

COMMUNITIES OF COLOR NETWORK

an affiliated program of The Louisiana Campaign for Tobacco-Free Living

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Did you know?

The concentrations of any of the toxins in secondhand smoke are higher than in the smoke inhaled by the smoker.

Parents are responsible for 90% of children's exposure to secondhand smoke.

~<http://www.kiiss.org>

CoC Network

Mission Statement:

To eliminate health disparities caused by or related to tobacco consumption in La. communities of color by building coalitions, enhancing awareness of the dangers of tobacco and reducing tobacco consumption and secondhand smoke exposures.



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Faith-Based Organizations Implement Tobacco-Free Policy

In an effort to eliminate tobacco use in African-American communities, the Southern University Ag Center's Communities of Color Network seeks to provide a safe and healthy environment by implementing tobacco-free church policies statewide.

Through the CoC Network Tobacco-Free Church Initiative, regional coordinators educate and empower members of congregations to provide leadership in promoting a holistic and healthy approach in reducing and eradicating the use of tobacco products.

As a result of a series of educational awareness workshops and activities, faith-based organizations commit to being a 100% tobacco-free facility. "No Smoking" signs, provided by CoC Network, are posted in visible areas inside and outside of the building, in addition to tobacco literature and cessation information for members, visitors, and the community.

"I love this church initiative...this is an important step towards eliminating tobacco use within our community," commented Henry Williams, pastor of the Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church in Alexandria. "We appreciate CoC Network for including our church in this initiative."

"We appreciate the information shared with us to establish healthy living," said Greg Jackson, pastor of Salem Baptist Church in Bunkie. "We can make a difference!" Regional coordinator Shawntell Lewis-Harrell facilitated trainings and the culminating activities at both churches.



Pastor Henry and First Lady Williams along with son, Jeremy, participate in ribbon cutting ceremony declaring Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church a tobacco-free facility.



Pastor Greg Jackson (rear center) and members of Salem Baptist Church pose with signs and a mayoral proclamation declaring their facility tobacco-free.

Contact a staff member and register your congregation for this church initiative today!

CoC Network: Impacting Lives in Local Communities Statewide

Throughout the month of September, regional coordinators continued educating the grassroots community and youth on the dangers of tobacco use, secondhand smoke exposure, and providing cessation information through videos, booth displays, and educational presentations at:

- Bunkie Elementary Parent-Teacher Conferences, Bunkie
- Concordia Parish Coalition Meeting, Vidalia
- Eagle's Wings Ministries, New Orleans
- Grace Girls 2009 Conference, Ponchatoula
- Lake Charles Pride, Lake Charles
- Louisiana State University, Shreveport
- The McFarland Institute, New Orleans
- Orleans Parish Health Unit, New Orleans
- Red River Junior High School, Coushatta
- Senior Citizens Community Center, Welcome
- Southern University Alumni Federation, New Iberia
- St. Mary Alternative School, Franklin
- St. Rose Community Center, St. Rose
- Veteran's Affairs Recovery Month, Pineville
- Workforce Investment Administration, Baton Rouge



Tobacco Educational Awareness

Regional coordinator Shirley Simon educates youth on the dangers of tobacco use at St. Mary's in Franklin.



CoC Network Pledge Drive

Constituents vow to live tobacco-free lives by signing pledge cards at the Veterans Affairs Recovery Month Health Fair in Pineville.



Southern University Ag Center's Homecoming Parade

Regional Coordinator Latricia Dixon (left middle) and community advocates spreading prevention, educational awareness, and cessation messages including smoking kills, smoking stinks, and promoting Louisiana's quit line to a crowd of more than one thousand via candy and beads.



CoC Network Collaborates with Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

Members of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Beta Psi Chapter, collaborated with the Communities of Color Network to sponsor a “Phresh Campus” program that encouraged students to advocate for a tobacco-free campus and to increase that knowledge levels concerning available cessation services. Camille Bryant, chapter president, in conjunction with her sorority and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Beta Sigma members were instrumental in encouraging more than 100 students to participate in the interactive, student-driven program at the Cotillion Ballroom.

Chandra Stacie, a CoC Network community encourager, dazzled students with the relevant statistics about tobacco and the African-American community. The students intently listened as she continued to share how the illnesses and deaths from tobacco are seriously impacting our communities and how they could be a part of the solution. “Keep sharing the information,” she said to the students about how to get the word out. It was interesting to see how the students reacted to information about their peers who smoke and those who have died from smoking. Stacie applauded them for taking the initiative to come to the presentation and urged them to make a difference by not engaging in tobacco and sharing the information with their friends, families, and communities.

Other activities included a panel discussion, skits, and ice breakers that were all related to tobacco consumption and how it impacts the college population. As a call to action, students committed to becoming proactive, making the right decisions and advocating for a “fresh campus.”

