



HBCU
WELLNESS
PROJECT

at Meharry Medical College

Raising the Bar to Healthy Lifestyles and Choices.



What is the HBCU Wellness Project?

Abbreviated from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), the HBCU Wellness Project is an intervention designed to utilize the human and social capital at Tennessee HBCUs to promote health and modify risks for chronic diseases among individuals living in the surrounding communities. The primary goal of the HBCU Wellness Project is to leverage educational and service-oriented resources at HBCUs to positively impact the health and well-being of Tennessee residents.

Project Objectives:

- Conduct needs assessments for local communities and campuses
- Enhance the capacity of faculty to integrate service learning into the curricula
- Recruit, train, and guide student health ambassadors to develop health and wellness projects to promote readiness for change
- Assess short and long term outcomes of service learning activities in communities of color
- Develop and maintain a pipeline of students of color interested in entering health professions workforce

The participating HBCUs are: Fisk University, Lane College, and LeMoyne-Owen College.



Healthy choices start

Student Health Ambassadors

Student Health Ambassadors (SHAs) are full time students who attend one of the participating Historically Black Colleges or Universities associated with the HBCU Wellness Project. SHAs are exposed to service learning that will enable them to work with local health and social service agencies in addition to serving as community representatives. In this role, SHAs will positively impact the health and well being of underserved community residents in culturally sensitive and culturally relevant ways.

SHAs Key Roles:

- SHAs are health promotion and disease prevention advocates
- SHAs are change agents who work with community partners and residents
- SHAs are trained to investigate key community health issues through extensive study.

“The HBCU Wellness Project not only taught me about health disparities, but I was also able to meet students from other colleges and incorporate ideas for our community projects.”

~ Nayriah Johnson

Student Health Ambassador
Lane College

Student Research

SHAs take pride in being able to touch the community through their work on disparities plaguing minority communities. As health promotion and disease prevention advocates, they disseminate health information on topics associated with health priority areas for communities of color, using evidence based methods shown to be effective in targeted communities. As part of their research, the SHAs participate in community and campus events to further increase their knowledge of a particular health disparity. With access to the community, SHAs are able to disseminate information on local resources that will provide guidance to the community participants. The local resources are usually nonprofit organizations that focus on particular disparities that affect minority communities. These organizations are identified as community partners.

The community partners help the SHAs identify underlying causes of health inequalities in communities of color. With partnership, the community partner is able to gain an independent perspective on their resources while giving the SHAs insight on their research. Together, the goal is to increase health protective behaviors in communities, empower residents through education, information and skills, and build activities that will lead to long-term solutions for social and/or environmental factors that contribute to disease development, disability and early death.



with our youth!

Service Learning

Service Learning is a system of structured learning opportunities and experiences in local communities that expose students to the real-life problems and concerns of stakeholders. Students become civically engaged through active participation, collaboration, problem solving, and providing community service. In this regard, students are given an opportunity to connect what they have learned in the classroom with their actual communities experiences and facilitate that connection through journaling and reflection. It differs from traditional learning because it:

- Strives to achieve a balance between service and learning objectives
- Places emphasis on addressing community concerns
- Involves community partners
- Emphasizes reciprocal communication and learning
- Emphasizes reflection
- Develops civic engagement and responsibility

Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR)

The SHAs are trained to incorporate community based participatory research into their studies. According to the Community Health Scholars Program, CBPR is a “collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings. CBPR begins with a research topic of importance to the community and has the aim of combining knowledge with action and achieving social change.”

“I became a **SHA** because I want to be able to **cater** to my community and other communities that look like mine; and the **research and resources** I’ve gained through this program will **help** me do that.”

~ **Ciera Gray**
Student Health Ambassador
LeMoyne-Owen College



The Impact

Where are they now?



Erin Malone

*Former Student Health Ambassador
Tennessee State University
Class of 2015*

“I am currently a Doctor of Dental Surgery and Doctor of Philosophy student in the Oral and Craniofacial Sciences Department at the University of California-San Francisco. The HBCU Wellness Project allowed me to explore my initial interest in health care. As a sophomore, the project put me in a health care environment where I was able to get hands on experience and learn how health disparities affect America. I feel the HBCU Wellness Project benefited me by guiding me through an IRB approved project during my undergrad years. Going through the process on how to create an educational intervention and executing the wellness project gave me early exposure to health care and qualitative research. I was able to use my experiences as a benefit to my applications and research experience. These influences even encouraged me to pursue translational research for my doctoral degree.

