SALSI/CTRC speaker series offers latest research in cancer health disparities

The new San Antonio Life Sciences Institute (SALSI) and Cancer Therapy and Research Center (CTRC) Distinguished Health Disparities Lecture Series will bring some of the top U.S. health disparities experts to San Antonio to offer the latest trends, tools and advancements in the fight against cancer health disparities.

Lectures will occur periodically at the CTRC from now to August 2011.

The series aims to enhance the knowledge of local doctors and researchers who can apply learned techniques and strategies in their labs and clinics to address health disparities.

Disparities — the disproportionately higher incidence and mortality of disease compared to whites — plague South Texas residents, particularly Latinos.

“Our SALSI/CTRC lecturers will expose our area health professionals to novel methods of addressing disparities locally,” said Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez, director of the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) at the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio, which co-leads the series with UT San Antonio.

The IHPR is coordinating the series with support from SALSI, CTRC and UTSA.

SALSI was approved by state lawmakers in 2001 in coordination with The University of Texas System Board of Regents to build and strengthen collaboration between the Health Science Center and UTSA.

SALSI in 2009 received its first funding from the Legislature — an $8 million, two-year award — for projects and programs to enhance research, teaching and service. The CTRC is the Health Science Center’s National Cancer Institute-designated Cancer Center.
**From IHPR Director**
**Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez**

Are you a Latino master’s student or master’s-level professional in Texas? I’d like to personally invite you to apply by Feb. 18 for **Éxito!** Latino Cancer Research Leadership Training, our new training program to encourage Latino master’s students and master’s professionals to pursue a doctoral degree in a Latina health disparity research field and/or cancer control research career.

**Éxito!**, based at my Institute for Health Promotion Research at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio, consists of:

- A 5-day Summer Institute with teaching, tools and resources (June 2011)
- Paid Internships (Starting in 2012)
- Doctoral Application Support Awards (Starting in 2012)
- Doctoral Biannual Retreats (Starting in 2014)

We believe our program will enhance participants’ understanding of the power of research to effect change; interest in research methods, theory and interventions; and research, networking, information-seeking skills, and motivation and ability to successfully apply to a doctoral program.

And, in accomplishing these aims, we believe that **Éxito!** can increase the much-needed ethnic diversity in the field of Latino health disparities and cancer control research.

Find out more about **Éxito!** and apply by Feb. 18 [here](#).

If you have questions, e-mail us at wittenburg@uthscsa.edu or sanmiguels@uthscsa.edu.

**Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez**
Director, IHPR

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**IHPR Staff Profile: Daisy Morales-Campos**

Dr. Daisy Morales-Campos’ grandfather came to the U.S. as part of the Bracero Program, which temporarily imported agricultural laborers from Mexico from 1942-64.

Braceros got low wages for physically demanding farm jobs. Many never got other benefits promised them when they returned to Mexico.

Morales-Campos’ grandfather was “gaunt” upon his return, family photos show. He never talked about his time in the program, either.

“I learned about the Bracero Program in college and realized what my grandfather had suffered through,” Morales-Campos said. “He came to this country to support his family and, while it seemed like a good opportunity, his health unfortunately suffered as a result of adverse working conditions in the Texas agriculture industry.

“This spurred me on my career path to ensure social justice for persons like my grandfather, and decrease the gap in health disparities among Latinos.”

Morales-Campos, who earned a PhD in health promotion and behavioral sciences from the UT School of Public Health at Houston and joined the IHPR in 2009, has become skilled in coordinating research projects, community networks, and more.

She coordinates two studies for IHPR researcher Dr. Deborah Parra-Medina: ENLACE, a culturally tailored intervention to increase Latinas’ physical activity; and a project that teams researchers, Girl Scouts, parents and community leaders together to design a multi-level intervention to increase Latina youths’ moderate-to-vigorous physical activity.

For those projects, Morales-Campos develops qualitative research protocols, such as focus groups, interviews and photovoice.

She also developed intervention training manuals and coordinated standardized quantitative data collection.

Morales-Campos also is a co-investigator for **Salud San Antonio!**, which promotes breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer screening among local Latinas.

