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## Cervical Cancer-Free America: Newsletter

1 message

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**Cervical Cancer-Free America** <ccfa@unc.edu>  
Reply-To: Cervical Cancer-Free America <ccfa@unc.edu>  
To: Michelle <michellewhitlock@gmail.com>

Tue, Jan 15, 2013 at 7:26 PM

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### January 2013 CCFA Newsletter

Welcome to the fifth edition of the Cervical Cancer-Free America (CCFA) Newsletter! January is Cervical Cancer Awareness month and we have highlighted a number of exciting activities for this important month, including interactive webinars, a Twitter discussion, and recent news regarding HPV, HPV vaccination, and cervical cancer prevention.

CCFA is proud to welcome Cervical Cancer-Free South Carolina (CCFSC) as a new state partner. Dr. Jennifer Pierce, Medical University of South Carolina, and Dr. Heather Brandt, Arnold School of Public Health, are co-leading this initiative. We're also working with future state partners in other states interested in joining CCFA. Please let us know if you are interested.

CCFA is pleased to announce our request for proposals for Collaborative Research Projects. Our goal with this initiative is to support organizations and universities in undertaking projects focused on cervical cancer disparities nationwide.

Please forward the newsletter to anyone you think would benefit from this information. We also welcome your submissions to future editions of this newsletter; please email [ccfa@unc.edu](mailto:ccfa@unc.edu) with items that you would like to share.

We thank you for your part in working to end this preventable disease!

Jennifer Smith, PhD, MPH  
Director, Cervical Cancer-Free America

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### **CCFA announces request for proposals for collaborative research projects**

Cervical Cancer-Free America is offering [Collaborative Research Project Awards](#) between \$5,000 and \$10,000. We will fund 7-9 innovative projects to help impact cervical cancer disparities across the United States. Scope of projects include:

*Analysis of national databases* to determine factors related to high cervical cancer burden, including the underuse of HPV vaccination and cervical cancer screening practices across the nation. *CCFA will fund 2 projects at \$5,000 for this strategy.*

*Implementation and evaluation* of evidence-based cervical cancer prevention and/or follow-up strategies. Implementation projects will promote public knowledge about HPV vaccination and cervical cancer screening guidelines and recommendations, and/or increasing the use of resources related to HPV vaccinations, cervical cancer screening, or follow-up testing and treatment. *CCFA will fund 2 projects at \$10,000 each for this strategy.*

*National policy and/or systems change initiatives* including national policy analyses or projects facilitating systems changes that increase HPV vaccination uptake and cervical cancer screening practices. *CCFA will fund between 3-5 projects for this strategy at levels from \$5,000-\$8,000 each.*

To learn more, visit our website [here](#) or contact Alison Gunn, Project Manager, at [Alison\\_gunn@med.unc.edu](mailto:Alison_gunn@med.unc.edu).

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## **News in Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment**

### **Upcoming free webinars offered by Cervical Cancer Action**

Cervical Cancer Action: A Global Coalition to Stop Cervical Cancer is hosting two webinars this month, January 2013. These events will bring together leading regional experts to provide the latest news and information on cervical cancer prevention in Africa and Latin America. During the 90 minute webinar, **A Cervical Cancer Free Africa: Regional Solutions for Lasting Change**, on **Wednesday, January 16, 2013, at 9:00 am EST**, regional experts will describe the progress made to date in Africa and describe emerging opportunities, available expertise, and tools to help countries reshape the future of this disease. To register for this workshop, click [here](#).

**The End of Cervical Cancer in the Americas: The Time is Now** will be offered Thursday, **January 17, 2013, at 11:00 am EST**. A panel of experts will provide an update on the new tools, technologies

and essential advocacy work shaping a cervical cancer-free future across the region. This workshop will be presented in Spanish. To register for this 90 minute workshop, click [here](#).

Email any questions to [info@cervicalcanceraction.org](mailto:info@cervicalcanceraction.org) and visit <http://www.cervicalcanceraction.org/> for more information about Cervical Cancer Action: A Global Coalition to Stop Cervical Cancer.

