RESOURCE GUIDE

25 Days of Facts | Links & Videos
$100,360 Raised to support cancer health disparities research at Massey Cancer Center

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THANK YOU TO OUR PRESENTING SPONSOR
Good morning,

Let's jump right in!

**What are health disparities?**
Recent national news has focused on disparities and how communities of color experience health in the United States, but what does this mean? Massey Cancer Center is a national leader in understanding how differences in social, economic, and environmental factors of a community impact an individual’s overall health. The goal is to remove health disparities as a factor in how cancer is diagnosed and treated in all populations. Cancer disparities research is research focused on understanding and/or reducing differences in cancer outcomes.

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**FACT 1:**

Health disparities are differences in health opportunities related to racial, social, economic and environmental factors.

*source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

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Today you can join VCU Massey Cancer Center in supporting our vision of a future without cancer for all people.

You have already taken the first step to become a Health Equity Champion! Thank you! I encourage you today to ask 3 friends to join you in learning, advocating for others and supporting our mission.

**What can you do today?**
• Watch this TED Talk video to learn how racism makes us sick.
• Share this email and ask others to join you in registering for this 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice campaign.
• Make your gift today of $25 or more to support Massey’s research in health equity and disparities.

Massey’s cancer center director, Robert Winn, M.D., recently contributed to a Congressional briefing on cancer disparities.

National attention is on the subject; join us in bringing attention to our state and local communities.

Thank you for being a Health Equity Champion so everyone can have a future that is bright and cancer free! Special thanks to our presenting sponsor, Apex Systems, Inc.!
Hi,

VCU Massey Cancer Center is one of two National Cancer Institute-designated Cancer Centers in Virginia. A part of VCU Health, Massey serves communities that have traditionally struggled to access health services. When you seek care at VCU Health, you will not be turned away based on your insurance status or ability to pay for health care. We are here to serve all.

**FACT 2:**

Massey’s catchment area includes the majority (~57%) of the state’s black population, despite similar overall cancer incidence* in the U.S., Massey’s catchment area has slightly higher incidences for breast (~9%), lung (~15%) and prostate (~11%) cancers than the nation.

[source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#)

*Cancer incidence refers to the number of new cases of cancer. A catchment area is the area from which a city, service or institution attracts a population that uses its services.

It is our mission to lead the nation in decreasing cancer disparities. We established an [Office of Health Equity and Disparities Research](#) in 2011, and expanded our mission in 2017 with the addition of [Dr. Vanessa Sheppard](#) to lead our cancer disparities research.

Join us in educating our state and advocating for great care for all.

- Watch this video - [Health Equity and Disparities Research at VCU Massey Cancer Center](#)
• Share this email and ask others to join you in registering for 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice.

• Invite your friends, families, colleagues and neighbors to give $25 or more to impact Massey’s research in health equity and disparities.

Thank you for becoming a Health Equity Champion today, and please continue to join us for the next 23 days!
Good morning,

In order to change unhealthy behaviors, we need to understand what informs unhealthy decisions. Our research teams partner with communities to learn about their lifestyles and help educate them about healthy habits, how to prevent cancer through healthy choices and offer cancer screenings. This is a critical part of Massey Cancer Center’s vision -- to learn from the community and take knowledge to the community in order to help improve their health.

FACT 3:

While the proportion of smokers in the Massey Cancer Center catchment* is similar to that of the United States, smoking in our catchment is approximately 21% more common than in Virginia counties outside the catchment. Smoking rates were higher among Black residents of the catchment relative to Whites, but alcohol use was lower.

source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

You can help educate your family, your neighbors and your community by learning about cancer prevention.

- Learn about Massey’s community programs and share the information with others.
- Watch this Ted Talk to learn a simple way to break a bad habit.
- Become a Health Equity Champion today. Share this email and ask others to join you in registering for 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice.
Make your gift today of $25 or more to support Massey’s research in health equity and disparities. Special shout out of thanks to Apex Systems, Inc. for presenting this important campaign!
Good Morning,

A cancer hot spot is a geographical region that has an unusually higher rate of cancer mortality (cancer deaths). Massey Cancer Center is focused on identifying areas in our state where we can reduce mortality rates for cancers that are higher than national averages.

