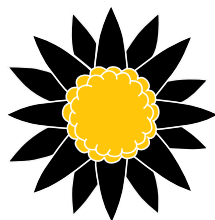


The HBEC encourages older African Americans to participate in research with the goal of addressing health disparities



HEALTHIER BLACK ELDERS CENTER

FALL 2024



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Research is critical to understanding why African Americans are at much higher risk of developing certain diseases, and why these diseases have a greater impact on their health and longevity.

If you agree to be part of the Participant Resource Pool (PRP), we guarantee that:

The research projects meet the highest quality federal, state and university standards.

- Your information will be handled with the strictest confidence.

- You will be considered for research that is of interest to you.

- You have the right to decline a research project for any reason at any time.

If interested, contact Vanessa Rorai, HBEC Program Coordinator and editor of this publication at 313-664-2604.



What is “Brain-Training” and Does it Work

*By Bradley J. Dixon
Psychology PhD Student, WSU*

Interest has been growing in playing “brain games” that claim to improve cognitive functioning. The prospect of improving one’s thinking abilities by playing games for 15 minutes daily is appealing. But do these games work? Many companies marketing brain-training programs reference research suggesting their products “improved performance,” while other scientists have argued that these pro-

grams are not beneficial. As a result, it is easy to be perplexed about the potential benefits of using such programs.

Claims about the benefits of “brain-training” programs become confusing when there is a disconnect between consumer expectations and the programs’ actual benefits. Many hope “brain-training” programs will improve their thinking and memory, reducing the cognitive changes in aging and lower-

SEE BRAIN PAGE 2



Fall HBEC Lunch & Learns

We’re excited for our Fall 2024 Lunch & Learn Series on page 7. For those of you who weren’t able to join us back on March 28th, Tracy Rowan (left) Staff Attorney at Elder Law and Advocacy Center shared valuable information on navigating finances and healthcare management. Her organization provides free legal aid. Interested? call: 313-937-8291.

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Brain FROM PAGE 1

ing dementia risk. This idea feels intuitive. If we were worried about falling, we would improve our leg strength and balance.

Yet, the brain does not work the same way, and unfortunately, extensive examinations of brain-training interventions show that these programs do not appear to improve general cognitive functioning. Instead, many improvements from brain training only impact a specific trained skill. While these improvements are often marketed as exciting, the same finding would be true for any other skill you practice. For example, your juggling abilities will improve if you juggle balls for 15 minutes daily. However, juggling practice will not improve your ability to play cards. Similarly, the gains most people receive from brain training do not tend to extend far beyond that particular skill. Brain games can be fun, and while they are not harmful, consumers should recognize their limitations and carefully consider the monthly fees associated with many of these programs.

Although brain training is unlikely to buffer age-related changes in thinking, several recommendations can improve cognition and reduce the risk of developing dementia. One recommendation is to live an active lifestyle by engaging in social events, attending shows, and visiting museums. Such activities are associated with maintaining cognitive skills. Regular physical activity, particularly aerobic exercise, also positively influences cognition. A healthy body helps to maintain a healthy brain.

HBEC Member Spotlight



Joy and Gratitude at 102

by JoAnn Smith
HBEC Community Advisory Board Member

HBEC member Ms. Ruby Love celebrated her 102 birthday on February 14, 2024, Valentine's Day! Everyone wore red and she was beautiful in her red sweater.

The celebration was held at Farwell Center with loving family, church members, friends and community. It was a joyful celebration with music, dancing, delicious food, flowers, gifts and of course many photos taken. Mrs. Love received several certificates of recognition from her community: The Pershing Dough Girls Class of 1941, The Spirit of Detroit Award, and recognition from the Detroit Police Department.

Ruby is a survivor of a loving husband and three sons. She currently resides with her loving granddaughter and two great-grandchildren. Her granddaughter says she is a joy to live with. When asked what it feels like to live to be 102 years old, she smiled and said, "Getting up each morning, I like be-



Ms. Ruby Love at her joyful 102 birthday celebration.

ing with myself. I do the things I enjoy."

Although her hands are getting a little weak, she still enjoys baking. She is famous for her brownies and also makes delicious pound cakes, chocolate chip cookies, and many more treats. She enjoys reading, watching religious programs, game shows, and her favorite sports basketball and baseball. She also does exercises in her chair!

The meaning of Ruby's name is a rare stone expressing love – she is quite the Healthier Black Elders role model. Thank you to Ms. Love for being an HBEC member!



