Greetings,

Approximately 10 years ago, Dr. Keith Ray began planting the seeds of a vision for the North Carolina Center for Health and Wellness (NCCHW). Based at UNC Asheville, the center would become a statewide resource for health, wellness and primary prevention, with a focus on healthy weight for children, youth and young adults, workplace wellness and healthy aging.

Dr. Ray found fertile soil for his vision among university and community leaders, and the North Carolina General Assembly provided a significant allocation for a building on the UNC Asheville campus that would become NCCHW’s home. Long-time UNC Asheville supporter, legislator and local leader, Wilma M. Sherrill, worked with university and community members to raise additional funds for this beautiful facility, now known as the Wilma M. Sherrill Center.

As the steel, concrete, stone and glass of the Sherrill Center took form, Dr. Ray and university leaders shared NCCHW’s vision with the BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina Foundation, which agreed to a generous investment in this new center that would carry NCCHW forward from 2008 to the present. Equipment for Sherrill Center classrooms, fitness center and research labs was acquired, and research and specific projects in each area of focus were funded. These projects engaged faculty and undergraduate student researchers from a variety of UNC Asheville academic departments and engaged community partners across Asheville and Buncombe County.

In July 2010, the university hired the first full-time staff, and by January 2011 all of the current staff were on board. This new team went to work building on the solid foundation established by Dr. Ray and UNC Asheville administrators Chancellor Anne Ponder, Janet Cone, John Pierce and others. During the 2010–11 fiscal year, as the final touches to the Sherrill Center were in progress, NCCHW staff developed critical relationships with the campus and local and regional communities while introducing NCCHW to long-time friends and colleagues across the state. In August 2011, the Wilma M. Sherrill Center and Kimmel Arena were dedicated and opened as the new home for NCCHW, the Health and Wellness Department, Campus Recreation and UNC Asheville Bulldog Basketball. With the Sherrill Center as a backdrop and destination for meetings, conferences, training and events, NCCHW continued its work in primary prevention with an emphasis on health equity.

As you peruse this first annual report of NCCHW, realize that the accomplishments and outcomes revealed in this document are merely snapshots of the successes and outstanding work of many individuals and organizations over more than five years. Enjoy, learn and support this story of health, wellness and prevention.

To your good health,

David Gardner, Executive Director
N.C. Center for Health & Wellness

The North Carolina Center for Health & Wellness (NCCHW) at UNC Asheville serves as a statewide resource for wellness professionals in establishing prevention of illness as an essential component of good health. The organization engages stakeholders by coordinating and supporting faculty and undergraduate student research, advancing community-based programs that address critical wellness issues and promoting the replication of successful preventive health practices. **NCCHW focuses on three of North Carolina's most pressing health concerns: workplace wellness, healthy aging, and healthy weight for children, youth and young adults.** NCCHW's work aligns with UNC Asheville's academic mission and encourages interdisciplinary collaborations among health and wellness providers and stakeholders across the region and state. By effectively connecting researchers, policymakers and professionals in the field of health, NCCHW helps to make North Carolina a healthier place.

UNC Asheville

Amid the culturally rich setting of Asheville, in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, UNC Asheville is the only dedicated liberal arts institution in the University of North Carolina system, offering students an intellectually rigorous education that builds critical thinking and workforce skills to last a lifetime. Small class size, award-winning faculty and a nationally acclaimed Undergraduate Research Program foster innovation as well as recognition.
Healthy Weight | for children, youth and young adults

- NCCHW works with School Health Advisory Councils (SHAC) in Local Education Administrative (LEA) Units, resulting in the adoption of policies supporting healthy eating and physical activity in North Carolina schools, which positively impacts the health of students, teachers and staff.

- Farm to School connects schools and local farms to the objectives of serving healthy meals in school cafeterias, improving student nutrition, providing agriculture, health and nutrition education opportunities, and supporting local and regional farmers. NCCHW has co-initiated the formation of the statewide Farm to School Coalition of North Carolina. The center also conducts process evaluation for Farm to School Projects and successfully implements model Farm to School initiatives throughout North Carolina.

- NCCHW supports projects that create outdoor learning environments in child care centers throughout North Carolina. The center also works with programs that promote hiking and nature exploration in an attempt to get children “unplugged” and into nature to support their health and the health of the environment.

A Kids in Parks participant gets ready to explore a Blue Ridge Parkway trail.

(Photoby Jason Urroz)

The Numbers

242,038

The number of children in North Carolina served in child care and in schools that adopt policies and create environments that support healthy eating and physical activity.

