It is the mission of the Office of Community Engaged Research and Implementation Science (OCERIS) to support the UI Cancer Center by fostering community-academic partnerships and supporting research and training conducted and implemented at the community level.
This has been an active and exciting year for the Cancer Center and the Office of Community Engaged Research and Implementation Science. The first year of OCERIS has focused on developing a strong infrastructure and building partnerships to realize the vision of the Cancer Center and the University. The Cancer Center has gained a stronger and evidence based understanding of the cancer disparities that exist among the people we serve through partnerships with key community stakeholders and an in-depth examination of community data.

Through the work of OCERIS, the Cancer Center has acquired three federally funded grants, including a P20 (in partnership with Governors State University) and a U54 (in partnership with Northwestern University and Northeastern University). These resources provide a foundation for us to expand research, engagement and the development of the next cohort of health equity researchers and clinicians. While focused on achieving NCI designation, we are committed to community engagement. OCERIS will continue to build partnerships that support community based screening, prevention, navigation, and access to clinical trials.

The next phase of our service to the community will focus on expanding partnerships and highlighting the key strengths of our institution. Our campus is home to some of the most innovative and renowned researchers in the country. We will leverage this strength to increase our local and national footprint in trans-disciplinary collaborative research. Our recently funded NCI grants will allow us to respond to our Chancellor’s charge to “enhance our student’s experience,” as well as engage students and junior faculty from around Chicago. We will develop a strategic plan to demonstrate how we can better serve our cancer center’s catchment area of over 400,000 community members through innovative research that is designed and conducted to address cancer inequities.

Robert Winn MD
Cancer Center Director, Associate Vice President for Community Based Practice
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THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS CANCER CENTER

As one of Illinois’s first community-based cancer centers, the University of Illinois Cancer Center (UI Cancer Center) is dedicated to reducing the burden of cancer on the people of Illinois and beyond through an integrated program of excellence in research and education on the causes, prevention, detection, and treatment of cancer. We work collaboratively with 11 colleges across all three campuses of the University of Illinois, including all of our health science colleges and Colleges of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Engineering; and Agriculture, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences, on issues of cancer biology, genetics, therapies, imaging, prevention and early detection, and psychosocial oncology. By employing an evidence-based approach to community engagement, our aim is to identify the needs of the community and develop pragmatic research and patient navigation to improve health outcomes. With cancer-related research funding exceeding $59 million, the UI Cancer Center is implementing a “bench to community” model by bringing cancer care into the community and actively translating knowledge gained into improved quality of life for all those who are impacted by cancer.

REACH OF THE UI CANCER CENTER

Who We Serve
The NCI states that the catchment area must be defined and justified by the center based on the geographic area it serves. UI Cancer Center is benefitted by the close partnership it has with the Mile Square Health Centers and Integrated Health Centers of UI Health with an ability to expand its reach through many parts of Chicago. The five Mile Square FQHCs and three IHCs help the Cancer Center have direct contact with people from fifteen wards, twelve zip codes, and numerous communities. This expanded catchment area gives the Cancer Center access to over 400,000 community members in the Chicago Area.

MILE SQUARE AND IHC CLINIC SITES

1. Back of the Yards
2. Cicero
3. Englewood
4. Main/Near West
5. South Shore
6. Humboldt Park
7. North Clinic
8. South Clinic
UI CANCER CENTER ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

UI Cancer Center is the research and clinical trials component of oncology within the University of Illinois College of Medicine. Our four campuses in Chicago, Peoria, Rockford and Urbana function as one Cancer Center. Research in the University of Illinois Cancer Center is organized into four broad, thematic programs that are mechanism-based and focused on making discoveries that can lead to improvements in cancer treatment, diagnosis, and prevention. These programs are tightly linked to clinical research and treatment working groups in areas such as breast cancer, lung cancer, gastrointestinal cancers and prostate cancer. UI Cancer Center is supported by its administrative leadership and staff. For more information please visit the Cancer Center website at cancer.uillinois.edu.

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Dorothy Sholeen-Modrzyk
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Regina Schwind
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Administrative Director Community Engaged Research

Meha Singh, MS, MPH
Manager Protocol Review/Data Safety Monitoring Committee
OVERVIEW

The Office of Community Engaged Research and Implementation Science (OCERIS) of the University of Illinois Cancer Center (UI Cancer Center) was designed to support the model of the UI Cancer Center as a Community Based Cancer Center. The VISION of the OCERIS is to support the engagement of underserved communities, to improve cancer outcomes, research, education and training. OCERIS is directly aligned with the Mile Square Health Center (MSHC), through the Office of Community Based Practice. Our partnerships with MSHC and our community collaborations are at the heart of our Community Based Cancer Center, as we move research from the “bench to the community,” and as we develop evidence based model of engagement. OCERIS supports the UI Cancer Center’s journey toward NCI- designation by emphasizing the essentials of the UI Cancer Center that maximize its role, as a comprehensive community-focused cancer center, and by fostering research and engagement that emphasizes prevention, control and population science research.