I ultimately want to practice, conduct research and teach at a dental school. I would love to practice and do research

in Tennessee, but dental schools in Tennessee are limited, and they tend to focus more on primary care, than research. Hopefully, if a job opportunity arises in Tennessee, I would consider it; otherwise I have to go where the job opportunities present themselves.

Either way, I hope the HBCU Wellness Project continues because I feel any person interested in health care should be encouraged to create a project. The project elicits community service, work related experience, and usually is a health disparity a person is passionate in. I feel being a great educator is the foundation to being a great medical provider. Also, all researchers should be familiar with the international review board process, as it is very similar to writing clinical research protocols and grant proposals. Most of all, the HBCU Wellness Project cultivates minorities to be change agents in health disparities influencing their communities. There is a disparity in health providers across America, and the Wellness Project helps to close that gap every year.” ■



Jacquelyn Favours

*Former Student Health Ambassador
Fisk University
Class of 2013*

"I currently serve as the Project Director for the research component of the Nashville Children Eating Well (CHEW) for Health Project in the Center for Prevention Research at Tennessee State University. The HBCU Wellness Project was a major turning point in my undergraduate career because it established a foundation for my future. The training provided me with knowledge in ethics, community-based participatory research (CBPR), Institutional Review Board (IRB) procedures, health disparities, policy, health communications and health promotion. As well, my time as a Student Health Ambassador within the program allowed me to give back to my HBCU and the local community through initiatives that targeted health disparities in minority populations, such as infant mortality. The HBCU Wellness Project taught me that there is more to health than just treatment and medicine. During the program, I developed an interest in prevention and went on to obtain a degree in public health. I believe the experience gave me a unique edge that

allowed me to excel academically and professionally. Today, I am equipped to help create healthier lifestyles in a society where prevention is now the primary focus in global health initiatives. I also plan to become more qualified as a public health practitioner by pursuing a Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) degree.

The HBCU Wellness Project offers a variety of options to students in various majors. Oftentimes, when students are interested in health they are directed to the medical profession in hopes of becoming a physician or dentist. Yet, the program allowed me to explore health in a way that I had not before, while also gaining practical experience. The HBCU Wellness Project provided knowledge, skills, and experience that are typically unprecedented on HBCU campuses in Tennessee. Ultimately, I hope to see this program in existence and fully-funded for years to come so other students aspiring to work in the health field will gain an opportunity that can help carve the path for their future career." ■



Preston L. Harris Jr.

*Former Student Health Ambassador
Fisk University/University of
Tennessee at Knoxville
Class of 2014*

"I am currently a second year dental student at Meharry Medical College's School of Dentistry in Nashville, TN. My experience with the HBCU Wellness Project greatly exposed me to the field of research, networking and the realm of public health. My focus during the HBCU Wellness Project stemmed from my high school experience working with Girls Incorporated on a project entitled I.M.P.A.C.T. (infant mortality public awareness campaign for Tennessee). As I participated in the program at Fisk University, my focus involved the male perspective, more specifically the ways in which males can affect the outcomes associated with infant mortality. This project afforded me the opportunity to collaborate with other public health professionals and find other plausible answers to reducing infant mortality related to my project focus. The impact of the HBCU Wellness Project provided me training in public speaking, organization, experience in outreach initiatives, exposure to public health organizations and professionals,

confidence in decision making, and the opportunity to gain access to health related topics presented by other scholars outside of my home university.

Often times, being at a small institution, particularly a small private institution like Fisk, it is really difficult to understand how much impact you have or rather what tools they have provided you to showcase to the entire world. Having programs like the HBCU Wellness Projects gives the institution and its students exposure to other top prestigious universities and allows students to believe that they are recognized and impactful. The Wellness Project should continue, in my opinion, because not only do I plan to complete dental school, but I am also planning to apply for the health policy program here at Meharry Medical College. I have not gathered my focus yet, but I can assure you that my confidence in providing care through public health is just as important as the service I plan to provide for underserved communities lacking dental care." ■

The Impact

Where are they now?