**FACT 4:**

Counties in the Massey Cancer Center catchment* comprise one of three national colorectal cancer mortality ‘hotspots.’ These counties include Petersburg, Chesterfield, Brunswick, and Suffolk. While colorectal cancer mortality rates declined nationally, rates in hot spot areas either stayed the same or increased.

*source: American Association for Cancer Research*

*A catchment area is the area from which a city, service or institution attracts a population that uses its services. Cancer mortality refers to the number of cancer deaths.*

Read more about colorectal cancer hot spots for men in [this article](#) from the American Journal of Cancer Research. What can you do today? Make sure the men in your life are getting annual health exams and colorectal screenings in accordance with guidelines.

Watch this video explaining:
• "Why do we need the 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice campaign?"
• Share this video with your friends and family

We can also use your help spreading the word and funding research:

• Share this email and ask others to join you in registering for 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice.

• Ask your friends, families, colleagues and neighbors to give $25 or more for Massey’s research in health equity and disparities.

You can make a difference!

Thank you! And special thanks to Apex Systems, Inc. for presenting this campaign in an effort to create a healthier community for all!
Good morning,

The mission of VCU Massey Cancer Center is to discover, develop, deliver and teach effective means to prevent, detect, treat and ultimately cure cancer through innovative research, patient care and education. We aim to facilitate and conduct community engagement, education and evaluation.

**FACT 5:**

Of 232 counties in the United states identified as Early Onset Colorectal Cancer ‘hot spots’, EIGHT are in the Massey Cancer Center catchment*. Early onset means that individuals are diagnosed with colorectal cancer before 50 years of age.

*source: American Society of Clinical Oncology Post*

*A catchment area is the area from which a city, service or institution attracts a population that uses its services.

In this study, researchers found that young adult non-Hispanic Black men living in these hot spots are part of a group in which there is a trend of increasing rates of early onset colorectal cancer and that these men are more likely to die of the disease as compared to other racial groups. Learn more about Massey’s approach to colorectal cancer care.
We know having these 'hot spots' in Massey's catchment area is unacceptable and by making a gift today you will be investing in cancer research in Virginia and helping everyone in our community have a bright, cancer free future.

- Watch this video Chadwick Boseman’s death puts spotlight on colon cancer among Black men, young people

- Share this email and ask others to join you in registering for 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice

- Make your gift today of $25 or more to help Massey research health equity and disparities.

Help save lives by educating your community today! We appreciate your help spreading the word and thank you for your continued support!
Good morning,

When was the last time you or a loved one in your family had a mammogram? Early detection is the best way to lower cancer mortality.

FACT 6:
The Massey Cancer Center catchment* includes a national ‘hot spot’ for breast cancer mortality. Risk of breast cancer mortality for Black women living in hotspot counties is 15% higher than for Black women who live in other areas. Catchment ‘hot spot’ counties for Black women include Brunswick, Danville, Suffolk, Portsmouth, and Norfolk.

source: NIH, National Library of Medicine

*A catchment area is the area from which a city, service or institution attracts a population that uses its services. Cancer mortality refers to the number of cancer deaths.

As a Health Equity Champion, learn more about mammograms. Share that knowledge with others to encourage annual breast cancer screenings among all women.

- Educate yourself - African American Women and Breast Cancer
• Watch this video on Breast Cancer in Women of Color: Understanding the Impact of Breast Cancer Disparities on Treatment

• Ask others to become a Health Equity Champion. Share this email and ask them to join you in promoting education and advocacy during Massey Cancer Center's 25 for 25: Health Equity and Justice initiative.

• Consider a gift of $25 or more to impact Massey’s research in health equity and disparities.

Thank you for helping us improve health in Virginia! Let's keep working to move the needle and reduce cancer health disparities! If you have an interest in getting involved further, check out the volunteer opportunities here.
Hi,

Did you know that your weight can impact the likelihood of developing cancer? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is a link between obesity and some types of cancers.

