

## Maya Angelou 80th Birthday Celebration



Photograph by Dwight Carter

On April 19th, 2008, the City of Winston-Salem, NC, invited all to a hometown salute of Dr. Maya Angelou, in honor of her 80th Birthday.

The festivities, which took place in Corpening Plaza, included readings of Dr. Angelou's poetry, drumming, jazz music, and performances by the North Carolina School of the Arts, Winston-Salem State University, Wake Forest University and the Black Repertory Company, among others. MARCMH sponsored Miss America 2004, Ericka Dunlap to attend and perform a song from her soon to be released country album.

Dr. Angelou has been a part of the Winston-Salem community since 1981, at which time she was appointed the first Reynolds Professor of American Studies at Wake Forest University.

In 2002, Dr. Angelou graciously agreed to partner with Wake Forest University Health Sciences to create the Maya Angelou Research Center on Minority Health and she continues to donate her time to achieving the Center's mission as Executive Chair of the National Advisory Board.

The Center wishes Dr. Angelou a very happy birthday year and many more to come!

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### Center Who's Who

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*Director, Community Outreach*

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## *Southeastern Symposium on Breast Cancer Disparities*

**March 28, 2008**  
**Marriott, Winston Salem, NC**

On March 28th, 2008, the Maya Angelou Research Center on Minority Health (MARCMH), along with the Susan G. Komen and Avon Foundations, sponsored the *Southeastern Symposium on Breast Cancer Disparities*.

Participants attended sessions on 1) differences in the biology, diagnosis, and treatment of breast cancer in underserved populations; 2) issues affecting breast cancer survivorship; and 3) mechanisms for community outreach in the field of breast cancer research. The overall goal of the symposium was for

participants to become better able to define the factors related to breast cancer disparities in minorities and other underserved populations.

Distinguished speakers from WFU School of Medicine, Howard University, UNC-Chapel Hill and University of Pennsylvania held both didactic sessions and interactive workshops. Ms. Molly Poletto, Healthcare Association of NY State Breast Cancer Demonstration Project gave the lunch Keynote address; Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr, Associate Dean of the Johns Hopkins School of

Medicine and Professor of Cardiac Surgery, gave the dinner Keynote address. Participants included physicians, nurses, students (both MD and nursing), health educators, physician assistants, radiology technicians and community members. The symposium also featured *The Pink Boutique*, which had various door prizes donated from many Winston-Salem and area businesses. The MARCMH looks forward to expanding the symposium to a national event.

## Director's Note

Greetings from the Maya Angelou Research Center on Minority Health! We have had a wonderful and exciting past few months as you will see in this edition of our newsletter.

In our research program, we have a number of health disparities-focused grants that are under review or soon to be submitted. We have also had several abstracts from Center projects that will be presented at regional and national conferences (for more details, see the Research Update on Page 3). The Southeastern Symposium on Breast Cancer Disparities on March 28<sup>th</sup> was a big success; we hope to be able to follow up with a larger conference on this topic as well as other conferences focusing on key

health disparity areas.

In our Community Outreach program, we have participated in or co-sponsored several community events, and are preparing for the BET Foundation Women's Health Symposium on September 6<sup>th</sup>. In our Faculty and Student Development program, we were honored to be a co-sponsor of the SNMA Pre-Med Conference, which was a rousing success with 130 students from across the state in attendance. We are also pleased to fund two minority medical students to do health disparities research this summer.

Through our faculty and student development program, We are in the process of developing a minority faculty mentoring program,

building on the successful program of the Women's Health Center of Excellence.

We would also like to welcome our new National Advisory Board members, who came to Wake Forest for training in conjunction with Dr. Angelou's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration. They are: Ian Smith, MD, Addie Perkins Williamson, PhD, Ricky Antonio Martinez, MD, Velma Watts, MD, Jean Irvin and Timothy H. Marshall.

We hope you enjoy this edition of *Hope Lives*. Thank you for your continued support of the Center as we develop innovative community-academic partnerships to address health disparities. Please let us know if we can be of service to you in any way.



Dr. Ronny Bell

Until the great mass of people shall be filled with the sense of responsibility for each other's welfare, social justice can never be attained.

- Helen Keller

## Upcoming Events

### 6th Annual Disparities in Health in America

**Workshop: Celebrating Scholar Entrepreneurs Working Toward Social Justice.** June 21-27, 2008. Houston, TX. Sponsor: University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center.

### The Founding Meeting of the Academy for Health Equity: Building Capacity to Eliminate Health

**Disparities.** June 26-27, 2008. Denver, CO. Sponsor: Academy for Health Equity

### 2008 Diabetes and Obesity Disparities in Healthcare

**Conference.** June 30 –July 1, 2008. Bethesda, MD. Sponsors: NIDDK, NCMHD, AHRQ.

### Cancer Health Disparities

**Summit 2008. Eliminating Cancer Health Disparities through Science, Training, and Community.** July 14-16, 2008. Sponsor: NCI

### International Society on Hypertension in Blacks (ISHIB) 2008 Conference.

July 18-20, 2008. New Orleans, LA. Sponsor: ISHIB.