Carla Gibbs

*Former Student Health Ambassador
Tennessee State University
Class of 2015*

"I am currently a first year doctoral student at Meharry Medical College in the School of Graduate Studies and Research Department of Biochemistry and Cancer Biology, and I truly can't say enough about the HBCU Wellness Project. It is an experience that molded me personally and influenced my professional goals. From designing a community based participatory project to networking and engaging with other SHAs, the HBCU Wellness Project was a great opportunity for personal development. I became a participant in my early years at TSU. I was relatively naive and just starting to learn in-depth about the field of public health. Being that most issues in public health require a interdisciplinary approach, I appreciated the opportunity and accessibility to learn from many local leaders and experts, who came speak to the groups on different ways to tackle health disparities. Observing, first hand, the different roles of politicians, dentists, medical doctors, lawyers, researchers,

and social workers all working together in our community made me realize that it was also possible for me to be just as dynamic and industrious when tackling issues in health disparity.

The HBCU Wellness Project gave me tools for research and engaging the community that I still use today. Its amazing how years later, I can still recall the basic strategies of developing an IRB protocol (e.g. gathering research, creating surveys, and listing reputable sources) that I learned in the Summer Institute. The HBCU Wellness Project provides invaluable resources to students who are interested in gaining exposure to the realm of public health and health disparities. The HBCU Wellness Project is a major factor in training the next generation of student leaders who are driven to progress the health of our communities and our nation. I believe the way in which the HBCU Wellness Project reaches out to students, like myself, who desire to be agents of change, is one small but critical aspect to serving our underserved communities." ■



Cleydy Avila

*Former Student Ambassador
Knoxville College
Class of 2009*

"I am a RN Versant Resident in the Emergency Department at North Fulton Hospital in Roswell, Georgia. The HBCU Wellness Project introduced me to the field of Public Health and aroused a feeling of fulfillment from educating the community on my research projects.

I can honestly say that the HBCU Wellness Project played a major role in my decision to pursue a career in nursing. While attending spring symposiums, I was intrigued to learn about the different health disparities. After I graduated Knoxville College my original intent was to pursue a Master's in Public Health and then get a job at the CDC, WHO

or NIH. I went as far as interviewing with the director of Public Health at the University of Tennessee. My cousin's wife, who worked at NIH, informed me that she was the only person in her department without a medical degree and suggested that I obtain a nursing degree, then get back into Public Health. That is exactly what I did.

I want to see the HBCU Wellness Project continue because it promotes awareness of the inequalities that minority communities face. It creates advocates of health and most importantly, it influences student health ambassadors to be in the medical profession. I am living proof." ■



JoEllen Jarrett Jamison
*Student Health Ambassador
Lane College
Class of 2009*

"I received my bachelor of science degree in Biology from Lane College and upon completion of my doctor of pharmacy degree, I accepted a full-time position with Walgreens as a Pharmacist. My experiences with the HBCU Wellness Project influenced my decision to seek a career in which I can make a positive impact. A career where I can serve as a healthcare advocate that seeks to improve health outcomes and potentially reduce health disparities. My experience with the HBCU Wellness Project enhanced my resume and enhanced my pharmacy school application as I was able to document the experiences I encountered while being a student health ambassador. My experiences with the program and my desire to reduce health disparities provided me with the necessary skills to confidentially complete a research program that resulted in the development of two manuscripts that sought to determine if health disparities exist among Medicare part D beneficiaries. On a daily basis I utilize the communications skills that I developed while in the program, as pharmacists are one of the most accessible health professionals to the public.

During my two years as a student health ambassador I had the opportunity to create and implement a project that sought to reduce health disparities and potentially improve health outcomes among those that may experience barriers that may prevent them from receiving adequate healthcare services due to socioeconomic status, racial, and ethnic differences. During the developmental and implementation stage of my project, I had the chance to collaborate and form relationships with several national

organizations. For example, my project was based on reducing infant mortality. As a result I was able to collaborate with the Office of Minority Health, Tonya Lewis Lee and their 'Healthy Baby Begins With You' campaign. Not only did the HBCU Wellness Project allow me to form relationships with national organizations, it enhanced my writing and verbal communication skills as we had to prepare and present our abstracts to several different audiences. Not only was the HBCU Wellness Project beneficial to the community, it provided me with opportunity to develop skills that will last a lifetime.