**FACT 7:**

Cancer Prevention – Obesity: The rate of obesity in Massey Cancer Center’s catchment* area was estimated to be 36%, with double the obesity rates among Blacks compared to Whites (61% vs 30%).

*source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*

The vision of the Office of Health Equity and Disparities Research at VCU Massey Cancer Center is to lead the nation in decreasing cancer disparities, making important contributions to Massey’s work toward a future without cancer. In addition to researching cancer disparities, Massey scientists also study the link between cancer and weight.
Today, get the facts and share your new knowledge with others. Let’s work together to improve the health of all Virginians, in every community.

- Share this video (watch it if you haven't seen it!) - "Why do we need the 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice campaign?"

- Share this email and ask others to join you in promoting education and advocacy during Massey Cancer Center’s 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice campaign

Consider a gift of $25 or more to impact Massey’s research in health equity and disparities. A big thanks to our sponsors and supporters!! We could not do this without you!
Good morning,

Great health care requires trust in your health care provider. VCU Massey Cancer Center knows building such trust can help overcome some of the issues related to health disparities.

FACT 8:

Black individuals in the state of Virginia have double the rates of multiple myeloma incidence and mortality when compared to White men and women. Furthermore, incidence and mortality rates for Black residents of Richmond surpass rates for the state.

source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

As Massey’s new cancer center director, I’m committed to sharing the facts, so I started a weekly call with members of our local Black clergy to ensure accurate information reaches our communities.

I'm proud that the attention has evolved from addressing the coronavirus to addressing cancer care and health in general. With your help, we can shed light
on the issues facing communities of color. I hope you will join me today in learning, advocating and sharing with others.

- Watch this great conversation our community leaders had last month - Facts, Faith and Health Equity: Justice in Our Community
- Share this email and ask others to join you in promoting education and advocacy during Massey Cancer Center's 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice campaign.
- Consider a gift of $25 or more to support Massey’s research in health equity and disparities.

Thank you for joining Massey as a Health Equity Champion,

Robert A. Winn, M.D.
Director, VCU Massey Cancer Center
Hi,

At VCU Massey Cancer Center, Leslie Randall, M.D., director of gynecologic oncology, treats all types of women’s cancers “below the belt”. She is a recent addition to our clinical and research team, and she is committed to expanding clinical trials, which are known to improve outcomes for cancer patients.

FACT 9:

Black individuals in our catchment* area were less likely to meet recommendations for cervical cancer screening (55% vs 78%) as did residents in rural areas compared to urban areas (39% vs 77%).

source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Dr. Randall recently spoke on CBS 6 Virginia This Morning about cervical cancer screening, HPV vaccination and other cancer prevention steps that women can take to protect their health.

Join Dr. Randall and Massey in sharing the importance of cervical cancer screening:
Start today by:

- Watch this video featuring Dr. Randall - **Ovarian and Uterine Cancers: What Every Woman Should Know**
- Another relevant video - **Why is cervical cancer killing many more African-American women than we thought?**
- Getting screened for cervical cancer and/or encourage the women in your life to get screened.
- Share **today’s Fact** on your social media, with your friends, loved ones, and in your community.
- Invest in Massey’s health equity research. **Make a gift of $25 more** and your gift will be matched by Massey’s Advisory Board.

Thank you for your continued support!

A big shout out of special thanks to our presenting sponsor, Apex Systems, Inc.!! And welcome to all the Apex employees that have joined us!
Good morning,

Health disparities exist, not only due to the lack of access to care, but the biology of a tumor can also play a role in both incidence and outcome, particularly in breast cancer.

**FACT 10:**

Black women are more likely to die from their cancer diagnoses, Latinx women are more likely to suffer while living. This is because they fare worse with respect to their quality of life and symptom management (due to access to care, lack of translation services, and other addressable barriers).

source: PMID: 27429867

The good news is that fewer women of any race are being diagnosed and dying of breast cancer for a number of reasons—but most likely due to a drop in the use of hormone therapy and better treatments. At VCU Massey Cancer Center, our doctors and scientists share the pride in helping to discover medical breakthroughs. Clinical trials are research studies that evaluate new medical treatments and are a key component to reaching those breakthroughs.