TARGET AREAS OF ENGAGEMENT

We believe that best practices in prevention, early detection and treatment begin and end with partnerships between primary care providers, patients and cancer specialists including researchers. OCERIS has five target areas of engagement:

- **Community Based Cancer Screening, Education and Prevention:** Improving cancer screening, prevention and early detection through engagement of our MSHC patients, providers, other community partners, community based hospitals, and clinics.
- **Access to Care:** Ensuring community members have medical coverage and have established a primary medical home that supports access to specialty oncology care along with supportive care from prevention and screening to survivorship support.
- **Community Engaged Research and Implementation Science:** Increasing access to research and clinical trials and facilitating the design of research that addresses community’s needs based on principles of community based participatory research and implementation science.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Engaging community partners from civic, political, public health and other stakeholders that have a vested interest in addressing cancer inequities locally as well as in the state of Illinois and nationally.
- **Workforce Development:** Fostering the development of a cadre of cancer and health disparities researchers and clinicians that reflect the diverse communities we serve and supporting the development of research agendas that address cancer inequities as well as early exposure to STEM careers for students from junior high to post-baccalaureate.
OCERIS STAFF

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Associate Director
Community Engaged Research

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Community Engaged Researcher

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Lead Research Coordinator

Chris Gay
Community Engagement Coordinator

Scott Grumeretz
Community Engaged Clinical Research Associate

Todd St. Hill
Men’s Cancer Navigator

Tina Lewis
Community Health Worker/
Health Advocate

Angela Ware
Community Health Worker/
Health Advocate Navigator

Desmona Strahan
Lifestyle Maintenance Navigator

FACULTY AND ACADEMIC PARTNERS
Rachel Caskey, MD, MPH
Vince Freeman, MD, MPH: Ward Based Cancer Model
Kameron L. Matthews, MD,
Peter Gann, MD, ScD
Kent Hoskins, MD
Alejandra Perez-Tamayo, MD
Marc Atkins, PhD: Advisor Implementation Science
In less than 18 months, OCERIS has expanded the breadth of shared research resources, to advance scientific goals and support the strategy for a developing a plan for NCI designation. In order to better align OCERIS with the Cancer Center goal to become an NCI designated Cancer Center, and to build a better infrastructure to create interventions and programs, the OCERIS has begun to accrue a strong base of federal and non-federal funding. Below is a breakdown of the increase in Cancer Center grant funding for this academic year. The Cancer Center was able to capitalize on many of these grant funding opportunities through internal and external academic partnerships, including a partnership with Governor State University, for funding through a P20 grant, and partnerships with the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University and Northeastern Illinois University, for funding through a U54 grant.
The OCERIS supports the UI Health commitment of ensuring the engagement of our patient population in screening, prevention and education by providing opportunities for UI Health providers, staff, student and volunteers to participate in community engagement activities. To comply with the standards set by the Commission on Cancer and the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers, the UI Cancer Center approaches engagement with intentionality and specific outcomes in mind. All engagement activities are categorized and tracked utilizing our Five Areas of Engagement to best gauge the manner in which the OCERIS is interacting with the community. Below are highlights of engagement that led to screening underserved populations, early detection, and comprehensive navigation for those requiring treatment and follow-up care.

---

**94 total events attended**

**Over 3000 touches by the Cancer Center**

**1200 community members navigated to care**

---

### Implementation of the Five Areas of Engagement

- Community Based Screening
- Access to Care
- Research
- Workforce Development
- Stalholder Engagement

---

### Program/Event Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/Event</th>
<th>Rationale/Aims</th>
<th>Target Population (Community Area or Demographics)</th>
<th>Service Provided</th>
<th>Outcome/Follow-up of Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mi-Quit Smoking Cessation and Long Cancer Screening Program</td>
<td>Address the high smoking rates in the Cancer Center and Mile Square catchment areas</td>
<td>UI Cancer Center Mile Square Health Center patient population</td>
<td>Navigation to Smoking Cessation through State Quitline, Navigation to Long Cancer Screening, LDCT Long Cancer Screening</td>
<td>136 Patients Navigated to Smoking Cessation, 93 patients screened through LDCT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mi-Care Colorectal Cancer Screening Navigation Program</td>
<td>Address the high rates of colorectal cancer in Mile Square catchment areas (Englewood, Back of the Yards, South Shore) and the low rates of colorectal cancer screening in the Mile Square patient population</td>
<td>Mile Square Patient Population</td>
<td>Navigation to Colorectal Cancer Screening (CTT and Colonoscopy), Education about Colorectal Cancer and Colorectal Cancer Screening</td>
<td>316 Patients Navigated to Colorectal Cancer screening, 104 completed Colorectal Cancer Screenings, 1479 Colorectal Cancer Screening Client Education and Reminders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project REACH</td>
<td>Address the low HPV vaccination and cervical cancer screening rates in the Mile Square Health Center patient population</td>
<td>Mile Square Health Center patients in Cicero (90000)</td>
<td>Educational about HPV vaccination and Cervical Cancer Screening, Navigation to cervical Cancer screening, Navigation and guidance through HPV vaccinations</td>
<td>270 Client Reminder and Education cards, 48 patients navigated to vaccination, 36 HPV vaccinations completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wealth in Wednesdays: Community Based Cancer Screening</td>
<td>Address the low utilization of the Mile Square Mammography suite</td>
<td>Underserved women from the UI Cancer Center catchment area</td>
<td>Education about Breast Cancer, Breast Cancer Screening best practices, Navigation to same day mammography, Consultation with Breast Cancer specialist and surgeon</td>
<td>91 women navigated to mammography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heupel 2015</td>
<td>Address elevated rates of breast cancer mortality in Bloomingdale Park, Current rate 1.2x state and national average</td>
<td>Underserved Latina and African American women</td>
<td>Navigation to Latina and Breast Health and Screening Education, Navigation to Smoking Cessation</td>
<td>16 Women Navigated to Walk in Wednesday, 23 scheduled appointments, 14 completed mammograms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The NIH defines Implementation Science as “the study of methods to promote the integration of research findings and evidence into healthcare policy and practice. It seeks to understand the behavior of healthcare professionals and other stakeholders as a key variable in the sustainable uptake, adoption, and implementation of evidence-based interventions”. The intent of implementation science and related research is to investigate and address major barriers that impede effective execution, test new approaches to improve health programming, as well as determine a causal relationship between the intervention and its impact. OCERIS has adopted Implementation Science as one of its main focuses and has created the following projects to align with the practices and goals of Implementation Science.

