

HEALTHY Aging

Newsletter

A Publication of Lincoln University Cooperative Extension Paula J. Carter Center on Minority Health and Aging

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EMBARKING ON THE NEXT CHAPTER

By Jan Curtiss-Carter, Writer/Editor

The month of January invites us to launch new beginnings, and this January we welcome Ms. Yvonne Matthews as she provides new leadership in the role of the full-time administrator of Lincoln University Cooperative Extension's Paula J. Carter Center on Minority Health and Aging (PJCCMHA). As a full-time leader, Ms. Matthews is excited about new opportunities. There will be greater engagement with all of you, our seniors and our partners, and the possibility of expanding our programmatic territories and creating new linkages for our clientele to utilize the ever-widening world of technology more fully.

Ms. Matthews comes to this role after having most recently served Lincoln University Cooperative Extension as the associate administrator. Over the past 15 years, the opportunity to oversee a wide range of specializations within Cooperative Extension, along with managing a diverse faculty and staff, has expanded her knowledge of agriculture. This experience has equipped her with valuable insights on how to enhance services for people, especially those living in Missouri.

Her commitment to serving vulnerable populations began as early as her undergraduate career. As a second generation native New Yorker (if you listen to her closely, you can still hear traces of the accent), she studied at Herbert H. Lehman College in New York City. While attending school, she interned for the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs and the Better



EMBARKING ON THE NEXT CHAPTER (CONT.)

Business Bureau. These experiences bolstered her resolve to help provide educational opportunities to protect and strengthen families, helping them reduce their vulnerability to consumer fraud. She would go on to complete coursework toward a doctoral degree in Family and Consumer Economics at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

While pursuing graduate education, Ms. Matthews discovered Cooperative Extension programming and became aware of Extension's mission and commitment to strengthened families around the world. She heard echoes of her earliest training in Sunday school to care for "the least of these" in the work of Cooperative Extension. She realized she had found a profession to which she could link her life's work.

When asked to talk about accomplishments of which she is most proud, she mentions having been trusted to serve the university as the interim dean of the College of Agriculture, Environmental and Human Sciences for two years, weathering severe budget cuts. She also cites co-leading a team from Lincoln University and the University of Missouri to produce an educational parenting toolkit for military families, entitled "Step Into Your Child's World." The toolkit was distributed to every U.S. Department of Defense military installation in the world.

During a recent trip to Florida, Ms. Matthews had the opportunity to visit with the founder of the Paula J. Carter Center on Minority Health and Aging, Dr. Dolores Penn, who just celebrated her 90th birthday.



When she was told of Ms. Matthews's new role, Dr. Penn responded, "Oh, a legacy! My work continues." With the founder's dream for the center as her charge, Ms. Matthews will lock arms with the current staff—Ms. Deborah Jenkins, and Ms. Glenda Meachum-Cain—as they propel the center to places where it has not been before.

SPOTLIGHT

MEET PJCCMHA BOARD MEMBER - DONALD GLOVER

By Jan Curtiss-Carter, Writer/Editor

As someone who exemplifies the sentiment “do unto others,” Mr. Donald Glover has been a valued member of the advisory board for the Paula J. Carter Center on Minority Health and Aging (PJCCMHA) for more than ten years. He was born and raised on a farm in Fulton, Missouri, and in 1964, he earned his Bachelor of Science in Engineering. Afterward, he found employment with Caterpillar Inc., where he worked for 37 years as a manufacturing engineer.

**"DO
UNTO
OTHERS."**

Glover now raises cattle and grows hay alongside one of his grandsons in his retirement and attends cattle shows across the United States and Canada. He is also an avid gardener who happily gives his harvested produce away to nearby community residents.

Glover’s extraordinary commitment to serve the board beyond what would be expected is evidenced in many ways. When the center was



DONALD GLOVER
Advisory Board Member
PJCCMHA

short-staffed, he came in and worked in the office. When someone was needed to represent the center and man the booth at conferences like Juneteenth or the Missouri State Fair, without hesitation, he volunteered. He also participated in the design of an award-winning poster for one of these events.