VCU Massey Cancer Center provides one of the largest selections of cancer clinical trials in Virginia. Thank you for being a Health Equity Champion - learn
more about clinical trials at Massey and share this information with your family and friends.

- Learn more about the BREAST CANCER'S COLOR DIVIDE by watching this TED Talk
- Share this email and ask others to join you in promoting education and advocacy during Massey Cancer Center's 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice.
- Ask others to consider a gift of $25 or more to impact Massey's research in health equity and disparities.

Register for this exclusive 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice webinar - Wednesday, October 14th, featuring Dr. Michael Preston, Assistant director, Office of Health Equity and Disparities Research at VCU Massey Cancer Center. Dr. Preston will dive deeper into what health disparities are, why they exist, and why this is important to our community at this time and moving forward.

A special thank you and huge applause to those of you that have been asking for donations and spreading the word for an even bigger impact! And thank you again to Apex Systems, Inc. and all of our sponsors.
Hi,

Register for this exclusive 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice webinar - Wednesday, October 14 at 12 noon, featuring Dr. Michael Preston, Assistant director, Office of Health Equity and Disparities Research at VCU Massey Cancer Center. Dr. Preston will dive deeper into what health disparities are, why they exist, and why this is important to our community at this time and moving forward.

Listen up!

FACT 11: Racial/ethnic minorities are least represented in clinical trials*, which can result in the development of care guidelines that may not work as well for minorities. For example the National Lung Cancer screening trial which resulted in the eligibility guidelines to access lung cancer screening only had 4% Blacks, 2% other races

source: National Center for Biotechnology Information, National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health

Because of this underrepresentation, current lung cancer screening guidelines may exclude some minority groups that need it the most. Source: National Library of Medicine, National Institute of Health

VCU Massey Cancer Center is committed to including more people of color in our clinical trials.
What can you do to help us?

- Watch this video to learn about clinical trials. If you or someone you know needs to speak with an expert about a clinical trial at Massey, contact our Clinical Trials Office.
- Create more Health Equity Champions by inviting others to learn. Forward this email today!

Ask others to invest in VCU Massey Cancer Center's health equity research to reduce cancer outcomes for communities of color. Encourage them to make a gift today!

Thank you for being a health equity champion and caring about the health and welfare of the greater Richmond community!!

Sincere thanks to our presenting sponsor, Apex Systems, Inc.
Good morning,

VCU Massey Cancer Center is a leader in cancer disparities research, which is research focused on understanding and/or reducing differences in cancer outcomes. Massey’s Office of Health Equity and Disparities Research team engages with a myriad of partners in the communities we serve, which expand across central Virginia into Danville and Lawrenceville.

FACT 12:
As of August 2020, there were 40 Commission on Cancer-accredited cancer programs in Virginia.

source: American College of Surgeons, Commission on Cancer

The Commission on Cancer (CoC) is a consortium of professional organizations dedicated to improving survival and quality of life for cancer patients through standard setting, which promotes cancer prevention, research, education, and monitoring of comprehensive quality care for everyone.

As a Health Equity Champion, please read about our community resources and see which partners exist in your community.

Join me today in making a difference in the future of cancer care.
Ask your expanded networks to learn alongside you. Send this email with a note, “Join me in learning about the great work of Massey Cancer Center today!

Register for this exclusive 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice webinar - Wednesday, October 14th, featuring Dr. Michael Preston, Assistant director, Office of Health Equity and Disparities Research at VCU Massey Cancer Center. Dr. Preston will dive deeper into what health disparities are, why they exist, and why this is important to our community at this time and moving forward.

Ask your friends on social media or through your blogs and email to support Massey's 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice campaign to improve care for communities of color. United we can make a difference.

We are proud to announce that a passionate group of donors and Advisory Board members came together to create a Matching Donation Fund for 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice.