### Association of American Indian Physicians 2008

**Conference. Listen! The Eagles are Calling: Our Native Youth Cry Out For Healing.** July 25-29, 2008. Worley, ID. Sponsor: AAIP

### Women's Health

**Conference.** September 6, 2008. Winston-Salem, NC. Sponsors: Maya Angelou Research Center on Minority Health, BET Foundation, Winston-Salem State Univ.

### Sixth National Conference on Quality Health Care for Culturally Diverse Populations.

September 21-24, 2008. Minneapolis, MN. Sponsor: Drexel University.

### The Institute for Health, Social, and Community Research's 2nd Conference on Minority Health.

Sept. 26, 2008. Raleigh, NC. Sponsor: Shaw University

### Society for Public Health Education 59th Annual Conference.

*Charting the Course: Changing Tides of Health Education and Health Promotion.* October 23-25, 2008. San Diego, CA. Sponsor: SOPHE.

### American Public Health Association 136th Annual Meeting.

*Public Health Without Borders.* October 25-29, 2008. San Diego, CA. Sponsor: APHA.

## Research Update

### Voices of African American Health

Though the VAAH study was completed over a year ago, the photographic exhibit created from the project is available to travel for exhibition in galleries, medical facilities, and other locations. Please contact Sarah Langdon if you would like to host the exhibit. The MARCMH is currently exploring funding opportunities for expansion of this project to other communities.

### The People's Clinic: A NC Minority Health Education Collaborative

The People's Clinic project has continued to be successful in its 3rd year, in the NC African American (AA), American Indian (AI) and Latino communities. The project aims to provide culturally appropriate, easy-to-

understand health information to these three communities. Focus groups will be conducted in the AA and AI communities to assess program reach, acceptability and amount of change in health behaviors as a result of the programming. The AA focus groups will begin in June 2008; the AI focus groups in August. Comments from our community partners indicate that the programming is widely accepted and appreciated in both communities.

La Clínica del Pueblo, the Latino arm of the project, completed its funding period from the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust in August 2007. Weekly radio and newspaper programming has continued with in-kind radio time and newspaper space from Que Pasa Media, Inc. and in-kind support from MARCMH.

### Presentations

An abstract entitled, *The People's Clinic: A health education partnership with North Carolina American Indian communities* (**Hunter, Langdon, Woods, and Bell**) has been accepted for a roundtable presentation at the APHA conference in October 2008.

**Jaimie Hunter, and Sarah Langdon** presented *Voices of African American Health: A Partnership to Elucidate Health Disparities* at the Society for Arts in Healthcare 19th Annual Conference, April 16-19 in Philadelphia, PA.

### Submissions

"Translating Dietary Trials into the Community," an R21 resubmitted by **Drs. Alain Bertoni and Melicia Whitt-Glover** (co-PIs), received a score in the 16th percentile and will be submitted for a 3rd review in July

2008. This study will examine the feasibility of translating the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet for use by community members living in impoverished neighborhoods.

Through the relationship formed between the Center and the NC Lumbee tribe via The People's Clinic, **Dr. Ronny Bell** (PI), **Dr. Liz Arnold** (Co-I) and **Jaimie Hunter** (Co-I) will submit a proposal in June 2008 (NIMH) examining effects of participation in cultural programs on mental health outcomes in Lumbee youth. To "This project is a partnership between the NC Lumbee Tribe, UNC-Pembroke, and MARCMH. If successful, the program will be a model for improving mental health in vulnerable communities nationwide.

## Affiliated Faculty Research

**Dr. Ha Nguyen**, Family & Community Medicine, began the *Hispanic Aging Survey* study (Principal Investigator) in January 2008, to identify types and rates of disabilities, biopsychosocial correlates of disabilities, and patterns of family care in a sample of 300 Latino Americans aged 60 and older living in North Carolina. She will also be working on a study entitled *Functional Competency and Well-being among the Elderly in Vietnam*, (PI) starting in August 2008.

**Dr. Scott Rhodes**, Social Science & Health Policy, has received funding for two new programs. *Cervical Cancer Prevention for Latinas* (C-CAPRELA) began in January 2008, with the goal of improving routine Pap smear screening among uninsured

Latinas using a community-based empowerment program led by lay health advisors. *CBPR and the Internet: Increasing HIV Testing Through Chat Room-Based Promotion* began in April 2008 to increasing HIV testing among gay and bisexual men and men who have sex with men (MSM) through development, implementation, and evaluation of a culturally relevant Internet chat room-based intervention.