345

The number of older adults served in health promoting/supporting senior meal programs that provide access to healthy food, increased physical activity and tobacco-free policies.

Worksite Wellness

- NCCHW annually hosts the WorkHealthy AmericaSM Academy presented by N.C. Prevention Partners. The academy trains representatives from worksites that serve employees and adopt at least one health promoting or supporting policy.

- NCCHW supports an innovative research partnership between the UNC Asheville Health and Wellness Department and the Mission Health System Employee Wellness Program called the “Living Lab.” This project examines the impact of biometric and health risk assessment, individual consultation and personal training on the physical activity behaviors of Mission Health employees. Results of the project will inform Mission Health and other employers of the benefits of similar strategies.

- NCCHW supports the UNC Asheville Employee Wellness Program through funding, staff representation, leadership and technical assistance. The program serves more than 700 UNC Asheville employees by providing weight-management counseling, lunch and learn seminars, and group fitness classes, among additional activities and programs.

UNC Asheville presents Well-a-Bration, a week of wellness activities for faculty, staff, students and community members. (Photo by Melissa Linney)
Healthy Aging

- NCCHW provides training and technical assistance on the implementation of Eating Smart, Moving More, Aging Well (EMMA), which results in improved access to healthy food, physical activity and tobacco-free environments at senior meal sites across Western North Carolina.
- The center awarded grant funding that supports balance and proprioception research by UNC Asheville faculty and undergraduate researchers in senior meal sites. This research provides critical data and findings that can be used in falls prevention.
- NCCHW staff members support scheduling of wellness classes for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute’s (OLLI) College for Seniors and assists in the planning and hosting of the Buncombe County Senior Games. In addition, the center hosts seminars on healthy living in partnership with OLLI, Council on Aging of Buncombe County and other organizations serving older adults.

Project EMMA participants enjoy an energizing exercise. (PHOTO BY PERRY HEBARD)

124
The number of worksites that have completed WorkHealthy America™ training and received technical assistance from NCCHW that initiated at least one health promoting or supporting policy change.

30
The number of boards, councils, task forces and steering committees of which NCCHW staff are members.

27
The number of Tier 1 counties NCCHW serves through initiatives, projects and activities.

Health Equity

- The Department of Commerce designates the 40 most economically distressed counties in North Carolina as Tier 1. NCCHW has worked with 15 community health and wellness projects that serve residents of 14 Tier 1 counties.
- NCCWH staff serve on the WNC Health Equity Network and North Carolina Health Equity Collaborative.
- NCCHW hosts meetings and events aligned with the National Stand Against Racism Initiative.
- The center created and maintains a Health Equity Internship to provide a UNC Asheville student with experiential opportunities related to equity in health, wellness and prevention.
- NCCHW recognizes the significance of equity as a guiding principle for health, wellness and prevention and strives to include and promote equity in its work.

YWCA’s Diabetes Wellness and Promotion Program participants learn about the health benefits of physical activity. (PHOTO BY SANDRA STAMBAUGH)
Undergraduate Research and Internships

CAROLYN BACCHUS

During her senior year at UNC Asheville, health and wellness promotion graduate Carolyn Bacchus held a position as community collaboration associate for the N.C. Center for Health and Wellness. In this role, Bacchus supported the community partners of NCCHW and cultivated relationships among local health promotion professionals, businesses and the university. In addition, Bacchus completed an in-depth policy research project and report for Eat Smart, Move More N.C. (ESMMNC), a statewide organization focused on reversing the rising tide of obesity and chronic disease among North Carolinians. Her report provided the ESMMNC Policy Committee a current snapshot of what health-related policies are being worked on at the local level across North Carolina, making the organization better able to support local coalitions through their policy efforts. Bacchus presented her research findings at the ESMMNC Executive Committee meeting and N.C. Society for Public Health Education (NCSOPHE) conference in October 2012.

LAURA GARDNER & SHAWN ROBINSON

In the spring of 2013, juniors Laura Gardner and Shawn Robinson began a communications internship with the N.C. Center for Health & Wellness. Gardner, who is a health and wellness promotion major, worked in partnership with Robinson, who is majoring in mass communication. Through their project, the duo created web stories, learned website editing and design, compiled success stories and quotes, presented at expos and conferences, created social media campaigns and videos, and implemented analytical tools. In addition to their numerous projects, the pair created materials for NCCHW’s Creatively Collaborative campaign, which launches in the fall of 2013 and will bring awareness to the dedication NCCHW lends its partners.