Every donation will be matched by this fund 1:1 for the next $20,000 raised! Please consider making a gift today and double your impact! Every donation will help fund critical research in Massey's Office of Health Equity and Disparities Research.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Winn, M.D.
Director, VCU Massey Cancer Center
Hi,

We are at the midway point of this campaign and are proud to announce that a passionate group of donors and Advisory Board members came together to create a Matching Donation Fund for 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice. This fund will match every donation 1:1 for the next $20,000 raised! Please consider making a gift today and double your impact! Every donation will help fund critical research in Massey’s Office of Health Equity and Disparities Research.

**What does evidence-based medicine mean?** It means that our doctors, nurses and other care providers deliver care that has been shown in research to improve patient outcomes.

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**FACT 13:**

Evidence-based medicine relies on rigorous scientific research to determine which therapies are most likely to result in the best patient outcomes in terms of disease progression and quality of life

*source: National Center for Biotechnology Information, National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health*

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**VCU Massey Cancer Center** is proud to conduct research that improves cancer care. Over 200 research scientists dedicate their lives to uncovering the best evidence to define how we treat cancer. Research produced at Massey has informed protocols used today as a standard of care for cancer patients.
Today you are HALFWAY through your 25-day journey! We are so proud to call you a Massey Health Equity Champion. I hope as you are learning about Massey that you are becoming proud to know that this cancer research leader serves YOUR community!

As you learn more, please send today’s email and social media post to at least 3 other people! Remember our matching donation fund will match any contributions made to our 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice campaign thanks to your actions!

Thank you for your continued support and contribution to our community!
Good morning,

Clinical trials save lives. Evidence shows that cancer patients who participate in clinical trials have better outcomes. They also contribute to science and bring hope to others with cancer.

FACT 14: Overall cancer death rates declined faster in Blacks than whites among both males (2.6% vs 1.6% per year) and females (1.5% vs 1.3% per year), largely driven by greater declines for cancers of the lung, colorectum, and prostate

source: National Center for Biotechnology Information, National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health

Hear from Massey patients who are grateful they participated in clinical trials.

“When they told me the science behind this trial, I had to chuckle … I knew all about the materials used from my time at NASA!” said Hayes. “I loved the idea of being a part of the next generation of scientific advancement for products I helped develop — what an amazing application for these materials.” - Junius Hayes

Join us today in addressing health disparities in our community by including more people of color in our clinical trials. Share this information with others.

Thank you,

Vanessa Sheppard, Ph.D.

Associate Director, Community Outreach Engagement and Health Disparities
VCU Massey Cancer Center, Department Chair, Professor
Department of Health Behavior and Policy

P.S. Please make a donation of $25 or more to support our 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice Campaign to invest in cancer equity research. Special thanks to our sponsors!
Hello,

A cancer diagnosis is hard, and it often takes a toll on the entire family. At VCU Massey Cancer Center, we are committed to ensuring that all of our patients have the resources they need to thrive.

**FACT 15:**

Complementary treatments are ones used along with standard, evidence-based medical treatment. Alternative medicine is used instead of standard, evidence-based care. Non-white patients report more perceived barriers to Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) use than white patients, but had a similar degree of expected benefit.

*source: National Institutes of Health/National Cancer Institute*

For many patients, one of the most difficult aspects of facing cancer is feeling a loss of control. That’s why we address the educational, emotional, spiritual and social service needs of our patients with the same dedication we give to treating their cancer. Our Integrative Health program encompasses the complementary care that we offer to support the body, mind and spirit.

What can you do to help?

- Watch this video of Dr. Winn on *Virginia This Morning (CBS6)* and share it with your family and friends.
- Share our resources with anyone you know with cancer who needs support. Be their champion today!
- Inform others about the care Massey offers to all patients, no matter their ability to pay or their insurance status.
Ask others to support our mission with a gift today! Remember we currently have an ongoing gift match - a passionate group of donors and Advisory Board members came together to create a Matching Donation Fund for 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice. Every donation will be matched by this fund 1:1 for the next $20,000 raised! Every donation will help fund critical research in Massey’s Office of Health Equity and Disparities Research.
Hi,

Some cancers never cause symptoms, but if found early by a screening test, they may be treated.