Volunteers Needed for Program to Prevent Financial Exploitation

Adults over age 50 are the most frequent targets for different types of financial exploitation. Dr. Peter Lichtenberg is the director of the Institute of Gerontology and a nationally known expert in preventing financial exploitation. To promote better financial health and well-being among older adults, he is currently working to introduce a new financial exploitation prevention program, which would help protect vulnerable older adults from being victims of financial exploitation.

SAFE as Prevention is a one-on-one educational program delivered by phone or Zoom

and tailored to your personal situation. We are conducting a research study and looking for a pilot group of older adults to help us test the program. This pilot group will provide us with valuable feedback on how to best roll out our program to the larger community of older adults.

Our goal is to provide a convenient program that can empower older adults against financial exploitation and scams.

All the information you give us remains private. Your information is never shared outside our SAFE team.

If you choose to participate in the research study: You will complete baseline and follow-up interviews (about 30 minutes each) and participate in three 30 to 45-minute sessions over a month's time. At the end of the program, we will compensate you \$50 for your time.



*If you have questions or would like to participate in this very important study, please call **LaToya Hall** at **313-664-2608**.*

SAVE THE DATE

NOVEMBER
Thursday
7th
6-9:00 pm

*Club Venetian
Banquet Center
29310 John R Rd.
Madison Heights
48071*



Fundraiser!



*HBEC makes a big difference in a lot of lives. Because of its impact, HBEC was chosen to receive all the proceeds from the 2024 **Senior and Caregiver Resource Network (SACRN)** fundraiser. Monies raised will support HBEC Lunch & Learns, increase HBEC outreach, and support the inclusion of more older African American adults in research.*

Each ticket includes dinner, drinks & entertainment. We'll have a silent auction, raffle baskets, live music, and a tasting experience!

*Details on sponsorship and ticket purchase will be emailed this fall. If you don't receive monthly HBEC emails, call us for more information at **313-664-2604**.*

A Study to Increase Older Black Volunteers

Volunteering is associated with positive physical and mental health outcomes for older adults, yet research suggests that Black older adults participate in volunteer work less often than White older adults. Dr. Rodlescia Sneed and her team are working to identify barriers and facilitators of volunteerism for Black older adults living in Detroit.

Dr. Sneed, is the principal investigator for the Detroit Volunteerism Intervention Planning (VIP) Study. She also leads the Social & Psychological Determinants of Health and Aging Research (SHARE) Group. The Detroit VIP Study has been running since June 2023 when the first participant, an HBEC member, was interviewed by the lead research assistant, Erika Karoll, MPH. Research team members Alexis Burns and Jackie Duckett also assist with cleaning and coding study data.

Although the project is still recruiting participants, 35 interviews have been completed with 24 Black older adults and 11 researchers and service providers who work with older adult volunteers. Twelve participants are HBEC members. A female participant (age 71) shared: "I like being able to help people. That's my biggest thing, especially if it's something I'm knowledgeable about, I want to be able to share it. I don't want to just leave here and not leave something behind."

Dr. Sneed hopes the results will guide future interventional programs to increase the number of Black older adults volunteering in

WHY SHOULD SENIORS VOLUNTEER?


THE BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING



PROVIDES A SENSE OF PURPOSE As seniors retire, volunteering can provide new ways to stay engaged with the community and learn new skills. Seniors who volunteer report higher levels of satisfaction with life, according to research performed by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).


GREATER SOCIAL INTERACTION Volunteering is a great way to meet new people and find new friends. Volunteers who serve together share passions, interests and experiences.






LOWER LEVELS OF DEPRESSION AND MORTALITY 3 CNCS found that seniors who volunteer report lower levels of depression later in life and experience lower levels of mortality.


KEEPS BRAIN SHARP, ACTIVE, AND HAPPY The challenges and new experiences that come with volunteering will help keep minds in tip-top shape. Nonprofit organizations need the experience, wisdom and wit of seniors.





DECREASED LEVELS OF CHRONIC PAIN 5 CNCS reports that individuals who volunteer experience less chronic pain as they age!

GREATER FUNCTIONAL ABILITIES Service can help keep seniors in good physical shape. As they stay active through volunteering, they can experience rejuvenation.



Source: Office of Research Policy Development. The Health Benefits of Volunteering. Corporation for National and Community Service 2007. Volunteering and Older Adults, Final Report.

the community. Her next steps are to finish recruiting and interviewing, then analyze the data. The research team is especially looking

for Black men ages 55+ to participate in the study. Contact Erika Karoll at karoller@wayne.edu or 313-389-6491 to learn more.