I would love to see the HBCU Wellness Project continue, because it served as a stepping stone into my career. It provided me with numerous opportunities to travel and to meet others that seek to make a positive impact in our society. It enhanced my resume, improved my communication skills and allowed me to make a difference in someone's life. If the HBCU Wellness Project continues, it can potentially provide others with the opportunity to enhance skills that are needed to serve in various healthcare positions, just as it did for me. Healthcare is constantly evolving to meet the needs of our society; as a result, we need strong passionate healthcare professionals. The HBCU Wellness Project can prepare undergraduate students with an invaluable opportunity!" ■

The Impact

Where are they now?



Ashley Dortch

*Former Student Health Ambassador
LeMoyne-Owne College
Class of 2014*

"I graduated from LeMoyne Owen college with a Bachelors of Arts degree in Social Work, and I am currently enrolled in Master of Social Work program at Jackson State University in Jackson, MS. The HBCU Wellness Project has inspired me to become a change agent in the African American community. As a health ambassador, I discovered a passion for educating young women on infant mortality. My long term goal is to decrease the high rates of infant mortality and teen pregnancy through psycho-educational groups. I plan to facilitate groups composed of teenage girls who will be educated on prevention methods of infant mortality and provided with educational resources.

As a member of the HBCU Wellness Project, I was expected to complete a proposal and go through the IRB (Institutional Review Board) process. This has been beneficial to me in my current graduate studies. As an assignment in my Research Methods, I was required to submit a IRB application, proposal, and an intervention strategy. While some students in my cohort found this challenging, I was able to refer to the training I have received as a student health ambassador. My most memorable moments of being apart of the HBCU Wellness Project was attending spring symposiums. During the spring

symposiums I was given the opportunity to meet other students who were also doing research on health disparities. This was a great way for myself and other undergraduate students to network and share unique and effective intervention methods. This project sheds light on the health disparities that minorities face in impoverished communities. The HBCU Wellness Project should continue because it has allowed students to become the liaison between the community and doctors. This is beneficial because it is well known that there is a disconnect between patients and doctors. Student Health Ambassadors can be used as a tool to bridge the gap and help physicians educate community members on illnesses and diseases. Student participants of the HBCU Wellness Project have developed ongoing community partnerships with American Heart Association, Planned Parenthood, Department of Health, Community Gardens, and other community organizations." ■

Reaching the Community

Fisk University & LeMoyne-Owen College

HBCU Wellness Partnership Event



Fisk University and LeMoyne-Owen College SHAs participated in the 2015 Love's Healthy Start Festival located in Nashville, TN.

Lane College

HBCU Wellness Project



Lane College hosted an Happy 1st Birthday Party for Infant Immortality Awareness at the Jackson Madison Health Department in Jackson, TN.

"The **HBCU Wellness Project** is a great opportunity for me to **learn** about what ails my **community** and ways I can help prevent or **positively change** the disparities in our communities."

~ Taryn Nurse
Student Health Ambassador
Fisk University



“Reducing Health Disparities for a Healthier Millennium”



James E.K. Hildreth, Ph.D., M.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer
Professor, Internal Medicine
Principal Investigator
TN-MMC HBCU Wellness Project
Meharry Medical College

“Our nation has made tremendous progress in the health sciences. While we are poised to advance new eras of discovery and scientific achievements, we must continue to promote health professions and opportunities to all of our citizens. These beneficiaries will ultimately influence health outcomes and continue the process of promoting healthy changes in meaningful ways. Health profession promotion is a priority that will greatly impact the future of our country.

We continue to live in a world where there are significant differences in health status. These differences are influenced by where we live, what and how we eat, whether we have access to resources, and who our ancestors were. By 2045, more than half of the United States population will be people of color. The Institute of Medicine (IOM) has warned of the “unequal treatment” minorities receive when engaging the health system. In response, the IOM recommends increasing the number of minority health professionals as a key strategy to reducing and eliminating health disparities. Health services research has shown that minority health professionals are much more likely to serve minority and medically underserved populations. Unfortunately, our medical and

dental schools have not produced minorities for our nation’s health professions in significant numbers.

My challenge and vision is to advance biomedical education to our young people as a catalyst to stimulate their thinking in wanting to improve health outcomes for themselves, their families, and their communities. Even today, the statistics reflect major challenges with preventable conditions such as HIV-AIDS and infant mortality. We want more men and women to have prostate and breast screenings and understand that obesity reduction can lead to decreased prevalence of diabetes, cardiovascular disease and metabolic disease. Educating and training our young people reduces their health risk and the risk of the future generations that follow them.