**FACT 16:**
People from minority, medically underserved, and geographically isolated groups have lower access to and participate less in cancer clinical trials.

*source: National Cancer Institute*

Screening tests can help find cancer at an early stage, before symptoms appear. When cancer is found early, it may be easier to treat or cure. By the time symptoms appear, the cancer may have grown and spread, which can be harder to treat or cure.

It is important to remember that when your doctor suggests a screening test, it does not mean they think you have cancer. Screening tests are done when you have no cancer symptoms.

What should you do?

- Watch this video on how VCU Massey Cancer Center is addressing health disparities and why it is a priority
- Learn more about cancer screenings.
- Get a cancer screening for you or your loved ones, in accordance with screening guidelines.
• Make a gift so that someone else in need can get a cancer screening.
• Share this fact on social media to inform others.

Welcome to those who are just joining us! Thank you for learning more, sharing what you learn and being an active member of our community.

Have a great day!
Hi,

Some cancers never cause symptoms, but if found early by a screening test, they may be treated.

FACT 17:

Racial and ethnic minorities, particularly African Americans, have higher death rates from many types of cancer for which death is preventable (e.g. breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer). Lower participation in cancer screening contributes to making these high mortality rates.

source: National Center for Biotechnology Information, National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health

Screening tests can help find cancer at an early stage, before symptoms appear. When cancer is found early, it may be easier to treat or cure. By the time symptoms appear, the cancer may have grown and spread, which can be harder to treat or cure.

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• Make a gift so that someone else in need can get a cancer screening.

• Share this fact on social media to inform others.

Welcome to those who are just joining us! Thank you for learning more, sharing what you learn and being an active member of our community.

Have a great day!
Good morning,

A patient navigator is a health professional that focuses on the patient's needs. The navigator helps guide the patient through the healthcare system and works to overcome obstacles that stand in the way of the patient receiving the care and treatment they require.

FACT 18:

Patient navigation programs help improve cancer screening rates and cancer outcomes. Successful patient navigation includes intervention to meet patient needs (e.g. insurance, transportation, information) and enhance patient relationships for effective patient-navigator and patient-clinician interactions. A study of 3,777 participants (91% women, 43% Hispanic, 28% White, and 27% African American) found that patient navigation may reduce cancer disparities associated with socioeconomic and household factors.

source: National Center for Biotechnology Information, National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health

At VCU Massey Cancer Center, nurse navigators assess barriers to care and help patients overcome them. They serve as a consistent point of contact for patients through the continuum of their cancer care.

Thank a nurse navigator who made a difference to you! Visit Massey’s Facebook page and say thank you, send a card, or make a gift in their honor.

And thank you for caring enough to be here and help make a difference! Special thanks to Apex Systems, Inc. for presenting the 25 for 35: Health Equity & Justice campaign!
Hi,

Health disparity across any type of cancer is unacceptable, but the rates of colorectal cancer incidence in Black men is intolerable.

FACT 19:
The highest rate of colorectal cancer incidence in Virginia during 2013-2017 was among African American men (47.8 per 100,000). Mortality rates in Virginia were higher in men compared to women and in African-Americans compared to Whites. The mortality rate among African-American men, 24.5 deaths per 100,000, was the highest of all groups.

source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

VCU Massey Cancer Center is a resource for colorectal cancer screening and care. Our team provides comprehensive and highly specialized care for patients with colon and rectal cancers and performs therapeutic colonoscopies for patients with pre-cancerous polyps. Screening and early detection is key – find a specialist today for you or your loved one. Everyone who needs one deserves a colorectal cancer screening.

What can you do?