“I love helping people and empowering them to make changes to live better, healthier lives,” she said. “This area allows me to use all my God-given talents to do what I love. I come to work and use both the artistic and analytical sides of my brain to create interventions, print materials, and training manuals to educate and to empower people.”

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**Fun Facts**

**Hometown:** San Antonio

**Family:** Husband, Hector; dog, Rocky

**Hobbies:** Zumba, kickboxing, dancing salsa, merengue and bachata with husband

**Favorite food(s):** Mom’s pineapple empanadas, mother-in-law’s chicken tamales

**Favorite movie(s):** Gladiator

**Favorite book(s):** Harry Potter series

Daisy Morales-Campos
Record number of South Texas kids with cancer gets access to clinical trials

Dominique is a bubbly, vivacious South Texas teen who is undaunted by her arduous battle with cardio sarcoma, a rare cancer of the heart.

Effective treatment options are needed because only a handful of cases exist.

Dominique didn’t hesitate to enroll in a biology/banking clinical trial for studies that may benefit other kids with cancer, said Cynthia Wittenburg, a patient navigator who supported Dominique as part of an Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) project to help Lower Rio Grande Valley kids get cutting-edge cancer treatment.

“Happy, courageous and hopeful — that’s Dominique. She is a ray of light who, regardless of condition, wants to help other kids in her situation,” Wittenburg said.

Dominique was among a record 115 clinical trial enrollments of Valley kids with cancer in 2010, potentially improving their treatment and lives.

It’s a record made possible by the IHPR’s project.

The project, part of Redes En Acción, a Latino cancer research network funded by the National Cancer Institute, tests how having a patient navigator/clinical research associate — Wittenburg — can help clinics enroll kids in cancer clinical trials.

Wittenburg works to enroll kids who are diagnosed with cancer at Valley-area community clinics associated with Driscoll Children’s Hospital in Corpus Christi. Area kids have disproportionately higher rates of leukemia than the rest of Texas, but don’t participate as frequently in clinical trials, which test new cancer treatments.

Before the project, 38 children enrolled in trials in 2007. The number rose to 62 in 2008 — the first year of the project — to 86 in 2009 and 115 in 2010, the largest number Driscoll’s ever had in a year.

Every single child also enrolled into the official Childhood Cancer Registry.

“While it gives us a heavy heart to see many Valley children suffer from cancer, it pleases us to know we can offer them the chance to enter clinical trials where they can get the most cutting-edge treatment advancements possible,” Wittenburg said.

Josh, a 3-year-old, is another trial participant.

Josh was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia in 2010 at age 2. He underwent several grueling surgeries, chemotherapy and other treatment regimens.

A year later, he has no leukemia in his bloodstream, spine or brain.

“Josh is now classified as a rapid recovery cancer patient,” said his parents, Ty and Audra, on a Web site dedicated to Josh. “This news made both oncologist and parents ecstatic!”

Enrollment by kids like Josh also has helped boost the region’s quality of care.

Several oncologists travel two or three times a week from Driscoll’s campus to the Valley and team with Wittenburg and other pediatric oncology professionals and staff at the local clinics to deliver a variety of new services.

The clinics offer radiology services — MRI, CT, ultrasound, and fluoroscopy — that had previously only been available some 200 miles away.

Nuclear medicine also soon will be available in Driscoll’s McAllen clinic.

“For children who have cancer in the Valley, these are important advances,” Wittenburg said.

“We are working as hard as possible to provide services that may improve their lives.”

IHPR Articles and Presentations

Articles:

Presentations:

Continued on Page 10 ▶
IHPR director addresses Latina breast cancer challenges, solutions

Dr. Amelie Ramirez, leader of the Institute for Health Promotion Research at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio, discussed Latino cancer challenges and solutions in a video podcast at the 33rd Annual San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium.

Ramirez, who led a symposium panel on Dec. 11, 2010, talks about the importance of screening and genetic testing for breast cancer — the top cancer killer of Latinas.

“We need to equal the playing field to provide Latinas with better access to quality health care and better inform these women about what they need to do to ensure breast health,” Ramirez said.