HILLARY MURPHY

UNC Asheville health and wellness promotion graduate Hillary Murphy held an internship position with the N.C. Center for Health & Wellness, where she worked on a Minority Health Grant to create assessment tools that better address the reasons individuals in Buncombe County are not receiving follow-up care. Murphy also worked with the Irene Wortham Center on the implementation of a health and wellness program that focused on increasing physical fitness and overall health while empowering the participants. After graduation, Murphy continued to work on a documentary film project with Assistant Professor Ameena Batada, conducting research and interviews with community members, organization leaders and experts about local food in Western North Carolina and the potential to address health disparities in the community. She was honored with the 2013 Carolyn Briggs Diversity Award at UNC Asheville for promoting diversity in the university community.
NCCHW Staff

David Gardner, D.A.
Executive Director

Rebecca H. Reeve, Ph.D., CHES
Director of Research Programs

Laurie Stradley, M.A.
Director of State and Community Collaboration

Andrea Fiedler, M.S.
Communications Coordinator

Laura Gardner
Administrative Assistant

NCCHW Advisory Committee

Luther Barnhardt, M.D.
Retired, Diagnostic Radiologist

Linda Barrett, MHA
Manager, Corporate and Community Health, WakeMed Health & Hospitals

David Chenoweth, Ph.D.
Founder & CEO, Chenoweth & Associates, Inc.

Sylvia Flack, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Center of Excellence for the Elimination of Health Disparities, Winston-Salem State University

Jeffery E. Heck, M.D.
President and CEO, MAHEC

Olson Huff, M.D.
Founder, Sixty Second Parent; Retired, Pediatrician

Suzanne Landis, M.D., MPH
Director, Division of Healthcare Innovation; Director, Center for Healthy Aging, MAHEC

Keith Ray, Ph.D.
Chair, Health and Wellness Department, UNC Asheville

Mollie Scott, Pharm.D., BCACP, CPP
Regional Associate Dean, UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy, Asheville Campus

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Mollie Scott, Pharm.D., BCACP, CPP
Regional Associate Dean, UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy, Asheville Campus

Tiffany Shubert, Ph.D., P.T.
Translational Scientist, UNC Institute on Aging—Center for Aging and Health

Tricia Willoughby
Member, State Board of Education

Future Plans

NCCHW will expand as a valuable resource and leader for the prevention of chronic health conditions across North Carolina by providing leadership, communication, collaboration and evaluation to improve effectiveness and efficiency of community prevention and health-protecting efforts across the state.

(L–R): Jim Rich, Artie Kamiya, Shellie Pfohl and David Gardner at the National PE Institute, held annually at UNC Asheville. In 2012, the Institute welcomed Shellie Pfohl, executive director of the President’s Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition, as the keynote speaker.

(PhotobyAndreaFiedler)
partners

As a hub for health-related information and training, the N.C. Center for Health & Wellness reaches citizens through its partners across the state.

- ABIPA (Asheville Buncombe Institute of Parity Achievement)
- Action for Children N.C.
- Alliance for a Healthier Generation
- Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project
- Aspire Youth & Family—Kids at Work!
- Be Active Kids N.C.
- BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina Foundation
- Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation
- Buncombe County Department of Health
- Buncombe County Schools
- The Carolina Collaborative for Research on Work and Health
- Center for Healthy Aging
- Council on Aging of Buncombe County
- Eat Smart, Move More N.C.
- Eat Smart, Move More University Collaborative
- FEAST
- First 2,000 Days
- Girls on the Run of WNC
- Healthy Buncombe Institute for Emerging Issues
- Land of Sky Area Agency on Aging
- MAHEC (Mountain Area Health Education Center)
- Mission Health System
- National PE Institute
- Natural Learning Initiative at N.C. State University
- N.C. Action for Healthy Kids
- N.C. Alliance for Athletics, Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance
- N.C. Alliance for Health
- N.C. Department of Public Instruction
- N.C. Division of Public Health
- N.C. Healthy Schools Partnership
- N.C. Prevention Partners
- NCPTA
- N.C. Public Health Foundation
- N.C. School Community Health Alliance
- N.C. School Health Advisory Councils
- N.C. Society of Public Health Education
- N.C. State Alliance of YMCA
- Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
- Smart Start and Partnership for Children—Shape N.C.
- WNC Health Network
- WNC Healthy Kids Coalition
- YMCA of Western North Carolina
- Youth Empowered Solutions—YES!
- YWCA of Asheville