Linda Early Brown and Fatemeh Malekian, program directors for the Fresh Campus initiative (Fresh Campus is an affiliated program for The Louisiana Campaign for Tobacco-Free Living) are looking forward to additional forums presented by various student organizations campus-wide.

CoC Network Hero: Making a Difference



Glynn Wade
New Orleans

As a civil service social worker, Glynn Wade has dedicated her life to helping middle and low income families. “Thanks to all of the information on tobacco awareness and cessation from the CoC Network, one of my daily goals is to counsel and give support to clients on the importance of a tobacco-free lifestyle,” said Wade. “The reception from my clients has been extremely successful. I’m grateful that the CoC Network is spreading this valuable information and helping me make a difference in many lives.”

October 19, 2009 made 20 years that Wade has been tobacco-free. Wade admitted, “It was a struggle to quit, but I made this choice for myself, my family, and my friends. I no longer suffer with shortness of breath, and I’ve been in good health ever since.”

Contact a CoC Network regional coordinator for more information on cessation services available statewide. For support to quit smoking, visit www.quitwithusla.org or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

Coalition Spotlight: CoC Network St. Landry Tobacco Coalition

The CoC Network St. Landry Tobacco Coalition is comprised of representatives from the grassroots community, social and civic organizations, faith-based organizations, healthcare, social services, and advocacy agencies. Its mission is to eliminate social norms and health disparities related to tobacco through educational awareness and involvement. The group is planning several activities including events for Great American Smoke-out in November. Recent coalition activities include participation in the SU Ag Center’s Back-to-School Summits, health fairs, and events hosted by children and youth services, Department of Social Services, and LaChip.

Monthly meetings are held on the last Monday at 6:30 p.m. at the Southwest Center for Rural Initiatives in Opelousas. Contact regional coordinator Paula Jordan for additional opportunities to get involved in your community.



COMMUNITIES
OF COLOR
NETWORK
STAFF

CHANCELLOR
Leodrey Williams

**VICE CHANCELLOR FOR
EXTENSION**
Gina E. Eubanks

PROGRAM DIRECTOR
Linda Early Brown
linda_brown@suagcenter.com
225-771-2242 ext.326 or 225-200-1634

**REGIONAL
COORDINATORS**

Shirley Simon
Regions 1 and 3
shirley_simon@suagcenter.com
504-826-2559 or 225-200-1635

Latricia Dixon
Regions 2 and 9
latricia_dixon@suagcenter.com
225-771-2242 or 225-200-1640

Paula Jordan
Regions 4 and 5
paula_jordan@suagcenter.com
337-457-7983 or 225-200-1643

Shawntell Lewis-Harrell
Region 6
shawntell_harrell@suagcenter.com
318-792-5373 or 225-200-1641

Eric Murphy
Region 7
eric_murphy@suagcenter.com
318-805-5916 or 225-200-1639

We're on the Web!
[www.suagcenter.com/
communitiesofcolor](http://www.suagcenter.com/communitiesofcolor)

**Southern University
Agricultural Research and
Extension Center**
Ashford O. Williams Hall
P.O. Box 10010
Baton Rouge, LA 70813

225-771-2242 (office)
225-771-2861 (fax)

Tobacco Watch: Mentholated Cigarettes

Menthol cigarettes are cigarettes flavored with the compound menthol, a substance which triggers the cold-sensitive nerves in the skin without actually providing a drop in temperature. Menthol cigarettes is derived from the peppermint plant and have also been shown to inhibit nicotine metabolism, and cause “systemic enhancement in exposure to nicotine.”

African Americans and Mentholated Cigarettes:

- Approximately three out of four African-American smokers choose mentholated cigarettes.
- 90% of African-American youth “prefer” mentholated cigarettes.
- Mentholated cigarettes are the tobacco industry’s most profitable cigarette. They produce higher sales than non-mentholated cigarettes and are strategically marketed and sold in Black communities.

Other facts concerning mentholated cigarettes:

- KOOL, NEWPORT, and CAMEL are the leading mentholated cigarettes currently in the market.
- There is evidence that mentholated cigarettes may promote the penetration and spreading of particles (cotinine) resulting in a higher rate of lung cancer among menthol smokers as compared to smokers of non-mentholated brands.
- Menthol smokers may be more likely to inhale deeper with each drag on their cigarette and potentially take in more nicotine than do smokers of non-menthol cigarettes.

Some commercial uses of menthol include:

- oral hygiene
- cosmetics
- confectionary
- sinus medication
- flavoring agent
- Food preservatives
- Cream for acne

In June 2009, President Barack Obama signed into law The Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act explicitly exempting menthol-flavored cigarettes from restrictions applied to other flavorings.

Source: 2nd Menthol Conference '09 in D.C., National African American Tobacco Prevention Network, and Wikipedia



“Linking Citizens of Louisiana with Opportunities for Success”

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