“That means conducting culturally and language-appropriate education on proper care, screening practices and resources available.”

Ramirez and her IHPR team do much research on Latina breast cancer.

They also produce bilingual educational materials, such as public service announcements, Nuestras Historias, a book that tells the stories of dozens of real-life Latina breast cancer survivors, and Buena Vida, a magazine to educate Hispanic communities about cancer issues and raise cancer awareness.

To watch Dr. Ramirez’ or other podcasts produced by the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) from the symposium, go here.

IHPR News Briefs

Drs. Ramirez, Turner examine ‘peer support’ in editorial

IHPR Director Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez and Dr. Barbara J. Turner, professor of medicine at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio, recently co-authored an editorial in the Annals of Internal Medicine. The editorial, “The Role of Peer Patients in Chronic Disease Management,” examines peer support programs that use laypeople—such as those who themselves have a disease—to help patients manage their own health. The editorial indicates that, while some unanswered questions remain about peer support, evidence exists that “we need to move outside of our often-isolated medical practices and partner with the community to improve health outcomes of persons with poorly controlled chronic diseases.”

Report: 2nd Annual Salud America! Scientific Summit

A new report highlights Latino childhood obesity issues discussed at the 2nd Annual Scientific Summit of Salud America! The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Research Network to Prevent Obesity Among Latino Children. The summit, from Sept. 22-24, 2010, in San Antonio, showcased the innovative obesity research being done by the program’s 20 pilot investigators. The investigators, from 11 states around the nation, presented the progress they’ve made on their two-year, $75,000 pilot projects to the audience of 75 of their peers and experts in the field. “I have to tell you, we’re very excited about the impact our pilot investigators are making,” said Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez, director of Salud America!, which is led by the IHPR.

“They’re only halfway through their projects, essentially, and they’ve already: developed original surveys and tools; presented at local and national meetings; had abstracts and posters accepted at prestigious conferences; generated media coverage; and gained a better awareness of their role in policy development.”

IHPR poster gets ‘research excellence’ award

IHPR researcher Dr. Daisy Morales-Campos’ poster has received a “research excellence” award from Dr. Rebecca E. Lee, director of the Texas Obesity Research Center at the University of Houston. Dr. Morales-Campos presented the poster, “Acculturation, body mass index, waist circumference, and physical activity in Mexican-origin women,” at the 2010 Texas Obesity Research Center Conference Nov. 18-19, 2010. IHPR researcher Dr. Deborah Parra-Medina also contributed to the research presented on the poster.
IHPR to open exercise lab to promote rehab, research, teaching in South Texas

About 30 percent of South Texas adults are obese, more so than the rest of Texas.

That's why the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) is opening a clinical exercise research and teaching center at its satellite office at The UT Health Science Center's Regional Academic Health Center (RAHC) in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

The new center, the first of its kind in the region, will serve as a rehabilitation facility and health promotion site for local residents, as well as a hub for research on obesity-related chronic diseases and teaching for medical and exercise science students.

The center will open in early 2011.

"We'll be able to provide an individualized, comprehensive exercise intervention approach to Valley residents, while also gaining the ability to conduct on-site research and teach the next generation of scientists," said Dr. Dan Hughes, the IHPR researcher who will direct the new facility. "This kind of facility is much-needed in region as evidence of the benefits of exercise for all populations continues to accumulate."

The center will be stocked with state-of-the-art exercise devices, including a metabolic cart, ECG machine, treadmill, cycle and strength-testing equipment.

Those referred to the center will be given specific exercise prescriptions based on their fitness capacities, medical history and personal goals, Hughes said.

Center research will examine the effect of exercise on people's health and quality of life.

The center also will have students work with certified exercise specialists to hone their skills in fitness assessment, goal-setting, exercise program development, training, and maintenance phases involved in individualized exercise prescriptions.

"Students will learn how to work with patients who have co-morbidities, like cancer and diabetes, to develop tailored exercise programs," Hughes said. "This type of hands-on experience will provide exercise science students with knowledge and clinical hours necessary for their degrees and certifications, and medical students will better understand how precise exercise programming will benefit their future patients."