**MI-QUIT**

In response to the Healthy People 2020 goal of reducing the national smoking rate to 12%, and to address the elevated lung cancer rates in the Cancer Center’s catchment area, the UI Cancer Center and Mile Square created the Mi-Quit smoking cessation program. The purpose of Mi-Quit is to incorporate a community-based smoking cessation and lung cancer screening and navigation program into an FQHC.

Mi-Quit includes the following:

- Provider training and education on the 5 As; “Assessment of Stage of Behavior Change
- Navigation to state and university smoking cessation resources
- Navigation to nurse navigator for lung cancer screening
- Follow-up, surveillance and navigation to specialty care

**WALK-IN WEDNESDAY: COMMUNITY BASED CANCER SCREENING**

The Cancer Center working with the Department of Radiology and Department Surgery, created Walk-In Wednesday to increase the awareness and utilization of the Mile Square Mammography services.

Beginning on Wednesday, May 13, 2015, UI Cancer Center and Mile Square Clinic began “Walk in Wednesday,” every second Wednesday of the month, for women from the community to receive screening mammograms and see Dr. Alejandra Perez-Tamayo, Associate Professor of Surgery and Breast Oncology Surgery Specialist.

**Outcomes**

- Increase screening mammogram volume for Mile Square Health Center
- Promote community partnerships through Walk-In Wednesday

**Community Partners**

- Chicago Metropolitan Breast Cancer Task Force
- New Life Covenant Church
- Consulate General of Mexico
- Consulate General of Dominican Republic
MI-CARE

The UI Cancer Center catchment area carries some of the highest rates of colorectal cancer in the city and state, with rates in some communities going as high as 2.4 times the national average.

The purpose of the Mi-Care program is to increase colorectal cancer screening in community based settings through the incorporation of a community-based colorectal cancer screening and navigation program into MSHC. Mi-Care includes the following:

• Provider training and education on CRC screening guidelines
• Navigation to GI or colorectal surgery for colonoscopy or distribution of FIT test
• Follow-up, surveillance and navigation to specialty care for positive screens.

PROJECT REACH

Reports from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that Hispanic and African American women carry the greatest burden of cervical cancer in the United States. However, they have decreased rates of HPV vaccination compared to white women. Documented barriers that prevent uptake of HPV vaccination in Hispanic and African American populations include medical mistrust, limited access and health literacy and paucity in research that examines effective, culturally tailored education in high risk populations.

The purpose of Project REACH is to employ community health workers at Mile Square Health Center (MSHC) and UI Cancer Center, to examine cervical cancer screening rates and vaccination compliance in the MSHC clinics, in order to align rates with Healthy People 2020 and US Preventative Task Force. Future effort will include a mixed-methods research project in collaboration with leading experts in the field such as Rachel Caskey, MD.

HERITAAGE

The HER-ITAAGe (Helping Educate about Risk: Improving Access and Awareness of Genetic Testing) project sets out to increase awareness and access of familial risk assessment and genetic counseling among two groups of African American women: those who are breast cancer survivors, and those who are first degree family members of women who have had a diagnosis of breast cancer but have been unaffected by breast cancer to date. This qualitative research project proposes to improve knowledge and awareness of breast cancer best practices and guidelines for genetic risk assessment, screening, and prevention for survivors and their family members.

Kent Hoskins, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Hematology-Oncology, is the PI for the project with Karriem Watson, DHSc, as a co-investigator.
The GUIDE (Governors State University–UI Cancer Center Disparity Education) Cancer Research Training Project is a collaborative initiative between Governors State University (GSU) and UI Cancer Center (UICC). This collaboration will enhance the capacity of both institutions to conduct research to understand and reduce local cancer disparities and their determinants. The institutions will jointly conduct a pilot research project addressing a local, cancer-related health disparity, and will develop a training program for GSU junior faculty and undergraduate students designed to attract and prepare investigators for careers in cancer disparities research. The training and education program will leverage research expertise in cancer-related health inequities at the UICC and will incorporate successful elements of research training programs developed at GSU and the University of Illinois at Chicago.