#### **Join CDC for a Twitter chat on Cervical Cancer**

On Thursday, January 17, 2013, 11:00 am, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will host a Twitter chat to help educate the general public about cervical cancer. Participants will talk about the best ways to help prevent cervical cancer, symptoms, risk factors, and survivorship. The chat will be led by epidemiologist Meg Watson, CDC's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control, and CCFA will be participating.

Follow the chat using the hash tag #CDCCancerChat.

If you cannot attend but have questions or stories to share, please email Valerie Daniel at [VDaniel@cdc.gov](mailto:VDaniel@cdc.gov).

#### **National Cervical Cancer Coalition (NCCC) Conference**

From January 19-20 in Atlanta, Georgia, the National Cervical Cancer Coalition is hosting a conference to bring together NCCC Chapter Leaders, cervical cancer survivors, family and friends of survivors, medical and scientific experts, and partner organizations. For more information about the meeting, click [here](#).

#### **Should young men be vaccinated against HPV?**

While vaccinating young women against HPV has been the focus of many immunization campaigns, there is still debate about whether vaccinating young men against HPV is cost-effective. Researchers from University of Southern California, David Geffen School of Medicine and Georgetown University School of Medicine have published a comprehensive review of recent medical literature to evaluate i) the potential for reducing illness caused by HPV infection and ii) the cost-effectiveness of expanding routine HPV vaccination to include young males. Their recommendations are presented in the article, [“Can Male Vaccination Reduce the Burden of Human Papillomavirus-Related Disease in the United States?”](#) found in the peer-reviewed journal, *Viral Immunology*.

#### **Therapeutic HPV vaccine shows promise in fighting cervical cancer**

Research results published in the journal *Science Translational Medicine* show promise for an experimental vaccine used to increase the production of HPV-specific killer T-cells. The vaccine uses synthetic DNA to harness the human immune system's ability to fight disease. Read more about this novel approach [here](#).

#### **HPV vaccination does not lead to an increase in sexual activity among adolescents girls, study suggests**

Does the HPV vaccination increase sexual activity in adolescent girls because of perceived protection

against sexually transmitted infections? A study led by Dr. Robert Bednarczyk published in [Pediatrics](#) reveals that HPV vaccination does not increase sexual activity in adolescent girls. Read more about this study [here](#).

#### **MMWR: Trends in Cervical Cancer Screening Among Women Aged 18–30 Years**

CDC's [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#) for January, 2013, examined trends in cervical cancer screening among women ages 18-30 years between 2000 and 2010. Results show that more effort is needed to promote acceptance of the latest evidence-based recommendations that screening by Pap test should not be used for women ages <21 years, regardless of initiation of sexual activity, and that a screening interval of 3 years should be maintained for women ages 21–30 years.

#### **EUROGIN develops continuing medical education course for HPV and related cancers**

The European Research Organization on Genital Infection and Neoplasia ([EUROGIN](#)) recently produced a continuing medical education (CME) course for practitioners entitled “Human Papillomavirus (HPV)-related cancers and diseases.” The course focuses on HPV and related cancers, as well as best practices for screening management and prevention efforts. The course is intended for gynecologists, pediatricians, and general practitioners and takes approximately one hour to complete. More information about the course, as well as how to access it, can be found [here](#).

#### **HPV vaccine may benefit HIV-infected women**

A [study](#) conducted by Dr. Jessica Kahn reported in the *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes* reveals that despite having been exposed to HPV, more than 45 percent of sexually active young women who have acquired HIV infection appear never to have been exposed to the most common high-risk forms of HPV, and therefore would still benefit from the HPV vaccine.

#### **Annual Report to the Nation on the Status of Cancer**

The [Annual Report to the Nation on the Status of Cancer](#), a product of the collaboration between the American Cancer Society, the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, the National Cancer Institute, and the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries reports findings on HPV vaccination coverage and levels by state, race and ethnicity, and other demographic factors. The data, analyzed by first author Dr. Ahmedin Jemal, suggests that vaccine coverage from HPV continues to lag behind rates of other North American countries and the UK. In the United States, 32% of girls ages 13 to 17 have had all three doses of the vaccine. This is relatively low compared to the 85% in Canada, 67% in Mexico and 70% in the UK. With vaccination rates low the rates of cancers caused by HPV such as anal and oropharynx cancers are rising. Go to [The Journal of the National Cancer Institute](#) to read the report.

