Center for a pilot demonstration of *Time to Make a Difference: Quick and Effective Mammography Counseling*. This curriculum for physicians and other primary care providers builds on work by researchers at Brown University.

The Komen Foundation partnered with NC-BCSP to refine that curriculum into a three-phase learning experience that can be adapted to different educational settings. Participants in the pilot first received a brochure inviting them to the presentation and explaining why mammography recommendations make

a difference. This pilot group was also asked to complete and return a brief form evaluating the brochure. On July 11, NC-BCSP staff led a training session using PowerPoint and video focusing on quick and effective counseling techniques for mammography screening based on the stages of change model and the 5 A's medical interviewing model. Following the presentation, the audience was treated to a live performance of a segment from an audiotape script designed as a call-in radio show for physicians, reinforcing key concepts and skills from the presentation.

Evaluations of the event were positive. The audience enjoyed the video portion of the training, which showed a series of interactions between an older, African American female patient and her primary care physician. They commented that it was "well-acted," "true-to-life," and "gave concrete examples in how to employ strategies and address patient barriers." The presentation overall was described as having "excellent content," and as "very effective in teaching physicians a simplified version of the stages of change model."

NC-BCSP recently received funding from the Triangle Race for the Cure, the local affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, to complete the *Time to Make a Difference* curriculum. The funds will be used to produce a 40-minute audio component that will supplement the existing curriculum.

Once the audio materials are complete, the next step will be a formal evaluation of the entire *Time to Make a Difference* curriculum package to determine if it leads to higher rates of mammography screening. NC-BCSP is currently exploring options with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina to evaluate the curriculum with physician practices across North Carolina. ■

Latest NC-BCSP Publication

Mayne, L. and Earp, J.A. (2003). Initial and Repeat Mammography Screening: Different Behaviors/ Different Predictors. *Journal of Rural Health*, 19 (1): 63-71.

NC-BCSP Community Outreach Specialists...

Bernice McElrath Makes Every Day Count

Make Today Count, established in 1997, grew out of Bernice McElrath's vision to have "a place where cancer survivors could come together as a group... where we could talk, laugh, and cry without any feelings of shame, embarrassment, or discomfort." With help from NC-BCSP, Ms. McElrath started a breast cancer support group in Martin County and then expanded to Tyrrell and Washington Counties. *Make Today Count* opened its doors to breast cancer survivors, from newly diagnosed to 50-year survivors. These survivors have been meeting monthly to offer comfort, information, and encouragement to each other.

Ms. McElrath also worked with women one-on-one. She often made phone calls or home visits to women needing extra support or who were not feeling well enough to attend meetings. She also drove women to be fitted for prostheses. Ms. McElrath has been described by the women whose lives she has touched as "an angel...like a mother...mentor...inspiration... the reason I'm here today."

Make Today Count represents an enduring tradition of caring among cancer survivors and their advocates. Ms. McElrath notes that the *Make Today Count* self-help groups were always a team effort. She called the meetings, but the real work of supporting and caring for each other came from everyone in the group. "They have done quite a lot of the work themselves. I wouldn't have been able to accomplish much without their support," she explained. Some of the women who have participated in *Make Today Count* will continue to meet and support one another. As a result of their participating in the program, many of the women are locally recognized as breast cancer survivors who can be called upon to offer friendship to support women who are newly diagnosed.

The staff of NC-BCSP gives its deepest thanks to Ms. McElrath for her outstanding contributions to *Make Today Count* and her considerable efforts to help breast cancer survivors in eastern North Carolina.



Bernice McElrath

You Can Always Count on Mary Gurley



Mary Gurley

"I just love Mary Gurley – and I want to keep her here in Beaufort County!" exclaimed Barbara Paul, the Beaufort County Health Department's Breast and Cervical Cancer Control (BCCCP) Coordinator. Ms. Gurley, initially an NC-BCSP lay health advisor and outreach worker for BCCCP, became Beaufort County's Community Outreach Specialist in 1995.

People who work with Ms. Gurley say that she can talk to anyone about anything at any time and make them feel comfortable. Brenda Harris, who also serves as a COS in Beaufort County, says her favorite part of working with Ms. Gurley is going to health fairs. "First we get our booth set up, then we look like 'pros' talking about breast cancer. We give out a lot of materials to people, but for something special, like a beaded

necklace, Ms. Gurley makes them answer three questions in a row before she gives it away! She's just like a teacher, but it's a lot of fun!" Some of Ms. Gurley's ease in dealing with others undoubtedly came from her years spent as an elementary teacher in the Beaufort and Craven County public school systems.

One of Ms. Gurley's favorite NC-BCSP memories is the time she convinced a woman in her early sixties with a family history of breast cancer to get her very first mammogram. After six months of experiencing Ms. Gurley's continuous encouragement, the woman finally agreed to get a mammogram. Ms. Gurley remembers that when the woman came out of the room after getting her mammogram, she said "If I'd known that's all there was to it, I would have done this long ago. I don't need you anymore – I can do this on my own now!" That's what NC-BCSP is all about!