AIMS OF THE GUIDE PROJECT

1. Establish a collaborative partnership between GSU and UICC in Cancer Disparities Research and Training.

2. Encourage underrepresented minority undergraduate students from GSU to pursue careers in disparities research.

3. Conduct a collaborative locally focused breast cancer pilot research study by investigators at UICC, GSU, and a local community-based organization.

4. Provide an integrated cancer research training and career development experience at the junior faculty level in the GSU college of Health and Human Services.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

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Cancer Center
University of Illinois at Chicago

Catherine Balthazar PHD
Department Chair
CHHS Communication Disorders
Governors State University

Rupert M. Evans Sr. DHA, MPA, FACHE
Chairman, Director
Health Administration Department
Governors State University

Funding support for the GUIDE Project is provided by the National Cancer Institute (grant 1 P20 CA202908-01)
THE GUIDE PROJECT WILL:

- Mentor GSU junior faculty and students with key UI Cancer Center researchers
- Conduct monthly lunch & learns open to students, faculty, and community members, on GSU campus addressing topics in cancer disparities
- Provide summer internships and research opportunities for GSU undergraduates at UIC to conduct cancer disparities research
- Support grant development at GSU that expands and sustains capacities built through the GUIDE project

GUIDE TOWN HALL FORUM

Officials from the University of Illinois at Chicago, Governors State University, and UI Cancer Center held a town hall forum on December 18th, to announce the GUIDE project and discuss the cancer disparities present in the city of Chicago and the south suburbs. The town hall was highlighted by speeches from Jerry Bauman, Interim Vice President for Health Affairs at UI Health, Deborah Bordelon, provost of Governors State, and State Senator Michael Hastings.

"The partnership between the University of Illinois Cancer Center and Governors State University in Project GUIDE will transform lives and communities. This collaborative effort will make a difference right now in our Southland communities, as well as support the development of future leaders in cancer health disparities research."

- Deborah Bordelon
  GSU provost

EXPANDING ACCESS AND AWARENESS

UI Cancer Center is proud to work with the “New” Roseland Community Hospital as a key community stakeholder in the GUIDE Project. Roseland has a state of the art mammography machine and the GUIDE Project hopes to increase community awareness of the resources for cancer screening and early detection in Chicago’s south side and south suburban communities.

Funding support for the GUIDE Project is provided by the National Cancer Institute (grant 1 P20 CA202908-01)
The Chicago Cancer Health Equity Collaborative (ChicagoCHEC) is a groundbreaking cancer research, education, and training partnership, led by the University of Illinois Cancer Center, the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University, and Northeastern Illinois University. Funded by a landmark five-year $17.4 million grant from the National Cancer Institute, ChicagoCHEC aims to improve cancer health outcomes in low-income and minority Chicago communities, through meaningful scientific discovery, education, training, and outreach. Working in tandem with communities affected by cancer, ChicagoCHEC will establish innovative research and community engagement programs across the cancer care continuum, from prevention and early detection, to treatment and survival. As part of its core education and training mission, ChicagoCHEC will provide mentoring and learning opportunities, to accelerate the career advancement of low-income and minority students interested in health and cancer research careers.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

Robert Winn, MD  
UI Cancer Center Director  
Associate Vice President of Community Based Practice  
University of Illinois at Chicago

Melissa Simon, MD, MPH  
George H Gardner Professor of Clinical Gynecology  
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology  
Northwestern University

Christina Ciecieski, PHD  
Associate Professor of Economics  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Northeastern Illinois University

Moira Stuart PHD  
Associate Professor of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Athletics  
Northeastern Illinois University
CHICAGOCHEC WILL:

• Establish trans-disciplinary cancer disparities research programs in behavioral and social science, biomedical, and translational science.
• Mobilize researchers, educators, community leaders, students, organizations, and patients in innovative cancer education and outreach programs, to improve health outcomes among Chicago’s low-income, minority, and disability communities.
• Provide training, mentoring, and learning opportunities to recruit and retain minority and underrepresented students in health and cancer research careers.
• Support the career development and advancement of minority and underrepresented faculty and scientists.

PRESS CONFERENCE AND TOWN HALL FORUM

To kickoff the beginning of the ChicagoCHEC project, the three partnering institutions held a joint press conference and town hall forum at the Arturo Velasquez Institute in Pilsen. The press conference focused on the health inequities present in Chicago communities and featured leadership from all three institutions. The press conference concluded with a town hall forum, where community members were able to ask the project PIs about the creation and aims of the ChicagoCHEC project.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

“Access Living is thrilled to be part of this citywide health disparities grant initiative. We are honored to take a leadership role in piloting peer mentoring as a tool to address the widely held misconception that women with disabilities are not at risk for breast cancer. This grant gives us the opportunity to address this misconception with a peer mentoring breast health project designed by and for people with disabilities.”

—Judy Panko Reis
Access Living Healthcare Policy Analyst

“ChicagoCHEC offers the amazing opportunity for cancer patients, survivors, and health advocates to not only engage with health disparities research but to take a major role in how research is done in the city of Chicago.”