Actively Recruiting Research Studies



The list below contains studies looking for participants. All have been reviewed and approved by the Community Advisory Board. Please contact the specific person listed after each study you are interested in.

Supporting Caregivers of People with Dementia

Family caregivers are needed for a study that can be completed at home, online or in person at Wayne State University. Study entails participating in up to 3-4 focus groups or interviews. All participants will receive a gift card. Contact Rosanne DiZazzo-Miller at ar7975@wayne.edu or 313-993-3970

The Affective and Sociomaterial Aftermath of Elder Financial Fraud and Scams

This project seeks to uncover what older adults do after falling victim to such frauds or scams and what resources they utilize in response. Participation includes a survey, an

hour-long interview, and a seven-day diary study (that should take 15-25 minutes to complete each day). If you're an older adult (65+) who has recently experienced fraud or scams (online, over the phone, or in person).

Contact the team at samank@umich.edu or call 734-330-2085

Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Healthcare Study

We are studying how primary caregivers of people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias choose insurance and arrange health care services for their loved one. After a brief eligibility survey, you will be asked to complete a 1-hour interview and compensated with a \$100 gift card.

Contact Lorrie Carbone at lbrach@med.umich.edu or 888-231-8707

ELECTRA Study

This research seeks to improve the way we diagnose Alzheimer's Disease in Black and African American adults by using electroencephalogram (EEG) and computerized assessment. Must be 65+ years old (among other criteria). Those who complete the in-person visits will be compensated.

Contact the ELECTRA Study Team at ELECTRA@wayne.edu or 313-577-1692

Shared Lives and Everyday Experiences in Partners (SLEEP) Study

This study aims to learn more about the daily experiences and sleep patterns of couples living

with dementia, along with how these factors influence well-being and brain health over time. Recruiting couples currently residing in Michigan who are age 60 or older with one partner living with symptoms of dementia (with or without a diagnosis of dementia). This study is mostly completed over the phone and at home with in-person cognitive assessments in Ann Arbor once a year for three years.

Contact Charity Garner at UMsleepstudy@umich.edu or 734-232-0532

STEPS-CI Chronic Pain Program

This study is seeking adults 50 and older who have both chronic pain and memory problems. We are testing a new telephone-based educational program that teaches skills to live better with chronic pain. This program is designed especially for people who also have mild to moderate memory issues. Participants will be randomly assigned to either 7 weekly telephone sessions with a health coach, or a one-time workshop. All participants will be invited to complete two telephone surveys. Compensation up to \$80 provided. Contact steps-ci-team@umich.edu or 844-862-2737

Resilience in Sleep and Everyday Life (RISE) Care Partner Study

This study aims to learn more about the daily experiences and sleep patterns of Black care partners and people living with dementia. Recruiting care partners currently residing in Michigan who

CONTINUED

reside with and support people with symptoms of dementia (with or without a diagnosis of dementia). Study can be completed entirely by telephone.

Contact Charity Garner at riscarepartnerstudy@umich.edu or 734-232-0532

HealthyLifetime

A 4-month study where you work with a UM Nurse Coach to set healthy living goals while tracking your progress. Participants complete surveys and health coaching sessions via Zoom with a nurse and will be compensated with a \$75 gift card. Must be 30+ years old, have Medicare and/or Medicaid insurance, one chronic health condition, and ability to use Zoom.

Contact Alexis Ellis at alexisel@med.umich.edu or 734-615-0085

The SuperAging Research Initiative

What contributes to excellent memory in older age? We need your help to find out! You may be eligible if you are: aged 80 or over, cognitively healthy and actively engaged in life, and fluent in English. The study involves visiting our Center every 2 years, memory tests, surveys, blood collection, and MRI brain scan (if eligible).

Contact us at SuperagingUM@med.umich.edu or 734-764-6157

The WISDOM Study

This study is working to improve breast cancer detection and prevention for all women. Participants have the option to learn their genetic risk of getting breast

cancer, receive recommendations for when and how often to get screened, and learn strategies to reduce their breast cancer risk. Participation takes less than one hour a year and can be done almost entirely online. Looking for women aged 40 to 74 who have never had breast cancer.

Sign up or learn more at www.thewisdomstudy.org; or call 855-729-284

Enhancing Digital CBT-I to improve Adherence and Reduce Disarities

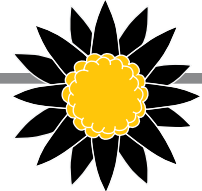
This project seeks to understand how different people interact with internet-based treatment for insomnia. This study lasts 8 weeks and requires participants to go through 20-minute-long weekly sessions of digital therapy for insomnia. Looking for those aged 18+ who have difficulty sleeping or insomnia.