As a leader of an academic health center and a scientist, I am committed to increasing opportunities for our Tennessee communities to become healthier through education, outreach and advocacy. Utilizing resources such as the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Wellness Project validates that Tennessee is strategically positioned to promote health change for those who need it most.”

“The HBCU Wellness Project is **important** because it **teaches** young individuals on how to **research and conduct studies** on disparities that affect African Americans. It **grooms** us in a way that we feel more **prepared** to impact our surrounding communities in a healthy way.”

~ Tracy-Ann Dehaney
Student Health Ambassador
Fisk University

Indisputable Health Disparity Facts

- Patients of lower socioeconomic position are less likely to receive recommended diabetic services and more likely to be hospitalized for diabetes and its complications
- Many racial and ethnic minorities and persons of lower socioeconomic position are more likely to die from HIV
- The impact of HIV infection and AIDs is disproportionately higher for racial and ethnic minorities, and people of lower income or education levels. Minorities also account for a disproportionate share of new AIDS cases
- Although access to care has improved, African Americans and women with HIV remain less likely to have access to care and less likely to have optimal patterns of care
- African Americans and patients of lower socioeconomic status have higher rates of avoidable hospital admissions
- Hispanics and people of lower socioeconomic status are more likely to report unmet health care needs
- Minorities are more likely to be diagnosed with late-stage breast cancer and colorectal cancer compared with whites
- African American infants have higher mortality and morbidity due to poor preconception health information

Changing Lifestyle Patterns

“Adopting healthy eating and active living initiatives...”

“Kimberly Vaughn, B.S., Exercise Science and ACSM Certified Exercise Physiologist, stands by the HBCU Wellness Project’s mission to impact the health and overall well-being of Tennessee residents. As a Health/Fitness professional within her community as well as surrounding areas, she believes healthy eating habits and physical activity is the key to improving our community’s overall quality of life. Health disparities such as diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease and many other chronic diseases can be controlled, prevented, or even eliminated by simply being physically active.

The HBCU by pulling underserved services that

initiative fights against these health disparities healthcare resources and partners into the communities to educate, motivate, and provide otherwise would not be easily accessible for its

residents. The HBCU Wellness Project also makes a conscious effort to reach out to our young adults and youth in order to further enforce a collective effort to improve our underserved communities. There is nothing like those within the community helping its own community better themselves. Kimberly often says, “Change is good, but lasting change and maintenance is better.” The HBCU Wellness Project, Health/Wellness Professionals, and other community programs strive to continue making small steps forward that result in a major push in the right direction toward our communities leading better and healthier lifestyles.”



Kimberly C. Vaughn, ACSM-EP-C
Exercise Physiologist/Fitness Trainer
TN-MMC HBCU Wellness Project
Meharry Medical College

“The HBCU Wellness Project gives our youth the **chance** to have a personal experience in promoting healthy initiatives to people who ‘look’ like them, and it gives the **community** an opportunity to help develop students with cultural competency in health promotion.”

~ HBCU Wellness Project Community Partner
Rep. Harold Moses Love Jr.
58th District of Tennessee Legislature

Community

Fisk University Community Partners

Athletic Odyssey Youth Association
American Diabetes Association,
Nashville Chapter
American Heart Association, Nashville
AmeriGROUP Community Cares
C.E. McGruder Family Resource Center
SALT Program
Silver Program
Hadley Park Community Center
March of Dimes
Matthew Walker Comprehensive Health
Center
Meharry Medical College
Metropolitan Public Health Department
Family, Youth and Infant Health Bureau
TN Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention
and Parenting Partnership
Adolescent Programs
Music City Healthy Start Program
Nashville Health Disparities Coalition
National Step Show Alliance,
Nashville Chapter
Northwest YMCA
Tennessee State University Cooperative
Food Extension

Lane College Community Partners

Tennessee Donor Services
Top Ladies of Distinction,
Jackson Tennessee Chapter
Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated
Gamma Alpha Omega
Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Incorporated
Delta Epsilon Chapter
Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Incorporated
Tau Gamma Chapter
Mrs. Marie Maxie
Life Line Blood Services
Jackson-Madison County General Hospital
Jackson Star Center
St. Paul CME Church
Society for African American Culture
Bethlehem Missionary Baptist
New St. Luke Missionary Baptist
Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist
Alexander Elementary School
NAACP - Lane College Chapter
West Tennessee Planning and
Consortium Group
Street Works- Nashville, Tennessee
State Farm, Greg Milam-Agent
Dream Center