#### **Is there an increase in HPV prevalence at older ages?**

A [study](#) in the *Journal of Infectious Diseases* led by Dr. Patti E. Gravitt from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health examined the prevalence of HPV in women ages 35-60. Authors suggest that further research is needed to estimate the risk of invasive cervical cancer among postmenopausal women highly-exposed to HPV to guide prevention strategies.

### **CCFA Partner States: Projects and Progress**

**Cervical Cancer-Free Alabama**

The UAB Teen Community Health Advisor (CHA) Program is in the process of conducting school wide surveys to assess youth's current knowledge and behaviors on sexual health issues, specifically HPV knowledge and HPV vaccination behaviors. The CHAs are working on programs for the Spring which will include a 12-week blitz of activities such as teaching an HPV module for health classes, health fairs, and skits. The Health-e-Teen project is working with local teens and a media company to develop a sexual health website and text messages. Researchers are developing an evidence-based program to educate teens on sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and to develop skills to prevent STIs. The media company is working with project staff and teens to develop a website and teaching video recording and editing. Teens continue to write and act out scripts focusing on HPV vaccination, STI prevention, and peer pressure, which will be used on the project website. In honor of cervical cancer awareness month, the Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) coalition will paint two local communities teal, host 10 teal lunch-and-learn community forums, and promote the Alabama Department of Public Health's "Third Time's the Charm!" campaign. For more information, contact Dr. Theresa Wynn at [twynn@uab.edu](mailto:twynn@uab.edu)

**Cervical Cancer-Free California**

The California Medical Association Foundation (CMAF) has partnered with Bendixen & Amundi International and New America Media to produce public service announcements (PSAs) addressing HPV vaccination and cervical cancer. CMAF is working with the Univision Spanish-language television network to disseminate the PSAs, which will occur this month. The goal is to reach the Spanish speaking population, as Hispanic women have higher cervical cancer incidence and mortality rates compared to non-Hispanic women. If the program is a success, CMAF and its partners hope to produce longer promotional PSAs on screening and vaccination for markets with a high Spanish speaking population. For more information on CCFCA, please contact Sandra Robinson at [srobinson@thecmafoundation.org](mailto:srobinson@thecmafoundation.org)

**Cervical Cancer-Free Indiana**

Building on our success at the 2012 Indiana Black & Minority Health Fair, CCFIN is planning an expanded educational outreach program to provide HPV vaccination on-site. The postcard reminder project, a collaboration between CCFIN and an Indiana Medicaid managed care organization, is continuing. In May and June, IU nursing students, providing community services under the CCFIN umbrella, disseminated cervical cancer and HPV education to 182 women in local area clinics. Cervical Cancer Free-Indiana has also formed a partnership with The Indianapolis Housing Agency (IHA), which provides services to over 7,600 families in Marion County. CCFIN developed an evidence-based educational program for IHA that is aimed at eliminating cervical cancer and HPV-related disease in Indiana among families with school-age children. Some of the activities include the creation of a toolkit

used to train HPV educators and advisors; training of HPV educators/advisors; community one-on-one educational sessions with families living in IHA communities; follow up of vaccination/screening recommendations with additional support and resources; and evaluation of data from community participants and training participants. CCFIN will provide HPV/Cervical education training and educational resources to Nurse-Family Partnership® (NFP) – a nurse-led, home-visitation program that provides education to IHA residents to improve health and social outcomes for young women. For more information on CCFIN, please contact Rivienne Shedd-Steele at [rsheddst@iupui.edu](mailto:rsheddst@iupui.edu)

### **Cervical Cancer-Free Kentucky**

Cervical Cancer Free-Kentucky (CCFKY) hosted twelve state-wide 2011-2012 Mini-Awards and nine Community Partnerships. Raising Cervical Cancer Awareness is still being evaluated and plans are being made for the dissemination of results. During the Cervical Cancer-Free Kentucky social media campaign, Cause the Movement ([www.causethemovement.org](http://www.causethemovement.org)), videos of cervical cancer survivors were developed. These survivors' stories are now on the CCFKY [website](#). CCFKY plans to meet with Kentucky's legislators to advocate for HPV vaccine legislation to place HPV vaccine on the state-based school-immunization requirements during this legislative session. For more information on CCFKY contact Dr. Baretta Casey at [bcase2@email.uky.edu](mailto:bcase2@email.uky.edu); <http://www.cervicalcancerfreeky.org>