The outcomes of the rehabilitation, health promotion, research and teaching aims of the center will be will be publicized in the community and region.

"This facility will help address the many health disparities affecting the Lower Rio Grande Valley," Hughes said. "We're excited about what we'll be able to accomplish."

IHPR researchers earn ‘life support’ certification

IHPR researchers Rose Annie Treviño and Gabriela Villanueva recently earned Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support certification from the American Heart Association. The certification allows them to perform stress testing as part of the IHPR’s soon-to-open clinical exercise research and teaching center at the IHPR’s satellite office at the Regional Academic Health Center in South Texas.

Family ties, healthy habits extend Latinos’ lives

Researchers say Mexican immigrants who exercise regularly, eat wholesome foods and live in tight-knit communities illustrate why Latinos live longer on average than non-Hispanic whites and blacks, according to the Chicago Sun-Times. A recent federal report found Latinos in the U.S. live about two years longer than whites and 7 years longer than blacks. Latinos live longer despite being, on average, poorer, less educated and less likely to visit doctors than most Americans — experts call it the “Latino health paradox.”

Healthy Eating Active Living initiative taking off in Laredo

Residents of Laredo will have the chance to learn more about good health through events and outreach that are part of the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) initiative. The initiative is led by faculty members and a fellow at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio’s Regional Campus in Laredo, and a team of dedicated Laredo area community stakeholders. The initiative aims to promote an environment that supports healthy eating and active living in Laredo. The HEAL initiative was modeled after successful programs in other cities and is backed by statistics from the IHPR’s South Texas Health Status Review, a publication that found a higher prevalence of obesity and diabetes in South Texas than in the rest of Texas or the nation.
A new study of a virus common in HIV-positive patients that leads to an AIDS-related malignant cancer called Kaposi’s sarcoma (KS) shows that Hispanic men are more likely to have antibodies to the virus and make more antibodies to it. Study results indicate that Hispanic men are infected more frequently and the virus is replicating more efficiently in the body. The mere presence of the antibody indicates that a person has been infected by the virus, and the presence of more antibodies is associated with higher risk for developing KS, and poor prognosis.

This is the first study to show that Hispanic men are more vulnerable than those from other ethnic groups, at least in the South Texas HIV-positive population, said one of the researchers, Dr. Shou-Jiang Gao of The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio. The study, published in the Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes, is valuable not only as a clue to guide future research, but also to doctors and HIV-positive patients, Gao said.

Monitoring the signs of increasing Kaposi’s sarcoma-associated herpesvirus antibodies can give them an idea of whether they need to adjust treatment.

“It’s a marker, not unlike PSA counts in prostate cancer,” Gao said. “You have a PSA spike and you know you have to watch this guy.”

Sunscreen prevents melanoma, S. Texas study shows

Rubbing on a lotion with sunscreen active ingredients can prevent melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, according to a new study by Dr. Heather Klug, an immunologist and cancer prevention expert at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio’s Regional Academic Health Center (RAHC) in Edinburg. “Especially after this study I can tell my friends and relatives, yes, use sunscreen on your kids; I use it on mine,” Klug said. Klug and her colleagues found that mice protected with SPF 15 sunscreen—applied 15 minutes prior to UV light exposure—were several times less likely to develop melanoma than mice coated with lotion that had no SPF (sun protection factor) ingredients. The study is described in the December Pigment Cell & Melanoma Research and in a video podcast.

Mexican Americans less likely to become frail

A new study found that older Mexican Americans were much less likely to become frail than Anglos, after adjusting for differences in income and health, the San Antonio Express-News reports. The San Antonio Longitudinal Study of Aging, a research project that followed 600 Hispanic and Anglo older adults for over 10 years, found that, after adjusting for differences in incomes and diabetes, Mexican Americans were about 60 percent less likely to become frail.

San Antonio diabetics ‘sicker’

Nearly one in four San Antonio-area diabetics suffered from out-of-control blood sugar last year, a higher percentage than any major Texas city except El Paso, according to a new report from a statewide business coalition, the San Antonio Express-News reports. Meanwhile, the El Paso Times reports diabetes is a ticking time bomb.