Thank You and Best Wishes!

Eva Butler Hill, A Long Time Leader



Eva Hill

Martin County LHA Shirley Respass will never forget her first encounter with Eva Butler Hill in 1997. "I was walking down the street and this woman began telling me about the lay health advisor program. I said, 'That sounds nice, let me think about it and call you.' But she wouldn't stop talking! She followed me

down the street until I said yes! When Ms. Hill starts talking to you about doing something, you might as well be on a leash, because she just keeps following you until you say yes!"

To say that Ms. Hill is a "people-person" is an understatement. She began working at NC-BCSP in 1994 as a Martin County COS. In 1999 her region expanded to include Washington and Tyrell as well. "Over 9 years and across 3 counties, Ms. Hill has always dedicated herself fully to promoting health and volunteerism. The NC-BCSP team has been mighty lucky to have someone of Ms. Hill's caliber," says Denise Brewster, Regional Coordinator of NC-BCSP. Ms. Hill says that it's the people she works with who inspire her every day. "What's kept me afloat all these years is the people I've met. The LHAs trust me, and they want to make a difference. I've enjoyed meeting

people and getting them into the program, because I have met so many wonderful, dedicated people."

Ms. Hill isn't the only one in her house with an affinity for helping people, however. Her husband, Gary, serves as her unofficial assistant on a regular basis. According to Ms. Respass, "He doesn't miss any event. We call on him for a lot of things, and he's always willing to help out. They're quite a couple, the two of them together, the way they do everything they can to help a person."

It's no surprise that Ms. Hill intends to find new ways to lend a hand once her near-decade at NC-BCSP comes to an end. She serves on the board of directors of New Life Women's Leadership Project, the organization that has adopted the Martin and Washington County LHA programs. Ms. Hill will remain actively involved in the LHA groups serving these two counties as a volunteer and as a mentor to the new staff leading the LHA program. She is excited to be helping with this transition. The LHAs and New Life are just as thrilled that Ms. Hill will continue to provide leadership and vision to the LHA program as it blazes new trails leading to better health and better access to high quality health care for eastern North Carolina women.



Brenda Harris, A Life Full of Energy

When Brenda Harris came on board with NC-BCSP, she was already familiar with community work from her previous job as a Federal Emergency Management and Assistance

representative. She felt prepared to advocate for mammograms. What she didn't realize was how committed she would become to spreading the word about cancer screening.

As a health and fitness buff, Ms. Harris enjoys helping women take charge of their health. "When you go to churches and hand out materials, you see how people light up. It's the excitement that comes from giving people information to help them take care of themselves." Likewise, about an October meeting

where LHAs met to prepare for a post office campaign, Ms. Harris said, "You could feel the energy in the room as the ladies made ribbons to hand out, knowing that they would be touching other people's lives and giving them power."

After NC-BCSP draws to a close in Beaufort County, Ms. Harris will continue to focus her boundless energy. She's returning to school at East Carolina University for a degree in health and exercise, she's working full-time at the R. G. Silver Stone Crisis Center in Beaufort County, and she's finding more time to work out! Her long-term goals to improve rural women's health includes opening a health center. "I love to work out! It makes you look better, but I do it so I'll live a long time and feel good, too."

Community Outreach Specialists, continued from Page 4**Lucille Bazemore,
Getting Things Done and Done Right**

Lucille Bazemore, a retired associate superintendent and elementary school teacher in the Bertie County School System, is revered for her leadership and commitment to improving the lives of others. Joining the project in 1993, Ms. Bazemore was a “ground breaker” and was just what the project needed at the time. She helped launch the recruitment and training of LHAs. She went on to become a coalition builder bringing together several state and local organizations to address breast health.

Eva Butler Hill comments about Ms. Bazemore, “The only way to describe her, as a person, is that you would be honored just to know her. And everyone who knows her feels so committed to her. She draws people with her kindness. Of all the friends I’ve made on this project, and I’ve made so many, I have the highest respect for that lady.” Bertie Rural Health Association Director Al Thompson also expresses appreciation for Ms. Bazemore’s achievements in spreading the word about mammography. “Ms. Bazemore has been a joy to be around and a blessing to the women of Bertie County,” Al Thompson recounts.

Ms. Bazemore’s ability to touch the lives of others and motivate LHAs prompted NC-BCSP to name its lay health advisor award after her. The Lucille Bazemore Outstanding Lay Health Advisor award recognizes LHAs from across the NC-BCSP five county region who have made significant contributions. Winners of the Lucille Bazemore award include:

- Nellie Council and Willie Bazemore (1997)
- Lillie Mae Peele (1998)
- Gladys Duggins (1999)

These women followed in Ms. Bazemore’s footsteps and demonstrated strong commitment and creativity in getting the message out about breast cancer.