He is a past Missouri Institute on Minority Aging (MIMA) Regional King who, as King, has participated in Lincoln University homecoming activities as well as the Gathering of Gentlemen events. As a PJCCMHA senior lay leader, he has also represented the constituents of Lincoln University Cooperative Extension programs around the state at several Lincoln University Day at the Capitol events.

Glover is not only a MIMA King, but he is also royalty in his family. With 10 grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren and 3 more great grandchildren due to be born in February 2024, he is ever so thankful for his family and always enjoys making everybody feel happy. The Paula J. Carter Center is thankful for him and his many years of selfless service.

UPDATE: NOT A TRIPLEDEMIC, BUT IT ISN'T GOOD

By Steve Calloway, Retired Pharmacist/Consultant

Have you had enough of COVID-19 yet? In the words of Dr. Michael Osterholm or Dr. Tony Fauci: "We may be through with the virus, but the virus is not through with us!" That's very much how we should be thinking as we enter into this season of flu, RSV and yes, COVID, which the press has referred to as a tripledemic. You should be aware that there are some negative impacts to the current state of public health and disease prevention, especially concerning COVID.

VACCINE MISINFORMATION

In the age of the internet, vaccine misinformation has been widely and easily spread through social media. There are even some people who do not trust the COVID vaccines or believe that they work. They may even question immunization science more broadly, forgetting that vaccines are responsible for the eradication of smallpox and the elimination of diseases such as polio, mumps, and measles. WHERE you get your information matters!

THE END OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

The federal government declared the end of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency on May 11, 2023. As a result, some people mistakenly believe that COVID is no longer a problem. Although updated versions of the COVID vaccine are available, the percentage of persons getting vaccinated is low. It is harder to find information on COVID cases and deaths at the national or state level or in reports by the media. There are no masking requirements (e.g., public transportation, health care facilities) and fewer public opportunities to obtain COVID vaccines or testing. Government purchased supplies of Pfizer and Moderna vaccines will remain free and available until they run out. The commercial price for the vaccines will be \$115 to \$128 per dose which may limit access.



**"WHERE YOU GET
YOUR
INFORMATION
MATTERS!"**

UPDATE (CONT.)

NOW FOR THE GOOD NEWS:

- There are updated vaccines for COVID and flu, and a new vaccine for RSV. These vaccines may not prevent you from becoming infected, but they are effective at keeping people from becoming so sick that they must be hospitalized or, worst-case scenario, dying.
- COVID vaccination language has been simplified, similar to recommendations for the annual flu shot. **MASKING, HAND HYGIENE, and SOCIAL DISTANCING** are still effective tools to help keep you safe. It is not too late to get vaccinated if you have not done so yet.
- FREE COVID and flu vaccines are covered through Medicare and Medicaid. At a cost of \$180 to \$195 a shot, the RSV vaccine is covered under Medicare Part D, but may incur a copay. Most pharmacies stock and can administer all three vaccines. Health departments and community health centers may have free COVID and flu vaccines but not RSV. Appointments are recommended.
- The vaccines are **SAFE** and **EFFECTIVE!** The evidence is that you are here reading this. There are also effective antiviral treatments such as Paxlovid if you get COVID (although the commercial price exceeds \$1,000 for the 5-day treatment).
- The federal government has resumed mailing **FREE COVID HOME TEST KITS**. Make sure you check the FDA website for extended expiration dates on test kits. Follow local COVID hospitalizations and wastewater virus levels.

Going forward, continue to stay safe and healthy.

AFRICAN AMERICAN SYPHILIS RATES CONTINUE TO RISE IN MISSOURI AND ACROSS THE NATION

By Dustin Hampton, M.Ed., Chief for the Bureau of HIV, STD, and Hepatitis
Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that health disparities are differences in the number of cases, the proportion of people affected, and the number of people who die of a disease among specific population groups. Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) have a greater disparity in the African American community.