LeMoyne-Owen College Community Partners

American Cancer Society
American Diabetes Association
American Heart Association
Balm in Gilead
Baptist Memphis, Baptist DeSoto, and
Baptist Collierville
Big Brothers and Big Sisters
The Blues Project
Boys and Girls Club
Champion Pharmacy
Children and Family Services
Christ Missionary Baptist Church
Church Health Center
Community HIV Network
Congressman Steve Cohen
Cummings Elementary Schools
Department of Children Services
Douglas, Bungalow, and Crump
Neighborhood
First Baptist Church Lauderdale
Friends for Life Corporation
Girls Scouts
Girls Incorporated of Memphis
Knowledge Quest
LeBonheur Hospital

“The public health and university **partnership** is a natural fit to **get students involved** at the community level on issues of public health importance. Training the **next generation** of leaders to be public health **savvy**, as well as even more “**community competent**” will not only give voices to those we strive to help, but also assure that these voices are **respected** and **valued**.”

~ **Fisk University Community Partner**

Kimberlee Wyche Etheridge, M.D., M.P.H.

Assistant Director, Division of Health Sciences, Tennessee State University

Partners

LeMoyne-Owen College Owen College
Community Development Corporation
March of Dimes
Memphis City Beautiful
Memphis City Schools
Methodist Healthcare –
Methodist University Hospital
Memphis Health Center
Memphis Housing Authority
Memphis Shelby County Health
Department
Mustard Seed Inc.
PEAS, Inc.
Porter Leath
The Red Door Foundation
St. Andrew AME Church
St. Jude Cancer Research Center
Shelby County Government
Shelby County Head Start
Shelby County Sheriff Department
Sierra Club Environmental Justice Program
Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation
Tennessee Legislative Black Caucus
Tennessee State Representative
GA Hardaway
University of Tennessee- Memphis

Meharry Medical College Community Partners

Adventure Science Museum
American Diabetes Association,
Nashville Chapter
American Heart Association
Power to End Stroke
Americorps
Center for AIDS Health Disparities
Center for Women’s Health
Research-Meharry Medical College
Clark Memorial United Methodist Church
Delta Sigma Theta Nashville
Metropolitan Alumnae Chapter
Dr. Gwinnett Ladson
Green Meadow Church of Christ
Shelbyville
Hadley Park Community Center
Kroger Corporation Community Affairs
Lee Chapel AME Church
Mathew Walker Comprehensive
Health Clinic
Meharry Medical College
Department of Pediatrics
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
Vanderbilt Coalition for Healthy Aging
National Cancer Institute
Sisters Network Inc.

Tennessee State University
Tennessee Voices for Children
Tyson Foods, Inc.
United States Department of Agriculture
Urban League of Middle Tennessee
Vanderbilt Coalition for Healthy Aging
W.O.M.E.N – Catherine Wyatt-Morley

National Partners

Discovery Channel
Office of Minority Health
American Heart Association-
Power To End Stroke
Research Centers for Minority Institutions
(RCMI)

Participating Colleges and Universities



Fisk University

The Fisk HBCU Wellness Project has afforded an opportunity for Fisk University to maintain its reputation and legacy of “town and gown”.



Through this partnership, Fisk has been able to integrate its student body with the local community around issues that really matter... their health. The Project has empowered Fisk students with opportunity, and has encouraged them to become translators and disseminators of vital health information in hopes of modifying behaviors to eventually eradicate health disparities along racial lines.



“I became a part of the **HBCU Wellness Project** because I wanted to be a part of more **research** about health disparities, that specifically **affect** African Americans.”

~ Jovon Duke
Fisk University





"I became a **SHA** because it's way for me to **impact** the urban community through the **knowledge** gained about different health disparities. As a SHA, I'm able to take what **I am learning** back to my college and **spread the word**."

