



# COMMUNITIES OF COLOR NETWORK

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

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## CoC Network Upcoming Events

### July 3-5

Stop by the CoC Network booth at the Essence Music Festival Ernest N. Morial Convention Center New Orleans, LA

### July 13-15

The Louisiana Campaign for Tobacco-Free Living and Louisiana Tobacco Control Program Joint Conference Lafayette, LA The Hilton Hotel



## CoC Network Sponsors Brown Baggin' Lunch and Learn Series

A *Brown Baggin' Lunch and Learn* was held at the SU Ag Center on May 21. This information-packed event was made possible through a collaborative effort between the Communities of Color Network and the nutrition and health programs. The theme, "Putting your Heart into your Health," focused on the ABC's of a heart healthy lifestyle 1) **A**void Tobacco, 2) **B**ecome more active and 3) **C**hoose good nutrition.

Linda Early Brown, CoC Network's program director, presented reasons to avoid tobacco and how tobacco affects the heart. Fatemah Malekian, Ph.D. explained how becoming more active and choosing good nutrition would help tobacco cessation efforts while maintaining a healthy heart.

Greetings were extended to the 70 plus crowd by Chancellor Leodrey Williams and Vice Chancellor Gina Eubanks. The event was facilitated by CoC Network regional coordinators Paula Jordan, Latricia Dixon, and Shirley Simon. The audience enjoyed a heart healthy lunch while engaging in a delectable diet of nutrition and education.

This event was the first of a series of *Brown Baggin' Lunch and Learns* to be held statewide.



Linda Early Brown and Fatemah Malekian

### CoC Network

#### Mission Statement:

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

## CoC Network Hero: Sharnet K. Nixon



"The issue of tobacco use among teens is important to me," said Sharnet Nixon. "I believe that one person can make a difference, and I'd like to serve as that person who will speak up for what's right."

The Baton Rouge native has decided not to become another youth addicted to nicotine. Outraged by the overwhelming tobacco statistics that impact her age group, she is taking a proactive stance against *Big Tobacco* in her school and in her community. She is looking forward to participating in CoC Network's upcoming activities and becoming trained as a spokesperson. She has been elected as Miss Southern Laboratory for the upcoming school year. Nixon plans to provide positive messages and encourage healthy lifestyles beginning with reducing and eradicating the use of tobacco products by teenagers.

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## CoC Network Staff: Ambassadors for Tobacco Prevention



As program director of CoC Network, Linda Early Brown manages the programmatic thrust and fiscal aspect of the organization.

Brown applauds the work of her team statewide; particularly, in the area of capacity building. "It is the commitment of the SU Ag Center and our coordinators to improve the lives of others through policy, advocacy, and awareness," said Brown. "We have the power to influence change."

Paula Jordan, veteran regional coordinator, works closely with community members in Calcasieu, Iberia, Evangeline, St. Landry, and St. Martin parishes.

"Our coalitions provide citizens with opportunities to get involved in tobacco-related issues and events," said Jordan. "Our work is vital for the overall well being of the citizens we serve."



As the newest member of the CoC Network, Shirley Simon is responsible for reaching constituents in St. Mary, St. Charles, St. John, St. James, and Orleans parishes.

"Connecting with community leaders and constituents assist me in raising awareness regarding tobacco-related health issues in such an effective way," said Simon. "It makes our efforts worthwhile for all."

Shawntell Lewis-Harrell is responsible for several centrally located parishes including Rapides, Avoyelles, Catahoula, and Concordia.

"My life has been negatively impacted by tobacco use," said Harrell. "This is why I am committed to the mission of CoC Network. My job isn't laborious; it's a calling. It's an honor to be a part of this life-changing initiative. We inspire others to change."



Latricia Dixon has been a part of CoC Network since its inception. Dixon covers East and West Feliciana, East and West Baton Rouge, St. Helena, Tangipahoa, and Washington parishes.

"When a mother with three children tell me, with tears in her eyes, she will quit smoking because she doesn't want her children to die from secondhand smoke," said Dixon. "That makes the work we do meaningful."

Located in Shreveport, Eric Murphy carries the mission of CoC Network to northern parishes like Caddo, Bienville, Claiborne, DeSoto, and Red River.

"Coalitions have been working to establish tobacco-free policies," said Murphy.

"It is important to reach into the heart of the community and educate the grassroots community on the dangers of tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure."



