

# »» NEWSLETTER ««



**RCMI CENTER  
FOR HEALTH  
DISPARITIES  
RESEARCH**



Team from Take My Breath Away Event - For further details, please refer to page 04.

## »» EMPOWERING THE DURHAM COMMUNITY AT NATIONAL NIGHT OUT



National Night Out brought together the Durham community for an evening of connection, education, and resources at Cornwallis Road community housing. Local law enforcement, firefighters, and community organizations joined forces to offer valuable services to residents, while the Durham Graduate Chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. provided food for attendees.



The RCMI Community Engagement Core (CEC) played a key role in the event, engaging with attendees. People of all ages came to soak up the community spirit with dance, food, nail painting, games and education. Residents were able to register to vote and to sign up for rides to the polls. NCCU RCMI team members taught children and adults "compression-only CPR" while the Community Health Alliance offered blood pressure screenings.

## »» WARRENTON COMMUNITY DAY

We recently conducted a successful health outreach event in Warrenton, a vibrant rural community northeast of Durham. Residents actively participated in health screenings and wellness activities. Our team provided informative handouts on heart health, breast cancer, and nutrition, along with heart-healthy cookbooks, breast cancer awareness pins, and coloring books for children.

As a token of appreciation, participants who completed their screenings received gifts, including t-shirts, first aid kits, and water bottles. We look forward to continuing our partnership with the Warrenton community to promote health and wellness in rural North Carolina.



## ➤➤➤ NCCU RURAL COMMUNITY HEALTH HUB HOSTS CHILD HEALTH ASSESSMENTS 2



The PBERN Community Engagement Core (CEC) hosted an outreach event at the Student Union on NCCU's campus, connecting with 100 students. With a diverse mix of first-generation and non-traditional students, many of whom are balancing studies with work, family, or additional degrees, this event was a meaningful opportunity to provide information and support directly on campus.



The booth featured breast cancer awareness educational handouts and details on upcoming events like the "Walk It Out", "Talk It Out", and "Pink It Out", all dedicated to promoting awareness. A prize wheel with interactive questions about breast cancer, current events, and entertainment kept attendees engaged and energized. Many students expressed excitement about discovering the PBERN CEC's presence and learning about resources that support their health and well-being.

## ➤➤➤ PINK EAGLE EDITION: WALK IT OUT FOR BREAST CANCER AWARENESS



The PBERN CEC hosted the "Pink Eagle Edition: Walk It Out" event at North Carolina Central University on October 10, 2024, attracting 150 students, faculty, and community members. Participants received pink ribbons and self-breast exam cards before gathering on the north side of the Student Union to walk a mile around campus, proudly displaying their commitment to breast cancer awareness.

The event created an exciting atmosphere, with attendees eager to raise awareness about breast cancer risks. Many engaged in conversations about proactive health measures and the importance of early detection.

## ➤➤➤ PINK EAGLE EDITION: TALK IT OUT FOR BREAST CANCER AWARENESS



The recent event hosted by the PBERN CEC featured four community tables focused on breast cancer education and early detection. Attendees had the opportunity to engage with interactive displays, including three breast molds at the Sister's Network Triangle table, where they could ask questions about breast health. The Women's Center provided valuable resources on domestic violence awareness, coinciding with October's focus on this important issue. PBERN CEC and IDC contributed handouts on breast cancer and community service opportunities.

The event transitioned to feature two inspiring speakers: Dr. Smith, a breast cancer specialist with a personal family history of the disease, and Dr. Burse, a breast cancer survivor and current PhD student. The audience engaged in a lively Q&A's session, benefiting from the speakers' expertise and personal experiences.

## RCMI ENGAGES THE COMMUNITY AT DURHAM TECH

The RCMI team from NCCU connected with over 100 community members at the Black Farmers Market hosted by Durham Tech, offering vital resources on CPR and heart health. Attendees engaged with experts to learn more about cardiovascular disease, clinical trials, diabetes, cholesterol, and blood pressure management. The educational booth provided comprehensive handouts covering CPR techniques, diabetes care, and blood pressure control.

Based on feedback, the team is exploring additional materials for future events, particularly in nutrition and mental health, as attendees showed strong interest in these topics. The RCMI team looks forward to deepening its community support and outreach in future engagements.

## IMPACT OF MARIJUANA AND ALCOHOL ON LEARNING AND MEMORY



The recent seminar titled "What Marijuana & Alcohol do to your Brain for Learning & Memory?" brought together participants both in-person and virtually, highlighting important research on the effects of substance use on cognitive function. Dr. Somnath Mukhopadhyay, led the discussion, presenting findings from his laboratory that explored how combined exposure to marijuana and alcohol during early adolescence can disrupt brain functions related to learning and memory in adulthood.



Dr. Mukhopadhyay's research emphasizes the significant co-morbidity of marijuana and alcohol use, with a focus on how these substances can affect brain health. Following the presentation, attendees participated in a Q&A session, allowing for further exploration of the topics discussed and fostering a collaborative environment between RTI International and NCCU.