Contact the team at hfhcoach@gmail.com or Call 248-579-5539

The Detroit VIP Study

Doing volunteer work is known to have health benefits for older adults. We are interviewing via telephone or Zoom older Black men (at least 55 years old) in Wayne, Oakland, or Macomb County who currently do volunteer work or want to do volunteer work in the near future. Participants complete a 5-minute questionnaire and a one-hour interview and will be compensated.

Contact Erika Karoll at karoller@wayne.edu or 313-389-6491



Know someone who wants to join HBEC?

If you are already an HBEC member, you know the many benefits of belonging to this group. Members have opportunities to hear expert speakers on important health issues and to participate in research studies to ensure that a diverse older adult population is represented.

If you aren't a member yet or you know someone who is interested, joining is simple. You can scan this QR code with your phone camera to access HBEC's online survey.



It takes less than 20 minutes to complete. Or call 313-664-2616 to do the survey by telephone.



INSTITUTE OF GERONTOLOGY
WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

FALL 2024

Lunch & Learns



All events are IN-PERSON free and open to the public (RSVP REQUIRED)

In-person events include free health screenings, resource tables, and free lunch. Due to limited capacity, you must RSVP prior to event date

313-664-2638

and leave a voice message with:

1. your name
2. phone number
3. name of the event



Thursday, August 8, 11 am to 2 pm

HBEC Health Resource Fair

LOCATION: Fellowship Chapel

7707 W Outer Drive, Detroit 48235

Join us at Fellowship Chapel for an open house resource fair! More than 25 vendors will share health-related resources, services, and programs available through our community partners! Each attendee will receive a lunch ticket at registration for free lunch at noon.

Thursday, September 19, 10:30 am to 1 pm

Hearing Loss & Cognitive Changes

LOCATION: Bethel A.M.E Church

5050 Saint Antoine St, Detroit 48202

While hearing loss can be a normal part of aging, it also affects various aspects of our lives and can be related to cognitive changes within the brain. Join us as we discuss the differences between normal hearing loss and possible cognitive changes in brain health as well as how to address these changes.

Thursday, October 17, 10:30 am to 1 pm

Scams: Protection & Prevention

LOCATION: Highland Park Recreation Center

10 Pitkin St, Highland Park 48203

Anyone can be scammed. Scams are becoming more sophisticated and harder to spot. Online scams, mail-based scams, and in-person scams are on the rise, many specifically targeting older adults. Join us for a discussion on how to recognize scams as well as how to protect yourself against them.

Thursday, December 12, 10:30 am to 1 pm

***Managing Finances
& Memory Changes***

LOCATION: Patton Recreation Center

2301 Woodmere St, Detroit 48209

Managing finances can be challenging as we age, especially if we or a loved one experiences changes in memory or cognitive function. Join us for a discussion with Dr. Peter Lichtenberg of the Institute of Gerontology on how to navigate these changes and take precautions to maintain financial security and safety.

If you have any questions, contact us at 313-664-2616



WSU, Institute of Gerontology
 Healthier Black Elders Center
 87 E. Ferry St.
 Detroit, MI 48202
 313-664-2600
 www.mcuaaar.wayne.edu

Non-profit
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 Detroit, MI
 Permit
 #3844

HBEC FALL
 2024 NEWSLETTER



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 Board of Governors

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- Bryan Barnhill II, Vice Chair
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- Mark Gaffney
- Marilyn Kelly
- Anil Kumar
- Terri Lynn Land
- Kimberly Andrews Espy, PhD, *ex officio*



HBEC Member
Spotlight



FALL
2024



Fundraiser!

SAVE
THE DATE
NOVEMBER
7th




Critical Crossroads is presented by HBEC Community Advisory Board members to engage in community conversations, advocacy, and strategies around issues of social injustice.

A CRITICAL YEAR FOR VOTING

Two important elections happen in the next five months. The state of Michigan primary takes place on August 7, followed by the Presidential election on November 5. Because this is a critical year for voting, HBEC Critical Crossroads has committed to providing information and discussion on the election process at its fall Lunch & Learn events.

Before you head for the voting booth (or the absentee ballot), we encourage you to check your voter registration status, review a sample ballot, research the candidates, and confirm your polling location. For information to help you vote with confidence, type the following websites into your internet browser or visit the Michigan Voter Information Center website.



<https://mvic.sos.state.mi.us/Home/Index>
<https://www.vote411.org/michigan>



Actively
 Recruiting
 Research
 Studies