The nation has experienced an increase in STDs (syphilis, chlamydia, and gonorrhea) in its African American population. In Missouri, African Americans are diagnosed with syphilis at a rate almost 5 times higher than whites. Gonorrhea is diagnosed at a rate 9.4 times higher in African Americans than whites. Chlamydia is diagnosed at a rate 6.7 times higher.



According to the CDC, STD rates are at an all-time high. Nationally, there has been a 74% increase in syphilis cases between 2016 and 2021. Syphilis is a disease that can cause severe health problems if left untreated. It spreads when someone has oral, vaginal, or anal sex with a person with as few as one syphilis sore. The good news is that syphilis can be cured with antibiotics. However, many cases go undiagnosed and untreated. This can lead to more people getting sick and having health problems in the future.

Congenital syphilis is when a mother passes the infection to her baby during pregnancy. It can cause low birth weight, pre-term births and stillbirth. There were more than 2,800 congenital syphilis cases across the nation in 2021. 220 resulted in stillbirth. Missouri has

also experienced this increase. Between 2015 and 2022, congenital syphilis increased from two cases to 82. Congenital syphilis is completely preventable with the correct treatment at the right time. Regardless of whether she thinks she has syphilis or has been exposed to it, all pregnant women should be screened for syphilis at their first prenatal visit, in the third trimester (28 weeks), and at delivery.

Using condoms can help protect you from getting syphilis. However, there are still some areas where sores can happen that a condom doesn't cover. Condoms are also important for preventing other STDs and HIV. If you're worried about STDs, it's a good idea to get tested regularly. The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services can help you get tested for syphilis, chlamydia, gonorrhea, and HIV. If you want to find a testing site near you, you can go to www.health.mo.gov/testing.

To view STD, HIV, and hepatitis data, go to <https://health.mo.gov/data/hivstdaids/data.php>.

PUMPKIN SOUP

BY SARAH EBER MPH, RD, LD, CDE

LUCE Human Nutrition and Health Program Coordinator

INGREDIENTS

- 2.4 pounds of pumpkin or 32 ounces canned pumpkin
- 1 onion, sliced
- 2 garlic cloves
- 3 c vegetable or chicken broth or stock, low sodium
- 1 c water
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Fresh parsley, chives, or green onions

Serves 4-6

HOW-TO FOR FRESH PUMPKIN

1. Wash your hands.
2. Rinse fresh vegetables.
3. Cut the pumpkin into chunks.
4. Remove the skin and seeds.
5. Place the pumpkin, onions, garlic, broth and water in a large stock pot.
6. Bring to a boil, uncovered.
7. Reduce the heat and simmer until the pumpkin is tender.
8. Remove from heat.
9. Place food in a blender. Blend until smooth.
10. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.
11. Sprinkle with parsley, chives, or green onions.

HOW-TO FOR CANNED PUMPKIN

1. Place the pumpkin, onions, garlic, broth (omit the water) in a large stock pot.
2. Bring to a boil, uncovered.
3. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Remove from heat.
5. Place food in a blender. Blend until smooth.
6. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.
7. Sprinkle with parsley, chives, or green onions.

Adapted from

<https://www.recipetineats.com/classic-pumpkin-soup/#wprm-recipe-container-23421>

BECAUSE WE CARE. Take care to keep hot food hot, cold food cold, and prevent cross contamination. Wash your hands. Wash all fresh produce.

**SARAH
EBER**

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Dr. Douglas LaVergne, Dean of the College of Agriculture, Environmental and Human Sciences and 1890 Land Grant Administrator. Distributed in furtherance of Food and Agriculture Act 1977 PL-113 Section 1444 and 1445, as amended by PL 97-98, December 22, 1981. Lincoln University is an 1890 land-grant institution and is part of the Missouri state system of higher education. Lincoln University was founded in 1866 by enlisted men and officers of the 62nd and 63rd Colored Infantries.



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