### Presentations

**Dr. Kristen Hairston** presented her research on *An Exploration of Racial and Gender Differences in Five Year Change in Abdominal Fat as Measured by Computed Technology* on May 1st, as part of the Public Health Sciences Spring 2008 Seminar Series.

## Student Research

Congratulations to **Bryant Cameron Webb**, MS2010, and Member, Student National Medical Association (SNMA), who has been awarded the



*SNMA David E. Satcher Research Fellowship*. Cameron conducted research in the ARC in Summer 2007,

under the mentorship of Drs. Kristen Hairston and David Mount. The Satcher Fellowship aims to provide members of the SNMA with opportunities to explore racial and ethnic health disparities through a research environment.

Congratulations to **Nichol Brewer-Lowry**, MS2011 and **Nikki Parson**, MS2011, who have been awarded summer research projects in the ARC. Ms. Brewer-Lowry will analyze data from the ELDER study, a multi-ethnic cohort of older adults, to gain a better understanding of diabetes self management strategies. Ms. Parsons will conduct a study with Dr. Paula Sisk, Forsyth Medical Center, Pediatrics, to collect information from mothers of very low birth weight (VLBW) infants on their experience with the initiation and duration of breast feeding. Dr. Sara Quandt, Epidemiology and Prevention and ARC Affiliate, is the faculty advisor for both projects.

## Faculty and Student Development Update

<p>Faculty and student development (Director, Jorge Calles, MD) is working on several projects simultaneously:</p> <p>The MARCMH and Winston-Salem State University (WSSU) developed a Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) grant, which was submitted to HRSA in March. If awarded the grant, the Center will develop a system to expose students from WSSU to healthcare careers other than Medicine, such as: Physician Assistant, Radiology Technician and Nuclear Medicine Technician.</p>	<p>The MARCMH has been instrumental in forming a coalition between WFUSM, NC Baptist Hospital, WFU Reynolda Campus, Northwest AHEC, Forsyth Technical Community College and Davidson Community College. The purpose of this coalition is the establishment of a certification program for Spanish Language Medical Interpreters and Trainers of those aspiring to become Spanish Language Medical Interpreters. We are working closely with Piedmont Triad Development group for the</p>	<p>initial funding for curriculum development. This program, once established, will open a career option for qualified Latino community members.</p> <p>The highly successful WFUSM Post-BAC program is threatened by rising costs. Financial responsibility has been partially transferred to selected candidate, which may result in selection bias for the program. The ARC is actively collaborating with the Office of Student Diversity (Director, Brenda Latham-Sadler, MD) in seeking funding for the program and the establishment</p>	<p>of an endowment to secure program accessibility for all qualified students, regardless of financial resources.</p> <p>The Minority Faculty Development Task Force will have its inaugural meeting on June 5<sup>th</sup> at the ARC. The charge of this Task Force is the establishment of a Minority Faculty Development Program which will have institutional-wide impact. The initiative has been well received by WFUSM administration, and we anticipate a formal program to be announced in the next six months.</p>
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### MARCMH Journal Club

<p>The MARCMH would like to invite you to be part of our monthly Journal Club, which discusses current research relevant to underserved and health disparate populations.</p> <p>Held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month in the Center conference room, Center Affiliates and staff present articles on new research being done in underserved communities and facilitate discussion regarding the research. Journal Club has also been a forum in recent months for Affiliate Faculty to present their current research in the health disparities field.</p>	<p>MARCMH welcomes all faculty, staff and students who have an interest in health disparities and underserved populations to attend. If you have questions or are interested in facilitating or presenting at Journal Club, please contact Dr. Alain Bertoni at 716-2824 or <a href="mailto:abertoni@wfulmc.edu">abertoni@wfulmc.edu</a>. If you would like receive monthly information about each Journal Club session, please contact Alicia Grayson at 713-7600 or <a href="mailto:agrayson@wfulmc.edu">agrayson@wfulmc.edu</a>. Our next journal club is September 8th, 2008. We hope to see you there!</p>
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### National Advisory Board Update

<p>On December 14, 2007 the MARCMH National Advisory Board held its annual meeting at Graylyn Conference Center in Winston-Salem, NC. The NAB approved planning for the first Annual National Health Disparity fundraiser at the Apollo Theatre in New York, NY. Further details on this event are forthcoming.</p> <p>The NAB also approved recruitment of new board members to serve on the national board. On April 18, 2008, an orientation was held at Graylyn for six newly appointed NAB members: Ian Smith, MD, Chicago, IL;</p>	<p>Addie Perkins Williamson, PhD, President &amp; CEO, Perkins Williamson Associates, Inc., Stamford, CT; Ricky Antonio Martinez, MD, Johnson &amp; Johnson, New Brunswick, NJ; Velma Watts, MD, Professor Emeritus, Wake Forest University School of Medicine, Winston-Salem, NC; Jean Irvin, Executive Director, Forsyth Futures, Winston-Salem, NC; and Timothy H. Marshall, President &amp; CEO, Jamaica Business Resource Center, Jamaica, NY.</p> <p>Thank you to our NAB for their dedicated leadership.</p>
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## Faculty & Staff Update