## MOBILE HEALTH UNIT SUPPORTS HURRICANE RECOVERY EFFORTS



Since the second week of October, North Carolina Central University (NCCU) has deployed its Mobile Health Unit to provide critical healthcare services to communities across North Carolina impacted by Hurricane Helene. This initiative, developed in collaboration with Peter Le from St. Joseph Primary Care and Dr. Deepak Kumar, Associate Provost and Dean of Research and Sponsored Programs, reflects NCCU's commitment to supporting North Carolinians in need.

Through the RCMI Practice-Based Equity Research Network (PBERN), the Mobile Health Unit is delivering essential medical care directly to affected areas. Alongside these services, NCCU BBRI faculty and staff organized a donation drive, gathering supplies to help impacted families with immediate relief.

With plans to continue services in the coming weeks, deployment of the Mobile Health Unit underscores the university's dedication to improving the well-being of communities in need and advancing health equity across North Carolina.

## ➤➤➤ ADVANCING COLLABORATION AT THE RCMI RETREAT PART 2

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Our RCMI team from North Carolina Central University hosted Part 2 of the RCMI Retreat at NC Biotech, focusing on strategic conversations around our strengths, challenges, and future goals. The retreat provided a productive space for open discussions, allowing us to align our efforts and address areas for growth and innovation in our research.



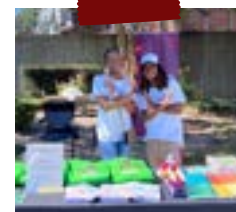
Engaging with colleagues from different cores deepened our understanding of how we can better support one another and optimize collaboration. These exchanges not only reinforced our commitment to high-impact research but also clarified our shared vision and roadmap.

## ➤➤➤ TAKE MY BREATH AWAY

The Take My Breath Away event, hosted by the North Carolina Central University RCMI Center for Health Disparities Research, was an afternoon filled with invaluable knowledge, interactive health education, and high-spirited fun.

Spread across six tables, each with a distinct RCMI focus, attendees were invited to complete a “passport” by visiting every station. At the first table, participants earned healthy snacks and prizes after completing their passport, promoting wellness through engaging incentives. The lung capacity assessment station gave attendees the chance to measure their lung health and join a research study on lung health. Another table recruited students for the BeFAB project, an initiative focused on improving physical activity and nutrition. For stress management, participants received swag and educational materials to help them incorporate stress-relief techniques into their daily lives. The CPR station offered hands-on training, equipping attendees with practical CPR skills and distributing heart health resources.

In a central open area, line dancing sessions kept the energy high and brought everyone together, making it a crowd favorite throughout the day. Attendees were thrilled to learn new skills and left feeling more informed and empowered in their health journey.



## ➤➤➤ IMPACT OF MARIJUANA AND ALCOHOL ON LEARNING AND MEMORY

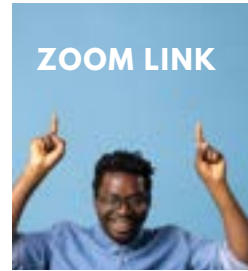
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## YOUR VOICE, YOUR HEALTH: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR IMPACTFUL RESEARCH

The RCMI Community Engagement Core (CEC) recently hosted the second session of the “Your Voice, Your Health” online conversation series, engaging students, community members, faculty, and staff in meaningful dialogue. Panelists Alec Greenwald, Xavier Cason, and Dr. Johnathan Livingston discussed their work and emphasized the impact of community voices on research initiatives.

Participants found the session insightful and highly relevant, expressing anticipation for the next conversation on November 8. This ongoing series continues to empower community-driven health and research conversations.



## STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS FOR RURAL RESILIENCE



We recently had the opportunity to visit Henderson’s Rural Community Resilience Center (RCRC) with a team from NCCU on October 28th. During this visit, we met with Mayor Melissa Elliott, Chief of Police Marcus Barrow, and City Manager Terrell Blackmon to discuss future steps and strengthen our collaborative efforts.



We also connected with representatives from the Green Rural Redevelopment Organization (GRRO), including Executive Director Henry Crews and Ardis Crews. Our partnership with GRRO is instrumental in building sustainable solutions and ensuring that vital resources reach rural communities in need, supporting long-term resilience and development across Henderson and surrounding areas.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

- 11/02 - Health Event - Concord, NC.
- 11/08 - Your voice, Your Health - Online
- 11/15 - American Diabetes Association event - Durham, NC.
- 11/16 - RCMI CEC and Black Healths matter - Charlotte, NC.
- 11/19 - Eagle Pride Blood Drive - NCCU
- 11/23 - RCMI Save-A-Life Event - Bertie County ,NC.
- 11/23 - Harvest Day - Concord, NC.



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



**Dr. Claudia Alberico**  
RCMI Program Manager

We invite you to connect with us and share your updates, ideas, faculty publications and ongoing research endeavors. Reach out to us today and let's collaborate!



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