—Stephanie Logan
Cancer Survivor, Patient Advocate

Funding support provided by the National Cancer Institute (grants U54CA202995, U54CA202997, and U54CA203000). The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.
HOPEFEST

The New Life Covenant Church held its 10th annual Hopefest on July 25, 2015. Heralded as the largest back-to-school event in Chicago, Hopefest hosts over 3,000 community members to take part in many festivities and engage with resources from across Chicago.

This year, UI Cancer Center partnered with the department of surgery and the UI Health Integrated Health Centers and hosted a comprehensive health table that offered cancer education, breast cancer screening, and navigation to mammography, smoking cessation and primary care.

OCERIS was able to educate 750 people about cancer screenings, navigate 76 women to breast cancer screenings and 26 people to smoking cessation.

ENCELEWOOD 5K: “DITCH THE WEIGHT AND GUNS”

OCERIS sponsored and participated in the second annual Englewood 5k “Ditch the Weight and Guns”, created to raise awareness and promote fitness, nutrition and promote violence prevention in the Greater Englewood Community. OCERIS was present to promote lung health and support our Englewood community partners. The race had over 900 participants from all over Chicago and included appearances from Mayor Rahm Emmanuel, Alderman Toni Foulkes, and Alderman Raymond Lopez.

BLACK WOMEN’S EXPO

A three day expo held at the McCormick Place, the Black Women’s Expo brings in tens of thousands of community members to engage with a number of resources.

UI Health was present for the event all three days with the community engagement team hosting a cancer education and screening table on the second day. The engagement team was able to educate over 300 people about the importance of cancer screening, and prevention.
U AND I BEATING BREAST CANCER SURVIVOR APPRECIATION CELEBRATION

The UI Health Center for Breast Care, co-chaired by OCERIS, organized the inaugural Survivor Appreciation Celebration. Sponsored by the UI Cancer Center, UIC Department of Surgery, and UI Hospital, the event brought in over 80 survivors, patients, and their families. Donated prizes and gift bags, performances from local community dance groups, and speeches from breast cancer survivors were just some of the many festivities present at the event. The OCERIS engagement team was present promoting our Survivors Empowerment Network and HERITAAGe genetic counseling project as part of the resource fair that included 12 UI Health departments and breast-cancer focused community organizations.

GOSPEL 5K RUN/WALK

The Gospel Run is an annual 5k Race and music festival that brings in almost 800 participants to promote physical activity and a healthy lifestyle. The UI Cancer Center was present to promote cancer screening and to navigate community members to primary care. In 2016 UICC is planning to expand its role with the Gospel Run and host a fully comprehensive cancer education table.

STATE OF THE CANCER UNION TOWN HALL FORUM

UI Cancer Center, partnering with the Robert H Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center at Northwestern and the Metropolitan Chicago Breast Cancer Task Force, organized the State of the Cancer Union Town Hall Forum. The forum, hosted at the Chicago Urban League, focused on health inequities among Chicago communities and African Americans. The forum was highlighted by a keynote presentation by Rick Kittles, PHD, whose research focuses on the roles of genes and environment for prostate cancer risk, and the presentation of the Mountain Movers Awards to Bishop Larry Trotter, a cancer survivor and community advocate for cancer research, and Donalynne Schaffer, a longtime community breast cancer educator and navigator with the Metropolitan Chicago Breast Cancer Task Force.
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Recent data have shown that community engagement efforts that build upon the social capital of civic and community partnerships have a positive impact on the health outcomes of the community. Our office has strong working relationships with political and community stakeholders. These relationships allow us to examine policies and build partnerships that enable us to engage our communities in a significant way. Our civic and political partnerships facilitate the creation of pipelines, from the community to the university, that support leadership development of our youth, and provide leadership with evidence-based data to help guide their policy and programmatic efforts.

ALDERMAN PARTNERSHIPS

Creating partnerships with the aldermen of Chicago is an important part of the Cancer Center’s civic engagement. Aldermen in Chicago are the closest political stakeholders in the communities of Chicago, and in many instances work as the principal voice in for the needs of the community. The UI Cancer Center’s relationships with the alderman of Chicago have produced more meaningful engagement with the communities we serve, and a more direct method to have a real impact in these communities.
The Chinese American Service League (CASL) is one of the largest and most comprehensive service agencies in the Midwest. It sits in the heart of Chinatown and serves the many Chinese American immigrants of Chicago. OCERIS has had a partnership with CASL since the inception of the Community Campus Cancer Collaborative (CCCC) in the summer of 2014. CASL is one of our most active CCCC partners and has been an essential partner for the Cancer Center’s efforts to engage the many Asian American communities of Chicago.

STATE IMPACT: PEORIA

As the research and clinical trials component of oncology within the University of Illinois College of Medicine, our four campuses in Chicago, Peoria, Rockford and Urbana function as one Cancer Center. Partnerships with the Regional Dean of the UIC-Peoria COM further expands the reach of the UI Cancer Center to engage rural communities and to provide additional opportunities for students. Researchers such as Dr. Carl Asche provides opportunities for current projects in colorectal cancer screening to be expanded to rural partners in Peoria. Additionally, basic science research conducted within the Peoria campus provides another true model of the “bench to community” approach.