- Watch this video Chadwick Boseman's death puts spotlight on colon cancer among Black men, young people
- Read this article Chadwick Boseman's death is making young people think about colon cancer. Here's what to know.
- Invite others to become Champions and encourage them to be screened for colorectal cancer, in accordance with screening guidelines.
- Invest in the health of communities of color by making a gift today in support of Massey's cancer disparities research.
Thank you for joining us in this 25-day journey! We appreciate you and your support.

We also appreciate our corporate sponsors and our match sponsors! Thank you!!
Good morning,

With only 5 days left to learn more, we want to stick to the basics. There are 10 key facts about cancer in African Americans. Read, Learn, Share.

**FACT 20:**

**Obesity, which increases cancer risk, is more prevalent among black women.** Nearly 6 in 10 black women were obese in 2013-2014, compared to nearly 4 in 10 white women

*source: American Cancer Society*

What can you do today?

Get moving! Being active helps reduce cancer risk. Go for a walk, ride a bike, dance or do something active that you enjoy. Make a commitment to yourself to be healthy and to live your best life! Encourage a friend to do the same.

**Health Equity Champions advocate for one another -- do that for a loved one today!**

Share our facts, [make a gift](#) and ask others to support VCU Massey Cancer Center’s mission to alleviate cancer health disparities.

Thank you,

Vanessa B. Sheppard, Ph.D.
Associate Director, Community Outreach Engagement and Health Disparities
Massey Cancer Center
Department Chair, Professor
Department of Health Behavior and Policy
Hello,

Access to healthy food and regular sustenance is critical to good health.

**FACT 21:**
A food desert indicates an area that has limited accessibility to supermarkets or fresh foods.

Lawrenceville, VA, home to one of Massey Cancer Center’s Cancer Research and Resource Centers, is also home to one of the state’s food deserts

*source: Brunswick Times Gazette*

How is a town just 71 miles from our state’s capital a food desert? In rural America, a food desert is defined as 10 miles or more from the nearest market. Unfortunately, food deserts are not few and far between. It's estimated there are more than 23 million people, more than half of them low-income, living in food deserts. Food deserts also contribute to food insecurity.

Learn more here:

- Read [11 Facts about Food Deserts](#) to educate yourself today!
- Read this Richmond Times Dispatch editorial on [No food deserts](#)
- Take a look at this [Food Desert Study Report](#) on Food Deserts in Virginia
- Watch this video on [Why food deserts are still a problem in America](#)

Ask your neighbors if they have access to healthy food, and if not, offer your assistance.

As a Health Equity Champion, thank you for investing in cancer research across rural parts of Virginia and in the Richmond community. We have a few more days of facts and information - Thank you for sharing your time with us!!
Good morning,

Early detection is key! As prostate cancer affects one out of every six men, leading medical organizations recommend older men discuss having annual prostate cancer screenings with their primary care doctor to help detect the disease early.

FACT 22:
The highest rate of prostate cancer incidence in Virginia during 2013-2017 was among African American men. Mortality rates in Virginia among African-American men was the highest of all groups

source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Learn the facts and warning signs for men.

This study from the Institute of Cancer Research seeks to find out why black men develop prostate cancer at twice the rate of other men.

MEN: Dispel myths and get your annual exam!

Make a difference today by asking others to support Massey’s 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice campaign designed to invest in cancer research that will help reduce mortality rates around health disparities. With only a few days left of this campaign, every dollar donated will be matched by a generous fund created by a group of passionate advisory board members and supporters.

Many thanks to our presenting sponsor, Apex Systems, Inc. for supporting this campaign and getting your staff involved in learning more and spreading the
word. And thanks to everyone involved in making our community a healthier place to live, work, and play!
Happy Friday,

How do you have a long and thriving life after cancer? VCU Massey Cancer Center is committed to survivorship.

FACT 23:
While cancer treatments are lifesaving, they may result in some debilitating side effects, including cardiotoxicity, dysfunction in the heart. Studies show that Black women suffer from a higher risk and prevalence of cardiotoxicity after treatment than White women.

source: National Institute of Health, National Library of Medicine, National Center for Biotechnology

Growing bodies of research continue to suggest that chemotherapy is associated with a significantly increased risk of heart disease, particularly in patients who have been treated for breast cancer. However, the emerging field of cardio-oncology is amplifying the attention on cancer patients’ heart health before, during and after their treatment to minimize cardiovascular side effects and increase cancer-related survival. Collaboration between Massey Cancer Center and VCU Health Pauley Heart Center is uncovering knowledge to improve the lives of patients, long after they beat cancer.