~ Jaqualen Franklin
Student Health Ambassador
Lane College



Lane College

The Lane Wellness Project has enabled Lane College to actively assist in finding better solutions for community residents to gain better access to health care. The project has provided free educational literature and brochures, educational workshops, health activities, testing/screenings, health fairs, and information about access to healthcare agencies and healthcare professionals. These critical factors permit Lane College to be a vehicle through which the community learns about health disparities, how to prevent them, and how to maintain one's health once diagnosed.

Lane's Student Health Ambassadors (SHAs) have partnered with community leaders and healthcare organizations to offer educational workshops and confidential screenings for citizens. They also gather surveys, analyze data, and track participants' health knowledge. At least one major activity is sponsored each month by SHAs. The Project has also assisted the target community and Lane College students in community-based service learning, developing effective intervention programs, and assisting the college to better prepare its students for graduate school and/or careers in the healthcare professions.



Participating Colleges and Universities

LeMoyne-Owen College



The LeMoyne-Owen College (LOC) HBCU Wellness Project efforts have benefited LOC in a variety of ways. Not only has LOC's infrastructure expanded resulting in increased personnel thus increasing the local workforce, but it has also expanded technologically. As a result of the Project, LOC has gained a state-of-the-art videoconferencing center which not only enables them to interface with the HBCU Wellness network, but it has also provided opportunity for their SHAs to conference with other entities, community partnerships and healthcare organizations.

The Project's emphasis on community outreach and the formation of partnerships has resulted in the development of relationships with more than 100 agencies in the Mid-South region. These agencies have not only supported the SHAs health projects, but they have also been accessible to the College at large. As a result, additional partnerships have been formed. For example, the

LOC Wellness Project fostered a relationship with the Memphis Health Center (MHC) that predated the asthma study's partnership with the same medical facility. It was the Project's success with MHC that allowed for an expanded relationship with the PATH asthma research study.



"I became and SHA because as an education major, I knew the HBCU Wellness project would **help** with my **research and writing skills** and I would also get to **meet** other college students focused on health goals, **like me.**"

~ Brianna Freeman

Student Health Ambassador
LeMoyne-Owen College

TN-MMC HBCU Wellness Project Scorecard

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2013	TOTAL
Summer Institute Participants	47	52	62	73	47	45	326
All Training	127	146	133	91	15	45	567
CITI Training	91	52	50	58	59	45	355
IRB Approved Protocols	22	43	46	44	38	36	227
Community Outreach Activities Conducted	69	177	154	140	128	92	760

The staff and faculty of the Meharry Medical College (MMC) HBCU Wellness Project would like to congratulate our member campuses, their support staff, faculty mentors and college presidents for their continued success in recruiting, training, and assisting Student Health Ambassadors in their community-based projects. As the Scorecard above indicates, we all have been very successful in executing the legislative goals of the Wellness Project in encouraging HBCU undergraduates to pursue health careers through work with local community partners. We look forward to this year's Spring Symposium as a platform for future student accomplishments.

SOURCE: TN-MMC HBCU Wellness Project SCORECARD

Discovery Channel

Discovery Communications is the world's number one nonfiction media company reaching more than 1.5 billion cumulative subscribers in over 180 countries. Discovery encourages people to explore their world and satisfy their curiosity through 100-plus worldwide networks, led by Discovery Channel, TLC, Animal Planet, Science Channel, Investigation Discovery, Planet Green and HD Theater, as well as leading consumer and educational products and services, and a diversified portfolio of digital media services.



Discovery Channel is a U.S. cable television network dedicated to programming that highlights various aspects of health and wellness.

The TN-MMC HBCU Wellness Project and Discovery Channel partnered to develop 12 health messaging videos targeting Infant Mortality/ Preconception Health, Breast Cancer, Obesity, and HIV/AIDS. Student Health Ambassadors developed health messaging scripts that were adapted to video taping and filmed on or near all campuses. These videos are available for health promotion strategies.