San Antonio girls get inside look at health professions

Some San Antonio girls ages 9-13 will get an inside look at health professions thanks to a new partnership between The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio and the local affiliate of Girls Inc. Girls will attend a three-hour “career day” and workshops on the cardiovascular system, eye dissection and the exploration of health professions. The next “career day” will be in early 2011. For more information, e-mail Anais Biera of Girls Inc.

UT System officials spell out plans for Valley vision

At a recent University of Texas Board of Regents’ retreat in Austin, UT System officials outlined their progress and plans to expand academic and health offerings to the Rio Grande Valley, the Austin American-Statesman reports. Officials say they hope to come up with money to hire faculty members in science, technology, engineering and math at UT-Brownsville and UT-Pan American.
In U.S., Hispanics outlive whites, blacks by several years

U. S. Hispanics can expect to outlive whites by more than two years and blacks by more than seven, government researchers say in a startling report that is the first to calculate Hispanic life expectancy in this country, the Associated Press reports.

The recent report is the strongest evidence yet of what some experts call the “Hispanic paradox” — longevity for a population with a large share of poor, undereducated members. A leading theory is that Hispanics who manage to immigrate to the U.S. are among the healthiest from their countries.

A Hispanic born in 2006 could expect to live about 80 years and seven months, the government estimates.

Life expectancy for a white is about 78, and for a black, just shy of 73 years.

Hispanics are the largest, fastest-growing U.S. minority, accounting for 15 percent of the population. An estimated 40 percent of them are immigrants, who in some cases arrived after arduous journeys to do taxing manual labor. It takes a fit person to accomplish that, suggesting that the U.S. is gaining some of the healthiest people born in Mexico and other countries, said Dr. Peter Muennig of Columbia University’s school of public health who has studied life expectancy in different countries.

However, experts say that immigrant hardiness diminishes within a couple of generations of living here, perhaps due to taking up smoking, fast-food diets and other habits.

Health researchers have seen a strong link between poverty, lack of education and life-shortening health problems. Hispanics are disadvantaged in those areas: About 19 percent of Hispanics live at or below the federal poverty level — three times more than whites. As for education, fewer than 13 percent of Hispanics have a college degree, compared to 17 percent of blacks and 30 percent of whites.

Indeed, past CDC studies have shown that Hispanics suffer some diseases at higher rates than whites, including diabetes and heart disease. But their death rates from those diseases were lower, not higher.

### News Briefs

**U.S. Hispanics have 1 in 52 estimated lifetime risk of HIV**

One in 36 U.S. Hispanic men and one in 106 Hispanic women are at risk of being diagnosed with HIV in their lifetime, HealthDay reports. The overall estimated lifetime risk of HIV diagnosis among Hispanics is one in 52.

**Blacks, Hispanics have low liver cancer survival rates**

U.S. blacks and Hispanics have low survival rates for early-stage liver cancer, according to a new study in the journal Archives of Surgery, HealthDay reports. The study determined five-year survival rates of: 22% for Asian patients, 18.2% for white patients, 15.2% for Hispanic patients, and 12.2% for black patients.

‘Fatalism’ a reason Latinas don’t get cancer screening

“Fatalism,” a belief that life’s events are predetermined, may be a reason why Latinas have some of the lowest cancer screening rates, new research suggests, HealthDay reports. Latinas are much more likely than white women to believe that cancer is not preventable, and that death is inevitable in those diagnosed with cancer.

**Latinas wait longer for confirmatory breast cancer diagnosis**

White women with private insurance waited an average of 15.9 days between breast cancer testing and confirmatory diagnosis, while privately insured Latinas waited 51.4 days, a new study shows, HealthDay reports. The study, which involved almost 1,000 women examined for breast cancer, indicates that race/ethnicity plays a larger role than insurance in getting a timely breast cancer diagnosis.

**CDC: Too many cancers spotted too late**

Although screening tests are widely available, many cancers aren’t diagnosed until the disease is well-advanced and, therefore, less treatable, a new government report finds, HealthDay reports. Overall, 61.9% of men age 50 to 75 received colorectal screening as recommended, but the rates were lowest for Hispanic men (46.5%). The report also found that Latinas ages 50-79 have the highest rates of late-stage cervical cancer.

