

A \$100,000 grant extension from the Office on Women's Health, NJ Department of Health and Senior Services allowed the Women's Heart Foundation to continue its outreach to *Take New Jersey Women to Heart*. As part of the same initiative, the Foundation designed Teen Esteem™, a program to address teen obesity and cardiovascular risk in adolescent girls. With the assistance and direction of the WHF and Rutgers University-Camden, Trenton Central High School became the benefactor of this three-year research study and a customized curriculum that directly serves vulnerable teens who are potentially at high risk for heart disease. The nutrition and fitness program was introduced September 2004 and officially launched with a press conference November 17 as an alternative to physical education classes. The 120 sophomore girls who meet three times a week for fitness and twice a week for nutrition and health are being monitored for the impact a wellness-based curriculum has on their lifestyle. Studies indicate that both environmental and genetic factors contribute to overweight and obese children and adolescents. Poor nutritional and physical activity behaviors among adults have been demonstrated to begin in childhood. Adolescence is seen as a critical transition period for the formation of health-promoting behaviors that can greatly influence adult lifestyles.

Outreach

- WHF partnered with the St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center and retailers February 5, 2005, for *Women's Heart Day at Willowbrook Mall* in New Jersey, giving busy women shoppers the opportunity to learn about their hearts. There were salsa dance instructors, music, a DJ, guest speakers and heart health screens. Over 2,000 women received the health message with lots of giveaways and 320 women were screened and offered lifestyle counseling.
- WHF partnered with UMDNJ School of Health Professionals Dietetic Internship Program and Wegmans to conduct a fieldtrip: *Shopping for a Healthy Heart*. Ninety 10th grade girls from Trenton Central High School learned how to make healthier food selections right at the grocery shelf.
- WHF conducted its second annual Women's Heart Walk and Run on Mother's Day Weekend with 320 runners and walkers who enjoyed a day of family fun and fitness.
- WHF partnered with *Working Well New Jersey* to provide site-based 'Lunch and Learn' seminars. It also participated in a health fair at the Department of Personnel and at the NJDEP. A total of 400 women over the age of 35 were served; 5 were referred for urgent follow-up.
- WHF partnered with PSE&G to provide a site-based *Women's Health Day* program at its Plainsboro location whereby 45 women attended and 10 were screened for heart disease risk.
- WHF presented its *Medication Safety—Facts, Fiction and Fundamentals* program to Lawrence Township Senior Center. Each of the 70 seniors received a free Cards4Life personal health file, T-shirt and water bottle.
- WHF conducted a 'Train-the-Trainer' session for women's wellness programming with 8 attendees including 4 hospital representatives.
- In partnership with the Rutgers University-Camden and Trenton Central High School, WHF continued its research project to measure the synergistic effect of a health intervention on teen girls' health choices, as part of its Teen Esteem Health and Fitness program at the school.

Advocacy

WHF's gender care messages are impacting healthcare as women's heart disease is becoming increasingly competitive and politicized. Research points to the need for improved diagnostic capabilities for early detection in women and gender separation of health outcomes to determine the best course of treatment. To build capacity, WHF redesigned its website, creating a new *Health Professionals* section.

Future

The Foundation continues to administer its Teen Esteem™ Health and Fitness program at Trenton Central High School and is exploring the possibility of extending operational hours to offer the program to community women at risk. It seeks to strengthen its relationship with the nursing community for imparting the gender care message and formalize its partnerships with government, business and insurance to promote use of its highly successful health intervention programs to address the growing burden of heart disease as it affects women.