How can you make a difference?

Act today: Make a gift so the women in your life will thrive!

- Understand the connections between cancer and heart disease.
- Learn about how VCU Massey Cancer Center's Breast Cancer Collaborative Care Clinic offers a multidisciplinary approach that begins with a team of world-class experts who will together recommend a treatment plan. Share this information with your community. If you or someone you love needs
this, feel confident you can discuss it with a healthcare provider on your first visit.

Only three more days of this campaign! We are excited that a passionate group of donors and Advisory Board members came together to create a Matching Donation Fund for 25 for 25: Health Equity & Justice. Every donation will be matched by this fund 1:1 for the next $20,000 raised! Please consider making a gift yourself or inviting a friend to do so today and double your impact! Every donation will help fund critical research in Massey's Office of Health Equity and Disparities Research.
Good morning,

This Breast Cancer Awareness Month, let's unite in support of all women!

**FACT 24:**

Adjuvant endocrine therapy, taken for 5-10 years after diagnosis, improves outcomes for women with hormone receptor positive breast cancer; however, up to 50% of women discontinue their therapy by 5 years and racial disparities exist with regard to endocrine therapy adherence. Suboptimal adherence among Black women includes lower rates of initiation, greater delays to initiate therapy and failure to complete the full course of therapy.

source: *National Center for Biotechnology Information*, *National Library of Medicine*, *National Institutes of Health*

Massey Cancer Center's breast cancer care is:

- Cutting-edge
- Comprehensive
- Collaborative
- Customized
- Compassionate

At Massey, patients have direct access to a nurse navigator, who will guide them through every stage of treatment and recovery. Massey is committed to supporting patients in every way we can - physically, emotionally, spiritually and otherwise - for as long as they need us. We're the community's breast health partner for the long haul.

Combining our commitment to cancer research, breast cancer care and addressing health disparities, Massey is making a difference for all women. Learn more about [Massey’s breast health program](#). Along with [VCU Massey Cancer Center’s Breast Cancer Collaborative Care Clinic](#) which puts women on a path to healing and recovery.
We are grateful to you for being a Health Equity Champion, sharing our resources, and informing others of how to improve their long-term health. While this campaign only lasts a couple more days, Massey’s work will continue to make an impact and our Team Massey fundraising website will still be available for donations and information.

Once again, thank you to our presenting sponsor, Apex Systems, Inc. We truly appreciate your commitment to building a healthier community for all!
Hi,

For the past 25 years, cancer mortality rates for African Americans compared to Caucasians have been declining, but the current rate of 14% higher mortality is unacceptable. Beyond cancer disparities, 2020 has shined a light on the pandemic within a pandemic.

**FACT 25:**

Many factors contribute to racial disparities in cancer outcomes. One issue is access to care. When compared to White patients, Black patients suffer from longer time until diagnosis which may result in late-stage diagnosis and delayed treatment following a diagnosis.

*source: National Center for Biotechnology Information, National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health*

VCU Massey Cancer Center is committed to addressing cancer health disparities.

Thank you for helping us make advancements in cancer equity by 2025.

For 25 days you have faithfully devoted time each day to LEARN, to GROW, to ADVOCATE and to SHARE! **Being a Health Equity Champion doesn’t have to end today.** You can sign up for newsletters, follow us on Facebook, and attend future events and webinars. You can continue to ask friends, colleagues, family and neighbors to support Massey’s health disparities research.

Thank you for your attention, support and awareness! We appreciate you.

Robert A. Winn, M.D.
Director, VCU Massey Cancer Center

Vanessa B. Sheppard, Ph.D.
Associate Director, Community Outreach Engagement and Health Disparities
Massey Cancer Center