ROCKFORD 2.0

Beginning in the spring of 2015, Dr. Winn and the Cancer Center have had the opportunity to work with Mayor Larry Morrissey and the City of Rockford administration to assist in building their Healthy Rockford campaign. The Healthy Rockford campaign was initiated to improve the primary and specialty care health awareness and access available to Rockford community members through the establishment of a network of clinics managed by the city. The UI Cancer Center, UIC Office of Population Health Sciences, and the UIC Institute for Health Research and Policy were brought in to partner on the project to assist with addressing the community health needs of the Rockford community. Key thought leaders such as Dr. Jerry Krishnan, Dean Michael Pagano, Dr. Stagnaro-Green, Dean of the College of Medicine at Rockford, and Michael Redding, Vice Chancellor for Public and Government Affairs, will be working with key leaders from Rockford to embrace the Chancellor’s vision of a global community.
MISSION OF CCCC

The Community Campus Cancer Collaborative is a community and academic partnership between internal and external stakeholders, to address cancer outcomes at the community level through community-based education, targeted screening and prevention, and improving access to treatment and clinical trial engagement, to improve outcomes.

THE AIMS OF THE CCCC ARE TO:

1. Support, develop and coordinate community engagement efforts for improved cancer education, screening, prevention and navigation to treatment.
2. Collaborate with community organizations to address psychosocial determinants of cancer outcomes and align community partners with academic partners, to develop programs and engagement that improve outcomes.
3. Assist in identifying the research needs of the community and to support and promote research engagement and dissemination of research findings relevant to community needs.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

“The CCCC is a beautiful initiative that brings leaders and minds from the Chicago cancer community together!! We all know we are stronger together. For example, at a CCCC meet-up, I met the awesome Esther Wong, Executive Director of Chinese American Services League (CASL), and she invited me to come in and speak to their team. After a 3h speech and meeting, Imerman Angels and CASL have partnered up to help more people with cancer in the Chicago Chinese-American community!!! I am GRATEFUL to the CCCC and its members’ hard work.”

— Jonny Imerman
Imerman Angels

“More and more people are surviving their cancer. These people need to learn how to live with their remission, how to navigate through their long term side effects, how to lessen the chances of reoccurrence and how to readjust to their ‘new normal’. I believe that the CCCC is a great resource to survivors as a way to educate and connect with multiple facets of the Chicago cancer community.”

— Stephanie Logan
Patient Advocate, Survivor
Alicia Matthews, PhD, Professor
Department of Health Systems Science, UIC College of Nursing

Dr. Alicia Matthews is a clinical psychologist and professor of health systems science in the UIC College of Nursing. She is a national expert on the factors associated with cancer-related health disparities among underserved populations, including African American and LGBT persons. She has served on three Institute of Medicine panels related to health disparities and health equity, and has received multiple federally funded grant awards, including an R01. As an expert in health systems training and academic pipeline programs, Dr. Matthews is Co-Investigator on the NCI U54 grant and NCI P20 grant.

Yamile Molina, PhD, MPH, Associate Professor
Community Health Sciences, School of Public Health

Dr. Yamile Molina is a Senior Research Specialist and Assistant Professor with the Center for Research on Women and Gender, Community Health Sciences Division. She is committed to academic, community, and advocacy efforts that optimize the agency and well-being of women. Toward that end, Dr. Molina has received qualitative and quantitative training that spans across disciplines, including graduate degrees in psychology and epidemiology. As an expert in health equity research, community engagement and partnership, she is working with the OCERIS as an Early Investigator and as co-leader of the Training and Education Core in ChicagoCHEC.

Marian Fitzgibbon, PhD, Deputy Director
UIC Institute for Health Research and Policy

Dr. Marian Fitzgibbon is the Deputy Director of the Institute for Health Research Policy and the Associate Director of the UI Cancer Center’s Population Health, Behavior and Outcomes Program. Her research focuses primarily on health risk reduction interventions in minority and underserved populations. As an expert in pre-doctoral, postdoctoral, and junior faculty mentorship, Dr. Fitzgibbon leads an R25 Training grant at UIC and serves as Co-Investigator on the NCI U54 Grant and leads the Internal Advisory Committee of the NCI P20 Grant.

Vincent Freeman, MD, MPH, Associate Professor
Division of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, UIC School of Public Health

Dr. Vince Freeman is a physician and epidemiologist in the epidemiology and biostatistics division of the School of Public Health, whose research addresses the nutritional and molecular epidemiology of prostate cancer, and the causes of racial/ethnic disparities in mortality among American men with the disease. Dr. Freeman is the Principal Investigator on a pilot project through the UI Cancer Center that will demonstrate the feasibility of the collection and dissemination of ward based cancer data.
LUNG CANCER SCREENING PROGRAM

Dr. Arek Dudek, Cancer Center Clinical Trials Office (CTO) Medical Director, is working with Mary Pasquinelli, APN, from the Department of Pulmonary and Medical Oncology, and OCERIS team to develop a community based screening and navigation program, to increase awareness and uptake of lung cancer screening. Communities on the South and West sides of Chicago see some of the highest rates of lung cancer mortality in the country. The Lung Cancer Screening Program navigates eligible patients to the nurse navigator for secondary prevention measures through low dose CT (LDCT).