**Same-language providers increase Latinos’ positive views of health care**

Foreign-born Latinos view the quality of their health care treatment more positively when medical professionals speak to them in the same language, according to a new University of California study. When patient and provider spoke the same language, Latino patients reported less confusion and frustration with the information received.

**Former surgeon general urges cultural competency**

17th U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Richard H. Carmona, also president of the Canyon Ranch Institute, stressed the importance of cultural competency during his keynote address at the recent National Hispanic Council on Aging conference.
Latina teens advocate for increased physical activity

Rosemarie Burgos and Melanie Benitez were a bit nervous.

The two teens — on a night when their friends might be home watching TV — were about to stand before the Common Council of New Britain, Conn., and argue that the city should plan to re-open pools to boost local physical activity options.

But they came prepared.

Months before that Sept. 8 city meeting, Burgos, Burgos and other Latina teens joined a pilot project led by the Community Health Center and funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) through Salud America! The RWJF Research Network to Prevent Obesity Among Latino Children. Salud America! is led by the Institute for Health Promotion Research at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio.

As part of the project, the girls took photos of parks and the closed pools littered with trash and graffiti, interviewed kids, parents and city officials on the need for water-related exercise options, and got 100 signatures on a petition to re-open pools.

Then, at the meeting, Burgos and Benitez made their pitch.

And although the council aldermen didn’t decide the issue on Sept. 8, the girls plan to reach out to the mayor to keep pushing for pool re-openings.

“Through our [project], we all came to the conclusion that we care about these pools and our parks being open,” Burgos said.

“The main purpose in trying to get these pools open is to get people to be more active, to reduce obesity.”

Read the full story or watch the girls’ presentation.

Latinos, African-American kids see more fast-food ads

Children as young as age 2 are seeing more fast food ads than ever, and restaurants rarely offer healthy kids’ meal choices, according to a new study by Yale’s Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity. The study also found that that exposure to marketing for fast food is even higher among minority kids. Latino preschoolers see 290 Spanish-language fast food TV ads a year.

Heavy babies, especially Latinos, have higher risk of becoming overweight kids

Babies who weighed the most at 9 months of age tended to be among the heaviest when they reached age 2, and Hispanic kids in low-income families had the highest obesity risk at both time points, WebMD reports. About 40% of Hispanic children were obese or at risk, compared to 31% of whites and 35% of blacks.

Obesity often follows minority youth into adulthood

People who were obese between ages 12-21 are seven times more likely than healthy-weight or overweight peers to develop severe obesity by the time they reach their late 20s to early 30s, according to a new study, the L.A. Times reports. For women and for ethnic minorities, the likelihood of proceeding from adolescent obesity to adult severe obesity is particularly pronounced.

Latino youth more susceptible to developing fatty liver disease

Hispanic children are genetically predisposed to developing fatty liver disease, a condition that can lead to heart disease and diabetes, according to new studies from the University of Southern California. The studies found that Hispanic children who carry the PNPLA3 gene variant (GG) have increased liver fat. Children who carry the variant are more susceptible to developing liver fat with a high-sugar diet.

Minorities play down overweight status

Among overweight women, 28% of blacks and 25% of Hispanics considered their weight within the normal range, compared to 15% of white women, according to a new study, HealthDay reports. Findings from the study, which was published in the December Obstetrics & Gynecology and examined 2,200 mostly low-income women in Texas clinics, mirror studies in different populations.

Latino, black families experience more food insecurity

Rates of food insecurity (not always having access to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members) were substantially higher than the national average among households with lower incomes, headed by single parents and among black and Latino households, according to a report from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Economic Research Service.