Reflections and Future of the TN-



M. Lisa McGee, M.Ed., Ed.D. (c)

Director
TN-MMC HBCU Wellness Project
Meharry Medical College

Nine years ago, members of the Legislative Black Caucus met with Dr. Valerie Montgomery Rice to identify how Meharry Medical College could assist with integrating the four private historically black colleges/universities

(HBCU) to focus on health disparity elimination. What evolved from that discussion is now the TN-MMC HBCU Wellness Project. Since that time, the program has formally trained more than 500 student health ambassadors (SHAs) in community based participatory research (CBPR) techniques and practices, and many of those students continue to develop ethically-approved health and wellness projects that promote positive change in knowledge, attitudes and behaviors among community residents. These students and their parent campuses have developed sustainable partnerships with community based organizations, churches, community clinics, private medical practitioners, public and private schools to disseminate health and wellness projects that increase understanding and promote healthier outcomes. Since the inception of this state-wide undergraduate advocacy project, both campuses and communities are more engaged in conducting monthly health forums (town hall meetings) to openly discuss public health issues such as safer neighborhoods, physical fitness, environmental dangers, healthier food choices, sexually transmitted diseases, preconception issues and other critical health concerns that impact individuals and communities daily.

Besides action at a community level, these SHAs have demonstrated objective output in Tennessee's investment in their service learning CBPR training. They have had their work showcased with oral and poster presentations at several health education and disparity venues at Xavier University of Louisiana's Health Disparities Conference, American Public Health Association, Office of Minority Health Conference, Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, and Beta Kappa Chi & National Institute of Science Summit. Service learning is innovative because it positions students to contemplate how making a difference in communities to improve health behaviors can improve their own individual lives.

As you read the impact section in this latest iteration of our project magazine, these young graduates represent a larger population of SHAs graduates who are pursuing or have pursued health related post-graduate opportunities. What has been significant and measurable throughout their experience with the project is that most of our student health ambassadors were not initially interested in health as a career choice. However, the health services research training and practical implementation of their project with community based partnerships provided an impetus to change their trajectory.

We continue to promote innovation and creativity in project development and implementation that underscores technology and access for greater health outcomes for our communities. Promoting change to reduce health disparities remains a primary goal to increase our chances at "Wellness for Our Communities . . . Fitness for Our Future."

MMC HBCU Wellness Project



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Since its inception, the HBCU Wellness Project has used service learning training to provide HBCU collegians experience with health disparities elimination in Tennessee as

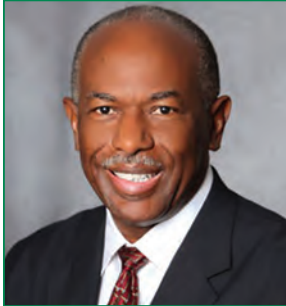
student health ambassadors (SHAs). This service learning is important for our future health care providers and scientists for two reasons. First, the training emphasizes health disparity elimination through promotion of health-related knowledge, attitude and behavior change. Second, the SHAs understand the personal impact and usefulness of their work through interacting with community members and receiving their feedback about the intervention experience. Fortunately, through the years, the HBCU Wellness Project, through its member campus institutions, have cultivated over 200 community partners across all three Grand Divisions that have worked with the SHAs to address breast cancer, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection, infant mortality, obesity reduction, and prostate cancer. Because this service learning utilizes community based participatory research (CBPR) training, SHAs have also gained valuable experience applying formal ethical and procedural concepts through institutional review board (IRB) submissions that achieve federal intervention standards. All these experiences are critical to HBCU students in health and science careers.

The additional benefits of the Wellness Project have been the different outreach approaches demonstrated in underserved communities. The diversity of the community

partners recruited by the SHAs and HBCU campuses have included a variety of urban, suburban and rural public and private groups, including churches, community health centers, disease advocacy organizations, local hospitals, etc. SHAs-produced interventions may be the only formal interaction some Tennessee community members have with trained advocates for either prevention or diagnosis of diseases related to health disparities. For example, community forums the SHAs organize bring these at-risk individuals in contact with experts who provide them with answers they and their peers might have related to these disparities. An exponential leap forward in this sort of information dissemination is the continued success of our HBCU campus partners with health disparity related health messaging that can be utilized with the Internet and social media.

The plan for the future is to build on these outcomes administratively to improve and increase program success. The service learning that the Wellness Project utilizes is becoming more popular in conventional curricula because its emphasis on real-world working situations that reinforces educational concepts more meaningfully. Further, service learning with CBPR principles grounds the learning experience in peer-reviewed clinical research paradigms. Therefore, future plans include structuring federal and private funding mechanisms that use Wellness Project outcomes to document specific service learning based interventions that address health disparities. The HBCU Wellness Project faculty and staff hope to build upon its peer-reviewed curriculum to both encourage and support HBCU campus partners to establish their own independent clinical research enterprises based on local needs assessments.

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