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE GRANT

Evidence based data from our community areas demonstrate the inequities in prostate and lung cancer outcomes in Chicago communities. Communities like Austin on the south side see prostate mortality rates over twice as high as the rest of the state. A Department of Defense grant led by Dr. Peter Gann, from the Department of Pathology, Dr. Michael Abern, from the Department of Urology, along with Dr. Courtney Hollwell, from Cook County Hospital System, and Dr. Adam Murphy, from the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern, are currently conducting impact of a randomized trial examining a novel biomarker on treatment choice and the psychological status of men with low-risk prostate cancer.
RESIDENT ASSOCIATION OF GREATER ENGLEWOOD

The Resident Association of Greater Englewood (R.A.G.E) is a resident-driven association established to build relationships with Englewood residents, public officials, business owners and organizations. R.A.G.E. strategizes to address community problems, creates tangible solutions and actively seeks ways to keep fellow residents informed about the latest news in Englewood. The UI Cancer Center is now a member of RAGE and partners with them on a number of projects including the Englewood 5k and our men’s health awareness efforts.

With our membership in RAGE, UI Cancer Center was tasked with engaging the Englewood workforce and if possible hiring Englewood community members. When an opportunity arose to hire new community health workers the Cancer Center worked to fill those positions with Englewood Community members. These efforts resulted in employing three community health workers from Englewood who are currently working with the Cancer Center to navigate patients to primary and specialty care.

SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

A major focus of OCERIS is to ensure that we continue to develop a workforce of health care leaders and researchers who understand the diverse needs of the populations we serve.

In the summer of 2015, OCERIS organized and managed the inaugural Cancer Center Summer Internship Program. In the first year of the summer program, OCERIS employed ten medical students, two graduate students, and three undergraduate students from the UI system to assist with Mi-Care, Project Reach, and the Cancer Center’s efforts with Hopefest. Along with experience on the navigation projects in Mile Square the summer interns had the opportunity to take part in trainings on breast and cervical cancer screening standards and best practices, patient navigation, and community engagement.

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER TRAININGS

During 2015, OCERIS had four Community Health Worker trainings. These trainings focused on improved navigation techniques and protocols, Cervical cancer screening education and protocols, Breast Cancer screening navigation, and community engagement. The trainings were sponsored by the UI Cancer Center, UIC OCEAN-HP, and Mile Square health Center. Looking forward, a goal of the training is to offer them to CHWs outside of the UI Health Network and to possibly build a certificate program for Community Health Workers.
MILE SQUARE HEALTH CENTER

The Mile Square Health Centers are a network of community-based, primary care federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) located in different neighborhoods in the city of Chicago. Currently functioning as an ambulatory care network of five primary health centers, three Integrated Health Care clinics and four school-based clinics, Mile Square has a close partnership with the UI Cancer Center, as it serves as the principal avenue for the Cancer Center to engage the community. The OCERIS was created with the crucial partnership between the Cancer Center and the Mile Square Health Centers. The OCERIS navigators and many of the primary care interventions created by the OCERIS (such as Mi-Quit, Mi-Care, and Project REACH) are housed in Mile Square. The Mile Square Health Centers, their primary care physicians, community health workers, and staff are an invaluable resource for the Cancer Center, as it builds into a community-based cancer center.

Our Mile Square Leadership
President and Chief Executive Officer, Henry Taylor, MPA
Chief Medical Officer, Kameron Matthews, MD, JD
Chief Operating Officer, Sherri Peavy, RN, MBA
Chief Financial Officer, Robert Maziarka, MBA

UIC CENTER FOR CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCE

The UI Cancer Center is affiliated with some of the most robust clinical and translational research partners in the country. The institutional collaboration with the UIC Center for Clinical and Translational Science (CCTS) represents a clear example of leveraging institutional resources to advance research. Key aspects of the CCTS such as the Community Engagement Advisory Board (CEAB) have been instrumental to providing resources for UI Cancer Center members and community partners. Additionally, CCTS faculty such as Dr. Alicia Matthews and Dr. Marc Atkins serve as key advisors and thought leaders in community engaged research and implementation science for the OCERIS.

Robin Mermelstein, PhD
CCTS Co-PI

Marc Atkins, PhD
Core Director, Dissemination and Implementation Research and Policy
The Office of Community Engaged Research and Implementation Science is excited about its expanded partnerships with the Office of Community Engagement and Neighborhood Partnerships. OCEAN-HP fosters partnerships to bring together the expertise, resources and wisdom from the community with that of the university to strengthen the quality of life for all beneficiaries. OCEAN-HP represents a diverse network of partnerships between UIC and organizations in the neighborhoods adjacent to UIC or near University-sponsored, community-based facilities.

During the past year, OCERIS has worked with OCEAN-HP through the Center for Faith and Community Health Transformation to work with faith leaders to examine the role of health ministries in cancer screening, prevention and education. Building upon the expertise of OCEAN-HP in working with Community Health Workers (CHWs), OCERIS has participated in a series of trainings with CHWs to enhance capacity of CHWs to assist in community based cancer screening, prevention and navigation.