### **Cervical Cancer-Free North Carolina**

CCFNC's director Dr. Noel Brewer co-chaired a workshop for the President's Cancer Panel on increasing uptake of HPV vaccination. Attendees included key leaders from CDC, NCI, industry, and academia, and CCFA director Dr. Jennifer Smith. The report will come out this spring. In collaboration with the [NC Institute for Public Health](#), CCFNC has launched a mass vaccination management academy for county and regional health departments. This academy guides health departments and community partners through the process of developing and implementing sustainable school-located adolescent mass vaccination programs. This early phase of the academy will inform future planning and curriculum refinement. CCFNC is disseminating an improved vaccination consent form to several school health centers in the western region of the state, building on our recent research in this area. Findings will inform the design of immunization packets for parents which will facilitate increased uptake within the school health center setting. CCFNC participated in the NC 2012 Adolescent Health Summit which was organized to strategize and identify adolescent health priorities for submission to the new NC General Assembly. The number one priority recommendation identified by the group was: "Fund School-based Health Services in Middle and High Schools." For more information contact Schatzi McCarthy at [shmccarthy@unc.edu](mailto:shmccarthy@unc.edu); CCF-NC: [www.ccfnc.org](http://www.ccfnc.org); Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CervicalCancerFreeNC>; Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ccfnc>

### **Cervical Cancer-Free South Carolina**

Cervical Cancer-Free South Carolina (CCFSC) co-directors Drs. Jennifer Pierce and Heather Brandt launched [The South Carolina Cancer Alliance](#), home organization for Cervical Cancer-Free South Carolina. This statewide non-profit organization is dedicated to reducing the impact of cancer for all people in South Carolina through activities centered around addressing cervical cancer objectives in the South Carolina Cancer Control Plan 2011-2015. Consistent with the state cancer plan, CCFSC efforts will focus on increasing participation in cervical cancer screening (including HPV testing); increasing adherence to follow-up care of abnormal screening results; increasing rates of HPV vaccination; and seeking additional funding to support cervical cancer screening and HPV vaccination. CCFSC is planning an initial teleconference for April 2013. Please visit our website, [www.sccanceralliance.org](http://www.sccanceralliance.org), or email Heather Brandt at [hbrandt@sc.edu](mailto:hbrandt@sc.edu) for more information.

### **Cervical Cancer-Free Texas**

Cervical Cancer-Free Texas (CCFTx) organized a luncheon for Cancer Prevention Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) grantees conducting cervical cancer prevention projects in the Houston area. Grantees met to discuss lessons learned, share results, and explore opportunities for future collaborations. CCFTx also began conducting in-depth interviews with the grantee network and has completed seven to date. The purpose of these qualitative interviews is to help CPRIT identify successful project components that can be replicated and disseminated statewide. In December 2012, CCFTx released a new Request for Applications (RFA) for three mini-grants in collaboration with [Latinos Contra El Cancer](#), and [Latinos in a Network for Cancer Control \(LINCC\)](#). Letters of intent were received from 19 organizations throughout Texas. CCFTx will award one \$8,000 grant to a community-based organization to initiate or expand a program with a primary focus on HPV/cervical cancer prevention. As part of Cervical Cancer Awareness month, CCFTx is gearing up to host a second Cervical Cancer Summit in partnership with MD Anderson's Cervical Comprehensive Cancer Control Workgroup on January 29, 2013. For more information on CCFTx, contact Dr. Sally Vernon at [sally.w.vernon@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:sally.w.vernon@uth.tmc.edu)

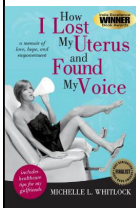
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### **Cervical Cancer Spotlight**

CCFA works with advocates on the community and national level on the issue of cervical cancer prevention. In our efforts, we have met dynamic people who have made it their work to spread the word that this is a preventable disease. We will highlight the work of advocates and their personal stories here.