<p><b>New Affiliates</b> The MARCMH would like to welcome four new affiliates: <b>Don Bowden, PhD</b>, Professor, Biochemistry and Internal Medicine; <b>Thomas DuBose, MD</b>, Professor and Chair, Department of Internal Medicine; <b>Barry Freedman, MD</b>, Professor and Section Head, Nephrology (Dept. of</p>	<p>Internal Medicine); and <b>Ha Nguyen, PhD, MPH</b>, Assistant Professor, Family &amp; Community Medicine. <b>Best Wishes</b> The ARC extends best wishes and thanks for her hard work to <b>Ti Klingler</b>, our former administrative assistant whose last day with us was April 18th 2008. Ti has moved back to</p>	<p>California to be closer to her family. <b>Congratulations</b> <b>Liz Arnold, PhD, MSW</b>, Psychiatry &amp; Behavioral Medicine and MARCMH Affiliate has been promoted to Associate Professor. <b>Brenda Latham-Sadler, MD</b>, Family &amp; Community Medicine, Dean &amp; Director</p>	<p>Minority Programs, and MARCMH Affiliate, has been promoted to Associate Professor, and is also the President Elect of the Forsyth Medical Society. <b>Vernon Ross, MD</b>, Anesthesiology and MARCMH Affiliate, has been promoted to Associate Professor.</p>
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**Spotlight on...**

**Alain G. Bertoni, MD, MPH**



**Alain Gerald Bertoni, MD, MPH**, is the Director of Research for the Maya Angelou Research Center on Minority Health, and an Associate Professor, Department of Epidemiology and Prevention, (Division of Public Health Sciences) and

Section on General Medicine (Dept. of Internal Medicine at WFUSM). His education was at Johns Hopkins (School of Medicine 1995, School of Public Health 1999); his training was also at Johns Hopkins (1995-1998 residency and 1998-2001 a post-doctoral fellowship in General Internal Medicine/Epidemiology). He is a board certified general internist who supervises residents in Internal Medicine clinic. He teaches "Population Health and Epidemiology" to first year medical students.

His research interests lie in quantifying, predicting, and preventing morbidity and

mortality in diabetes and cardiovascular disease, and minority health. He is a co-investigator in various studies including the Multi Ethnic Study of Atherosclerosis (MESA); the Action for Health in Diabetes Study, the Vascular Stiffness and Heart Failure Study, the Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities (ARIC) study, the CT and MRI reading center for the Jackson Heart Study, and the African-American Diabetes Heart Study.

These studies have provided opportunities to investigate the relationships between heart disease and diabetes, both of which are significantly more

common in several minority populations. Dr. Bertoni is currently working with several MARCMH investigators to obtain funding for new grants in the areas of dietary interventions for hypertension, and understanding the relationship between life experiences (such as education or employment) and health status.

Dr. Bertoni enjoys spending his free time with his family, which includes his wife and two children; hobbies include traveling, cooking, political discourse, and biking.

**From the Student National Medical Association**



Continuing with the tradition of community service, the WFU School of Medicine chapter of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) participated in a number of activities aimed at giving back to the community.

In addition to our ongoing relationships with the Student Sight Savers program and the Sickle Cell Association of the Piedmont, we held the first annual Premedical Student Conference. The conference was targeted to college students in North Carolina interested in attending medical school. Over 100 students took part in this two-day conference that featured workshops on study skills, becoming a successful applicant, and other topics pertinent to students interested in a career in medicine. Mock interview sessions were also available for juniors and seniors in attendance.

The school year ended with our annual SNMA Banquet of Excellence held on May 18<sup>th</sup> to honor graduating seniors. We were honored to have Dr. Norman Adams, president of the National Medical Association, as our keynote speaker. His presentation was very timely in discussing health disparities facing minority communities and the role of the newly minted MDs in ensuring that all communities have equal access to healthcare.

The WFU chapter of SNMA would like to thank the school and surrounding community for its continued support of our endeavors.

**2007-08 WFUSM Officers**

- President:** Shayla Nesbitt
- Vice President:** Damilola Akinnifesi
- Secretary:** Nikki Parson
- Treasurer:** Edward Miller
- MAPS/Post-Bac Liaison:** Katie Mahoney
- Fundraising Chair:** Marc Guerra
- Social Chair:** Tona Rios-Alba
- Volunteer Chair:** Juliana Robles
- Banquet Chair:** TBA

[www.wfusm-snma.com](http://www.wfusm-snma.com)

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**Hope Lives!**

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