



# HEALTHIER BLACK ELDERS CENTER

Promoting Successful Aging in Detroit and Beyond

SPRING 2010

## Aging Gracefully: Live, Laugh, Learn

**TUESDAY  
JUNE 1**

7:30am - 2:30pm

Registration Deadline  
Friday, May 14th

Pre-Registration  
Required  
**313-577-1000**  
First Come First Served

**FREE** For All  
55 years & older

### New Location

**New Providence  
Conference Center**

18211 Plymouth Rd.  
Detroit 48228

(On the Southwest  
corner of Plymouth Rd.  
and Southfield, where  
the old K-mart was  
formerly located)



### Health Reception Stresses Participation In Wellness

If the older adult in your life is not now chanting "Live! Laugh! Learn!" they will be after attending this year's 8th annual Health Reception!

Held annually on the first Tuesday in June, the event promises all of the excitement of past years and more. Vernice Davis Anthony, MPH, president and CEO of Greater Detroit Area Health Council, and Jerry Johnson, M.D., professor and chief of the division of Geriatric Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania will present keynote addresses.

New this year are interactive panel discussions focusing on health challenges and health promotion with am-

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Upper: Guests at recent event practice chair exercises to stay limber as Miguel Thornton (lower left) demonstrates. A guest (left) asks the panel a question. Comedian Horace Sanders will entertain on June 1.



Outreach

*"We are committed to connecting the older adults or caregivers, who stop by our booth with barrier-free resources and service."*

-Denise Stinson, MSW Student

Denise will supervise a team of University of Michigan and Wayne State University geriatric social work students at this year's Health Reception to help guests identify needs and get referrals to community resources and services.



HEALTHIER BLACK ELDERS CENTER (HBEC)

University of Michigan and Wayne State University

Michigan Center for Urban African American Aging Research: A National Institute on Aging Grant Program



# U-M Researcher Focuses on Female Caregivers

As Community Liaison Core (CLC) Co-Chair of the Michigan Center for Urban African American Aging Research (MCUAAAR), Dr.

Letha Chadiha encourages older African Americans to participate in health-related research and in activities that



*“Having relatively good health is a key factor allowing older African Americans to live longer . . .”*

- Dr. Letha Chadiha, Community Liaison Core Co-Chair, MCUAAAR

is a key factor allowing older African Americans to live longer lives in the community,” says Chadiha.

While Dr. Chadiha has been co-director for three years, she is now taking a more active role in assisting with the HBEC Annual Health Reception as well as conducting her own research. Her research focuses on African American women caring for older African Americans.

“More specifically,” she says, “my research interests include these women’s health — both physical and mental — and their social functioning within marriage and other social roles while caring for other loved ones.”

will improve health and reduce health risks. A University of Michigan social work researcher, she is committed to reducing health disparities among African American older adults. She is further committed to finding ways to help African American older adults preserve the longstanding tradition of living their lives within their communities.

“Older adults, especially older African Americans, are more likely to spend their later years of life living in the community among family members, church members, friends, and neighbors than in a senior residential setting. Having relatively good health

*“I participate in research because I know it’s the only way we can get to the bottom of why our people suffer more than others. We have to be part of the solution!”*

- Shirley Thompson, HBEC Volunteer



Volunteer Shirley Thompson interviews metro Detroit older adults regarding their health status, and also recruits for the Healthier Black Elders Participant Resource Pool (PRP). The PRP is a list of older adults who have agreed to consider research projects sponsored by the Healthier Black Elders Center. All HBEC research is non-clinical and non-invasive.

## Study Explores the Link Between Pain and Socioeconomic Status

A recent study completed by HBEC Director and Community Liaison Core (CLC) co-directors, Carmen R. Green, M.D. and Letha Chadiha, Ph.D., *Pain and the Economic Downturn: Hard Times Hurt Minority Elders* reveals the high prevalence and high severity of pain among African American elders.

“Unfortunately, too often older adults are making hard choices between basic security needs and health care,” says Dr. Green.

The study illustrates the importance of pain on the financial health and well-being of older African Americans while showing the additional impact of the recent economic downturn and how it is jeopardizing older adults’ basic health and security needs.

“To our knowledge, this is the only investigation that examines the relationship between the economic downturn and pain among African Americans,” says Dr. Green.