[Michelle Whitlock](#) is a two time cervical cancer survivor, mother of a daughter born via surrogacy and

the award-winning author of [How I Lost My Uterus and Found My Voice](#). It's one woman's story of falling in love, battling HPV and cervical cancer, facing sexual dysfunction, confronting her conflicting feelings about motherhood, and becoming her own best advocate. Inspirational, honest, and witty, this memoir tells the emotional story of love, loss, resilience, and survival.



### **Finding My Voice!**

Michelle L. Whitlock

Motherhood wasn't something I gave much thought to until the day cancer knocked on my door and threatened to take away that possibility. Suddenly, I was keenly aware just how precious the ability to carry a child truly is. Still, when I heard the words, "you have CANCER and need to have a radical hysterectomy," I didn't know if motherhood was right for me but I knew I wanted a choice. I realized I need to speak up and challenge my doctors for options and advocate for the future I might want someday.

I was only 26 in 2001 when I heard those dreadful words and my life changed forever. My diagnosis with invasive cervical cancer came after a normal Pap and a positive HPV test. I decided to have a radical trachelectomy in an attempt to preserve fertility. Immediately, I discussed my cancer with friends and family, warning them to keep up with their screening.

However, for as loud as I thought my voice was then, it was still silent—silent about the HPV virus. I didn't want to be viewed as 'that girl'; the one with a sexually transmitted infection. I was embarrassed and thought others would judge me. Then in 2004, my cancer returned and I realized I'd never carry a child. Cancer had taken too much and I didn't want anyone else to lose their fertility or life so I opened my mouth and out came a bigger, more courageous voice. I told a friend my vagina story, all of it, and she surprised me by confirming she too had HPV. Suddenly I wasn't alone.

I went public in an article titled, "[That Girl](#)," in May of 2007. By this time, I realized that HPV was so common that no other woman should ever suffer in silence because of HPV or cervical cancer. That following fall I attended the first [National Cervical Cancer Coalition](#) conference and met my sisters, fellow survivors all trying to make sense of our lives during and after cancer. There I found my calling as an advocate. I became determined to rip the closet doors off the hinges and drag the virus out into the light where women and men could talk about it without shame or embarrassment.

My voice has now become my vehicle for change. It was small at first, talking one-on-one or in tiny groups. Then I found writing as an outlet. I penned a few articles and got invited to speak to larger and larger groups. With each interaction my voice grew. It felt as if I was a megaphone, talking, not only about HPV and cervical cancer, but also fertility preservation, sexual dysfunction and everything in



between.

Fast forward a bit: the day my daughter was born and I stared into her eyes I knew my voice would never be silent again. It's my duty to scream these messages from the rafters, make each moment count when I am in front on a group of mother's debating about giving their daughters the HPV vaccination, telling college-aged girls to make their own sexual health a priority, to remind women in their 50s and 60s that it is never too late to be educated. I will continue to be a strong voice until the day we stop burying our mothers, sisters, daughters, and friends from this preventable disease. Please join your voice with mine, because together our voice is more powerful and we can prevent others from losing their fertility and/or their life.

[www.HowILostMyUterus.com](http://www.HowILostMyUterus.com)

[www.MichelleLeeWhitlock.com](http://www.MichelleLeeWhitlock.com)

<http://www.facebook.com/michellewhitlock#!/michellewhitlock>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/MichelleLWhitlock/featured>

<https://twitter.com/MLWhitlock>

901-481-2506

"Together our voice is stronger and more powerful; join me and speak out"

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CCFA is a multi-year, multi-state initiative that is building a broad public health strategy to eliminate cervical cancer through vaccination, screening, and education. This newsletter provides up-to-date news related to cervical cancer prevention including HPV vaccination, screening, education, and news items from CCFA and the six CCF Partner States.

Almost every case of cervical cancer can be prevented so we thank you for your part in fighting this disease!

To sign up for the newsletter and to join our cause, email [ccfa@unc.edu](mailto:ccfa@unc.edu) with your name and email address and we will add you to our mailing list.

Visit CCFA on-line at [www.cervicalcancerfreeamerica.org](http://www.cervicalcancerfreeamerica.org)

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