**Lucille Bazemore (left)
Survilla Cherry (right)**

**Survilla Cherry,
Once a Teacher Always a Teacher**

Bertie County COS Survilla Cherry joined the project as many did – through her friendship with Lucille Bazemore. The working partnership between these two women goes back to their days as teachers in the county’s public school system. Ms. Cherry became the Bertie County COS in 1996 when Ms. Bazemore took a temporary leave due to illness. Since 1999, when Ms. Bazemore returned to work, she and Ms. Cherry have served as co-COSs in Bertie County.

As one of the original LHA training group, Ms. Cherry has been with the project since 1994. “I’d been coming to meetings for two years, always the first one there and staying after to help clean up. I thought I knew what I was getting into, but it turned out to be a lot more than just holding meetings and talking with the ladies once a month.” Although being a COS can be challenging, she’s happy she took the job because it’s provided her with many new friends and fine memories.

Ms. Cherry’s previous teaching experience was apparent when NC-BCSP launched its new LHA breast and cervical health training in 2001. At a training session for the staff, she impressed everyone with the way she commanded the audience’s attention while infusing a dry wit along the way. “Ms. Cherry was incredibly poised delivering the training. Her great sense of humor and ability as a COS made our training a success in Bertie County,” says Erin Kobetz, former NC-BCSP Research Associate.

As the LHA torch is passed from NC-BCSP to the Albemarle Health District, Ms. Cherry is again teaching, this time the Health District’s two new health educators about the ladies and reach of the LHA network. She plans to stay plenty busy with church activities. And she looks forward to running into her NC-BCSP acquaintances, at church, in town, and throughout the area, to catch up and remember the good times of NC-BCSP. ♡

New Agencies Lead LHAs, continued from Page 1

Survilla Cherry during the last several months of NC-BCSP. Ms. Bazemore says, "I've been observing these two new coordinators almost all year, and I am confident that they have a whole lot to give us. All of us are looking forward to working with them. This program will be in good hands."

New Life Women's Leadership Project is in the process of recruiting and training staff to coordinate the LHA groups based in Martin and Washington Counties. Eva Butler Hill, NC-BCSP's Community Outreach Specialist for Martin and Washington Counties from 1993-2003, serves on the New Life board of directors. Ms. Hill will meet routinely with New Life staff to ensure that the LHA program transfers smoothly. Ceremonies celebrating the LHA program's move from the university to New Life were held on February 13th and 14th in Washington and Martin Counties. The Bertie County LHAs celebrated their transition to Albemarle Regional Health Services on March 13th.

In Tyrrell County, the most rural of NC-BCSP's 5 counties, a small group of 6 LHAs held their last meeting in December 2002. Beaufort County LHAs met, perhaps for the last time, on March 8th to honor their nine years of community service as part of NC-BCSP. Barbara Paul, Adult Health Coordinator of the Beaufort County Health Department, Mary Mattheis, American Cancer Society Community Cancer Control Manager, and Susan Chase, Family and Consumer Specialist at the Beaufort County Cooperative Extension, also attended the meeting. They each pledged support for the Beaufort LHAs and committed to continuing to involve individual LHAs in volunteer opportunities through their agencies.



LHAs celebrate NC-BCSP's achievements

Speaking about how the NC-BCSP staff and volunteers felt about the end of NC-BCSP, Project Manager Alexis Moore said, "Any ending is difficult to confront, and we will all miss the surprisingly large and positive role that NC-BCSP has played in our lives. However, we also realize that the end of this project is also a reason to celebrate. We have demonstrated that community partnership interventions can help improve the health of rural African American women. But, best of all, the LHA program is being sustained and is already heading down promising new paths."

In Bertie, Martin and Washington Counties LHAs have formed new alliances with outstanding local agencies. They are working together to design and carry out new program aims for promoting health. For UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, NC-BCSP has come to represent the direct translation of research into public service for North Carolina residents.

Support for this type of community service has always been valued by Lineberger and is likely to receive increased emphasis. Lineberger and the UNC School of Public Health will continue to provide technical support and training as needed to the LHA programs that are now based at

Albemarle Regional Health Services and New Life Women's Leadership Project.

Thank you LHAs, for all your hard work and outstanding contributions over the years!

NC-BCSP Awards

The North Carolina Breast Cancer Screening Program won the Kathy Kerr Outstanding Health Education Project from the North Carolina Society For Public Health Education for making a significant contribution and commitment to excellence in the practice of health education.

Denise Brewster, MEd, CHES won the Outstanding Health Education award from the North Carolina Society For Public Health Education for her long history as a trusted leader in health education and health promotion as well as her high quality performance as NC-BCSP's Regional Coordinator.

Congratulations NC-BCSP and Denise!

The **NC-BCSP Newsletter** is a publication of the North Carolina Breast Cancer Screening Program at the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center. **Editor: Katherine Vatalaro.** For more information about NC-BCSP, contact Dr. Jo Anne Earp or Alexis Moore at (919)966-7971; NC-BCSP, CB#7295, Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, UNC, Chapel Hill, NC, 27599-7295; email: bcsp@unc.edu.

North Carolina Breast Cancer Screening Program
Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center
CB #7295
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-7295

Address Service Requested