Civil rights groups unite to fight minority childhood obesity

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is uniting five civil rights groups to help reverse childhood obesity in black and Latino communities, where the epidemic continues to hit hardest. The organizations are: the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC); Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF); National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); National Council of La Raza (NCLR); and National Urban League (NUL).
Video: Changing determinants of health to improve outcomes

A new video from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services explores “determinants of health,” which are factors that make some people healthy and others unhealthy, in the context of the Healthy People 2020 initiative. Two examples in this video illustrate determinants of health, as well as interventions which can change determinants of health and lead to a specific health outcome or outcomes. The video then explains the four phases of the intervention life cycle.

Video: Podcasts on minority cancer issues

The third American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Conference on The Science of Cancer Health Disparities in Racial/Ethnic Minorities and the Medically Underserved has released video podcasts featuring experts on minority cancer issues. The conference, held from Sept. 30-Oct. 3, 2010, in Miami Beach, Fla., had more than 500 attendees, 200 posters, and several highly meritorious abstracts selected for proffered paper presentations.

Spanish initiative: Minority health

The Food & Drug Administration (FDA) Office of Minority Health (OMH), established this year, has a new Web site with information and resources in English and Spanish to help you stay healthy. Features include new health information, FDA consumer reports and more.

Spanish initiative: Clinical trials

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society’s new Spanish and English booklet, Knowing All Your Treatment Options/Conozca Todas Sus Opciones de Tratamiento, aims to help patients understand clinical trials as one of the treatment choices they may want to consider. There is also a Healthcare Question Guide inside the back cover of the booklet for patients and family members to take with them to their doctor appointments.

Spanish initiative: Fotonovela and diabetes, obesity

The New Mexico Office of Border Health has received an award for its bilingual fotonovela (photo novel), “I Wish I had Known,” which tells of a Latino family’s struggle with obesity and diabetes. This fotonovela, in English or Spanish, was recognized by the National Public Health Information Coalition for the Bronze Award of Excellence in Public Health Communication/In-House Health Literacy. The fotonovela also has a film version.

Spanish initiative: National health trends

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) offers synopses of empirical findings in both Spanish and English from its biennial administration of the Health Information National Trends Survey (HINTS). HINTS aims to help communicators understand how changes in the communications environment may be influencing the public’s understanding of cancer.

Info: Cancer clinical trials

To find available clinical trials across the nation, call the National Cancer Institute (NCI) at 1-800-4-CANCER or the American Cancer Society’s help line at 1-800-332-4423. If you live in South Texas, the Cancer Therapy and Research Center in San Antonio has information about local clinical trials at 210-450-5798.

Info: Latino cancer screening

View the six new PSAs touting Latino cancer screening in English or Spanish at the Institute for Health Promotion Research’s SaludToday Web site. To request broadcast-quality PSAs, e-mail us.

Info: Women’s health report card

Among U.S. women there is more binge drinking, higher blood pressure, more diabetes, and more chlamydia than a few years ago, according to the 2010 Making the Grade on Women’s Health: A National and State-by-State Report Card. The report also found that about 38% of Hispanic women do not have insurance, compared to 23% of blacks and 14% of whites.

Info: Healthy People 2020

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services last week unveiled Healthy People 2020, the nation’s new 10-year goals and objectives for health promotion.
Continued from Page 1

The new lecture series kicked off Oct. 20, 2010, with Dr. Rena Pasick, a professor of medicine at the University of California, San Francisco.

Dr. Pasick, a well-established population-based cancer control researcher, conducts community- and clinic-based intervention studies to increase the use of and access to breast and cervical cancer screening among ethnically diverse and underserved communities. She also developed a training program to encourage minority students and professionals to pursue doctoral degrees in cancer research.

The next lecture at 4 p.m. Jan. 27, 2011, will feature Dr. Paula Braveman, also of the University of California, San Francisco. Her lecture, at the Abebe Conference Center at the CTRC, is on The Social Determinants of Health: Circumference, and Physical Activity in Mexican-Origin Women.” 2010 Texas Obesity Research Center Conference, Nov. 18-19, 2010, Houston.


Other prestigious speakers are being recruited. “We’re lining up some of the most well-respected names in health disparities research,” said Dr. Ramirez, who also is the associate director of health disparities at the CTRC. “We’re hoping these speakers spark new research and clinical collaborations across the South Texas region that can reduce health disparities.”

Find out more about the lecture series [here].