## CoC Network Statewide Activities throughout May '09

- St. Helena Literacy Program, Greensburg
- West Feliciana Council on Aging Family Health Day, St. Francisville
- Southern University Ag Center, Baton Rouge
- Tangipahoa Parish Social Service Coalition Meeting, Hammond
- St. Helena Central Middle 4-H Day, Greensburg
- Bishop Ott Homeless Shelter, Baton Rouge
- Ever Increasing Life Ministry, Baton Rouge
- Mt. Triumph Baptist Church, Boyce
- KAYT 88.1 Radio Interview, Alexandria
- Excelth Inc., New Orleans
- Israelite Baptist Church, New Orleans
- J.R.'s Outreach Center, New Orleans
- Avoyelles Parenting Classes, Mansura
- Jheri's Anointed Hands, New Orleans
- Orleans Parish Health Unit, New Orleans
- Realty House Senior Citizen, New Orleans
- Avoyelles Job Readiness Class, Marksville
- Rapides Parish Drug Court, Alexandria
- New Bethel Baptist Church Health Fair, Alexandria

## Staff Gains National Training

As a part of the CoC Network's professional development training, staff members participated in the National Conference on Tobacco or Health held June 10 - 12 at the Phoenix Convention Center. This year's theme was *Reigniting the Movement, Renewing our Commitment*.

Staff members benefited greatly from this three-day event filled with various plenary and poster sessions, anti-tobacco artwork, interactive booth displays, and exhibits focused on empowering tobacco control and prevention specialists.

Staff members in attendance were Shawntell Lewis-Harrell, Paula Jordan, Linda Early Brown and Latricia Dixon.



Advocating against big tobacco marketing tactics

## CoC Network Co-Sponsors Annual Family and Youth Expo



Several youth wearing t-shirts with CoC Network's logo posed after signing pledges and receiving wristbands to live tobacco-free lives.

The annual Family and Youth Exposition attracted approximately 350 youth to the SU Ag Center on June 18-20. The Expo's theme, "Ready, Set, Go: Encouraging Youth to Win the Academic Race," set the stage for a fun-filled, educational experience for young people from across the state.

During the expo, Communities of Color Network conducted a session for students on the dangers of tobacco use and second-hand smoke exposures. CoC Network shared a DVD *Smoking: Truth or Dare* that showed how tobacco negatively impacts individuals' lifestyle. Regional coordinators Latricia Dixon, Shawntell Lewis-Harrell, Paula Jordan, Eric Murphy, and Shirley Simon discussed tobacco awareness and provided cessation literature and information to interested youth.



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

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR**  
**Larry Proctor**  
larry\_proctor@suagcenter.com  
318-255-5380 or 225-200-1638

**REGIONAL  
COORDINATORS**

**Latricia Dixon**  
latricia\_dixon@suagcenter.com  
225-771-2242 or 225-200-1640

**Shawntell Lewis-Harrell**  
shawntell\_harrell@suagcenter.com  
318-792-5373 or 225-200-1641

**Paula Jordan**  
paula\_jordan@suagcenter.com  
337-457-7983 or 225-200-1643

**Eric Murphy**  
eric\_murphy@suagcenter.com  
318-805-5916 or 225-200-1639

**Shirley Simon**  
shirley\_simon@suagcenter.com  
504-826-2559 or 225-200-1635

**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)**

## Fathers Encouraged to Live Tobacco-Free Lives

On June 21, fathers were celebrated for all the wonderful things they do. This became the ideal time for fathers to remember the role they play in influencing the choices their children make regarding tobacco use. Unfortunately, tobacco use among men remain a serious problem: one in five men currently smoke. More than 259,000 men die every year from smoking.

### How Can Dads Prevent Their Children From Smoking?

- If you smoke, quit. If you have problems quitting, keep trying. Children from families who smoke are twice as likely to become smokers themselves.
- Maintain a smoke-free home.
- Educate your children about the dangers of cigarette smoking.
- Emphasize immediate health effects and its impact on physical appearance.
- Listen to your children about smoking and encourage them when they make good choices about this behavior.
- Ask your children what are their friends' attitudes toward smoking. Discuss peer pressure and how to deal with it effectively.
- Clear up any misunderstandings your children might have about smoking.
- Make sure your children's schools have strong and well-enforced no smoking rules for students and staff.

### A Call to Action for Fathers to:

- Pledge to live a tobacco-free life.
- Agree to foster a tobacco-free home, car, and business.
- Educate your children, family, and friends on being tobacco-free.
- Support tobacco-free establishments and seek to create additional tobacco-free environments.
- Vow to recruit other African-American men to become tobacco-free.
- Seek professional assistance, if needed.

Source: *The Campaign for Tobacco-free Kids*



**"Linking Citizens of Louisiana with Opportunities for Success"**

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