The UI Cancer Center is also partnering with OCEAN-HP in the Healthy Cities Collaborative, which brings together researchers and community stakeholders interested in community engaged research. Healthy Cities Collaborative participants discuss new discoveries, ensure timely dissemination of research findings, and demystify the research for community members.

UI COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

In 2015, the UI Cancer Center has worked to better integrate and expand the role of community health workers in the outreach and engagement efforts of OCERIS. Utilizing community trainings and refocused community events, the Cancer Center has been able to optimize the skill set and capacity of our community health workers. In their increased role, the community health workers have been able to take on a number of initiatives to better address the health disparities in our catchment area. The community health workers who work with OCERIS are housed throughout the UI Health System and are integral to the Cancer Center’s efforts to engage communities all across Chicago.
BRIDGING THE EAST AND WEST CAMPUSES

UI Cancer Center maximizes its partnerships within the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). It is a mission of the Cancer Center to engage and include the undergraduate and graduate students across the many UIC colleges. The Cancer Center capitalizes on the strong institutional capabilities in basic science research and integrates education and training across the UIC colleges to support workforce development of a diverse cohort of health care professionals.

UIC COLLEGE OF NURSING

The College of Nursing and OCERIS have worked together closely since the inception of our office. One of OCERIS’s key researchers, Alicia Matthews, PhD, represents the College of Nursing on the Community Campus Cancer Collaborative and conducts research for OCERIS through the GUIDE project and ChicagoCHEC. OCERIS also works closely with the UI Health Integrated Health Care (IHC) clinics, managed by the College of Nursing. OCERIS assists with the community engagement efforts of the IHC clinics and navigates patients from these clinics to our intervention programs.

UIC COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

The College of Education is determined to improve educational and life outcomes and interrupt social and economic disparities in schools and communities. The College has worked for more than three decades to prepare teachers, principals, researchers, activists, and policymakers whose work focuses on positively impacting lives and forming healthy partnerships to counter indignities closely associated with poverty and race. UI Cancer Center is working with the College of Education to engage the next generation of STEM educators with the diverse communities we serve on the South and West sides of Chicago.

UIC OFFICE OF HEALTH LITERACY

The Office of Health Literacy, Prevention and Community Engagement, led by Dr. Paula Allen-Meares, uses a health curriculum to enhance both adult literacy and an understanding of health related issues, which will contribute significantly to scientific research in this area where gaps currently exist. OCERIS is working with the Office of Health Literacy to connect their services to our catchment area and create a more comprehensive engagement model.
It is a mission of OCERIS to assist in the development of the next workforce of healthcare professionals. OCERIS has actively engaged with multiple student programs and organizations within the College of Medicine, College of Nursing, and School of Public Health and worked to connect these students with our multiple programs. The students engaged throughout the past year have been integral resource for OCERIS through our engagement and programmatic efforts.

**UIC HISPANIC CENTER OF EXCELLENCE (HCOE)**

The HCOE is a center of excellence in programs for recruiting and nurturing Latino students in the health professions and in supporting Latino medical students and faculty. The HCOE and OCERIS will be leading the Outreach and Engagement Core of the ChicagoCHEC program. The HCOE’s experience with programming and engagement, focused on diverse minority populations, is an invaluable resource moving forward for OCERIS and the ChicagoCHEC.

**UIC STUDENT NATIONAL MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

The UIC Chapter of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) has been an excellent resource for OCERIS to assist with our engagement efforts and intervention programs. The SNMA assisted us with both of the Men’s Health days hosted at the Mile Square Health Center this past year. Their assistance with the Men’s Health day gave OCERIS a determined and talented volunteer workforce and offered the SNMA real primary care clinic experience.

**UIC URBAN HEALTH PROGRAM**

The Urban Health Program (UHP) at UIC was created to train a cadre of undergraduate health professionals dedicated to addressing persistent health disparities in minority populations. OCERIS and the UHP share the goal of increasing minorities within the field of health professions and health sciences. OCERIS is working with the UHP to connect undergraduate students to research and community engagement opportunities.

**UIC SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

The School of Public Health and the Cancer Center have built a strong partnership over the past year. Vince Freeman, MD, MPH, and Garth Rauscher, PhD from the Division of Epidemiology are assisting OCERIS with data analysis and intervention projects. Dr. Freeman is leading a pilot project for UI Cancer Center focusing on expanding the ward-based cancer data model created by Dr. Rob Winn. This project will build into a resource for OCERIS to create more effective and pragmatic intervention projects.
THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE “BENCH TO COMMUNITY” MODEL

The UI Cancer Center at UIC is thankful to the UIC Office of the Chancellor, Office of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Office of the Vice President for Health Affairs, and the UIC College of Medicine for institutional funding support and resources to UI Cancer Center. Resources and support from UIC leadership positions UI Cancer Center to continue to serve as a major part of the UIC commitment to excellence in research, teaching, and community engagement.

Michael Amiridis, PhD
UIC Chancellor

Eric Gislason, PhD
UIC Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost

Jerry Bauman, PharmD
Dean, College of Pharmacy
Interim Vice President of Health Affairs

Dimitri Azar, MD, MBA
Dean
UIC College of Medicine