### Warning Signs and Symptoms of Diabetes

Many signs of Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes are similar. In both, there is too much glucose in the blood and not enough in the cells of your body, but the cause of the high glucose is different in each of them. The high glucose levels in Type 1 are due to a lack of insulin because the insulin producing cells in the pancreas have been destroyed. Type 2 diabetes occurs when the body's cells become resistant to insulin that is being produced, so it can't make use of the insulin circulating. Either way, cells don't get the glucose they need to function, and your body lets you know with these signs and symptoms:

- Frequent trips to the bathroom
- Unquenchable thirst
- Losing weight without trying
- Weakness and fatigue:
- Tingling or numbness in your hands, legs or feet
- Blurred vision
- Dry or itchy skin
- Frequent infections or cuts that take a long time to heal

All these symptoms can be the result of glucose levels that are too high and may be due to diabetes or pre-diabetes. If you notice any of the above signs, schedule an appointment with your doctor. He or she can administer simple tests to determine the exact cause of your symptoms. Diabetes is treatable. Detect it early to avoid long-term problems.

### HBEC Senior Volunteers at Work

Orientation for newly trained HBEC volunteers included a warm welcome by HBEC Volunteer Coordinator Patricia Rencher and research subject interview training by Dr. Tom Jankowski, WSU Institute of Gerontology, associate director of research. The newly trained volunteers will contact attendees after all HBEC community events to conduct 5-minute, Activities of Daily Living surveys.

The Participant Research Pool is a list of potential research volunteers who are willing to consider participating in research. **Anyone interested in learning more about the PRP should contact Ms. Rencher at 313-577-2297.**



### HBEC Reception

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ple opportunity for audience questions and answers from experts in the field.

According to Carmen R. Green, MD, HBEC director, "This year's goal is to really connect our older adults and their caregivers to the research and the science of aging in an engaging and empowering way."

"And yes," adds Dr. Green, "we'll have fun while we learn!"

"Detroit comedian Horace Sanders is guaranteed to make us laugh, Ernie Clark's Couch Potatoes will make us move, and Ms. A. Franzle Green's poetry interpretation will make us fee," says Dr. Green.

This year's health reception will be held at the New Providence Conference Center on Plymouth Road and the



An estimated 600 Seniors will receive health screenings at this year's HBEC Health Reception.

Southfield Expressway. Health screenings begin at 7:30 a.m. as does the exhibit hall. The formal program begins at 9:00 a.m., lunch is served at 11:30 a.m., and the formal program ends at 2:30 p.m. The event is free for those 55 years and older, but you must call **313-577-1000** to pre-register for tickets.

"We're really excited about our new, senior-friendly format and venue. There's increased space for exhibits, adequate parking, adequate restrooms, and everything is on one floor," says Dr. Green. "It's a beautiful thing!"

**Healthier Black Elders Center**

Pauline Knapp Bldg.

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313-577-2297

www.mcuaaar.wayne.edu

Non-profit  
US postage  
PAID  
Detroit, MI  
Permit #3844

CARMEN R. GREEN, MD, HBEC DIRECTOR is professor of anesthesiology, obstetrics and gynecology, and health management and policy at



the University of Michigan schools of Medicine and Public Health, and faculty affiliate with the Program for Research on Black Americans. Dr. Green co-directs the Community Liaison Core, oversees community education events and also directs the dissemination and health policy core for the Michigan Center for Urban African American Aging Research (MCUAAAR). She is principal investigator for the Michigan Pain Outcomes Study Team, and attending physician in the Multi-disciplinary Pain Center.



## Save the Date

### HEALTHCARE CONSUMER LEARNING SERIES

The Healthier Black Elders Center presents five to ten community educational forums each year to provide accurate, up-to-date aging information to older adults. Events are free, but reservations are required. Call Ms. Karen Daniels outreach coordinator at **313-871-0735** to RSVP.

TUESDAY, JUNE 1, 2010 (7:30AM-2:30PM, LUNCH SERVED)

***Aging Gracefully: Live, Laugh, Learn!*** **Registration Deadline, Friday May 14th**

New Providence Conference Center, 18211 Plymouth at the Southfield Fwy, Detroit 48228  
Now in its 8th year, our annual event features free health screenings, exciting presentations, panel discussions, comedy, exercise, poetry interpretation and health exhibits all within a new, senior-friendly venue. Call 313-577-1000 for tickets.

SEPTEMBER 8-9, 2010 (8:30 AM - 1:30 PM)

***Michigan Kinship Care Conference & Grandfamily Reunion***

Greater Grace Temple, 23500 W. Seven Miler Road, Detroit 48219

Two interactive days of training and information designed for kinship caregivers and professionals working with kinship care families. Presented through the Detroit Area Agency on Aging's Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Committee. Free for kinship caregivers; \$25 fee for professionals. Breakfast and lunch included. Call Veronica Padmos at 313-446-4444, ext. 5828, or email her at padmosv@daaa1a.org, to register or receive more information.