

»» NEWSLETTER ««



**RCMI CENTER
FOR HEALTH
DISPARITIES
RESEARCH**



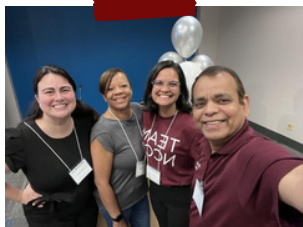
RCMI Retreat 2024

»» RCMI RETREAT

The RCMI Retreat 2024, held at the Friday Center at UNC Chapel Hill, marked an important milestone in our ongoing journey. Dr. Alberico and Dr. Kumar provided welcoming remarks, reflecting on the growth from RCMI 1.0 to our current RCMI 2.0 phase. RCMI began in 2017 and has since evolved into a significant research engine that integrates basic and behavioral sciences. As we advance through 2.0, our focus is on preparing a robust application and developing a comprehensive strategy for future progress.

Dr. Cherise Harrington and Dr. Alberico, emphasized the importance of finalizing our goals and optimizing our achievements for the next years. The agenda included a review of the mission statement, which aims to enhance NCCU's research infrastructure, mentor future underrepresented researchers, and address health disparities through evidence-based practices.

Administrative updates covered the organizational structure and teams, with pilot project leads actively working on submissions. Funding discussions highlighted partnerships, including one with RTI on environmental sciences, and the establishment of a lab under the CARES program to address environmental inequities. The second day of the RCMI Retreat 2024 will take place in October, between the second and third week of the month.



➤➤➤ BACK TO SCHOOL/YOUTH UPLIFTING DAY

On August 10, 2024, the Logan Multi-Purpose Center in Concord, Cabarrus, hosted a Back to School/Youth Uplifting Day, attracting approximately 150 attendees. This event provided the local community with a back-to-school giveaway, featuring essential school supplies and valuable health information.

During the event, participants received guidance on healthy eating habits and blood-pressure regulation. Informative materials on healthy eating, smoking cessation, and blood-pressure monitoring were distributed, along with some NCCU t-shirts and water bottles. Attendees expressed interest in more t-shirts, water bottles, and information on prostate screening for future events.

The event was both enjoyable and informative. Many attendees felt more empowered to take charge of their health, particularly in managing their blood pressure. Additionally, several high school students expressed interest in applying to NCCU and received college application guidance and resources.

➤➤➤ EAGLE MANIA WELLNESS BAG GIVEAWAY

On August 20th, 2024, we had the pleasure of participating in the Eagle Mania Wellness Bag Giveaway at North Carolina Central University. Our team engaged with approximately 200 new and returning students during their break. The event was filled with energy and enthusiasm as students connected with each other and explored resources to support their well-being.

At our table, we provided educational handouts and wellness bags designed to empower students to take charge of their health. The materials included information on self-care, the importance of self-breast checks, sexual health (STIs), and healthy cooking with our specially curated cookbooks. One of the highlights of our table was the sign-up sheet for our newsletter, which will keep students informed about upcoming events and opportunities to earn community service hours—a major draw for many attendees.

It was truly rewarding to see how engaged the students were, both in learning about important health topics and in signing up for future volunteer opportunities. The excitement among the students made the event a delightful experience for all involved.



➤➤➤ CEC SPOTLIGHT ON DR. JONATHAN LIVINGSTON- NCCU INVESTIGATOR

Discover how Dr. Jonathan Livingston, the Benjamin S. Ruffin Distinguished Professor of Civic Education and Social Justice and Interim Chair of the Department of Psychology at NCCU, is making waves in the community.

Read more about Dr. Livingston's impactful contributions and his dedication to bridging the gap between academia and community here: [Spotlight on Dr. Jonathan Livingston](#).



EXTERNAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

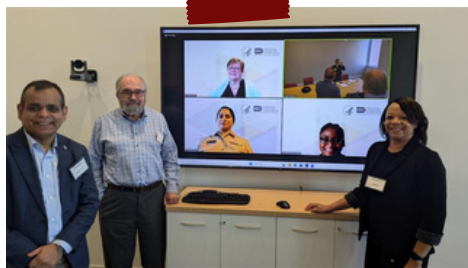
On August 28th, 2024, the NCCU RCMI team held a highly successful External Advisory Committee (EAC) meeting at the Student Center, from 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm. This event marked an important milestone as we gathered with our advisory committee and representatives from the NIH to review our progress, discuss future directions, and strategize for the upcoming renewal submission.

Dr. Deepak Kumar, Dr. Cherise Harrington, and Dr. Claudia Alberico provided an overview of the RCMI program and shared updates from the Administrative Core, highlighting the advancements we've made over the past year. Each core and project lead delivered compelling presentations showcasing the impactful research being conducted.

The Community Engagement Core, led by Dr. Robinson underscored the importance of community partnerships in driving our research forward. Meanwhile, Dr. Richardson from the Research Capacity Core and Dr. Graves alongside Dr. Sivaraman from the Investigator Development Core shared insights on how we are building and enhancing our research infrastructure and supporting the development of early-stage investigators.

The meeting concluded with a closed session where EAC members and our MPI team discussed the feedback received and the steps needed as we embark on Year 3 of our program. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with both the committee and NIH representatives recognizing the hard work, dedication, and progress made by our team.

We must continue to focus on the quality of science, mentorship, and engagement of early-stage investigators while ensuring our efforts are measurable and supported by strong data and visuals. We are excited to continue this journey together as we prepare for the next phase of our RCMI program.



YOUR VOICE YOUR HEALTH

Join us on September 27th at noon for Your Voice Your Health: Taking a Stand for Those We've Lost—a webinar focused on the state of minority mental health and evidence-based community interventions.

This session will bring together researchers, medical experts, and public health professionals to explore mental health crisis management, law enforcement, and social justice. You'll learn about the current state of mental health in minority communities and connect with advocates dedicated to improving outcomes.

Don't miss this opportunity to collaborate and make a difference.



MEET OUR PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATORS

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Jasmine Benner is a public health educator with RCMI CEC, holding a degree in Public Health Education from NCCU and currently pursuing an MPH at Michigan State University. Her research focuses on minority health disparities and HIV/AIDS prevention. Jasmine also serves on several advisory boards, including Duke CFAR's Community Collaborative Board.



Chandra Jennings is a key player in the PBERN grant at NCCU, where she focuses on delivering targeted health education to communities throughout North Carolina. Her role involves directly engaging with these communities to provide essential public health information, ensuring that education is accessible and impactful.



Leatrice Martin contributes her extensive experience to NCCU's Community Engagement Core, where she leads initiatives that bridge the gap between public health education and community needs. Her work is centered on developing and implementing programs that address health disparities and promote equity, directly benefiting underserved populations across the state.



Featured Publication:

We're excited to share the latest research by Jasmine Benner titled, "[Voting Engagement Among Adults with Sickle Cell Disease \(SCD\): Health Matters](#)". Be sure to check it out for an in-depth look at this critical issue.



COMING SOON

- 09/07 - 5K Suicide Awareness/Prevention - Concord, NC.
- 09/13 - 3rd Annual Symposium for Learning about Alzheimer's Disease Medical Research at Duke and UNC (SLAM-DUNC)
- 09/17 - Eagle Pride Blood Drive - Durham, NC.
- 09/20 - NC Med Assist (Mobile Pharmacy event) - Scotland Neck, NC.
- 09/28 - Rooted in Wellness - Durham, NC.
- 10/02 - Immunization/Influenza event - Durham, NC.



For further information regarding event specifics such as location and hours, please refer to our virtual calendar.

We invite you to connect with us and share your updates, ideas, faculty publications and ongoing research endeavors. Your insights are invaluable to us as we strive to keep our community informed and engaged. Reach out to us today and let's collaborate!



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RCMI Program Manager



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