



Ten Years of Heart

(Dr. Herman A. Taylor, Jr., MD, MPH, FACC, FHA)

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Jackson Heart Study (JHS), one of the most important efforts to end the glaring disparity between Blacks and Whites in the trajectory of cardiovascular disease (CVD). September 26, 2010, will mark the tenth anniversary of enrolling the first of a total of 5,301 African American participants in this history-making project. The birth of the JHS 10 years ago established a centerpiece of the National Institute of Health's (NIH's) response to a critical public health deficiency—the persistence of excess CVD deaths among Blacks. (Excess deaths is the difference between the number of deaths observed in minority populations and the number of deaths which would have been expected if the minority population had the same age and sex-specific death rate as the non-minority population.) The Study is rigorously scientific, but it adds special dimensions of professional education and community participation that distinguish it among the many great projects of the NIH.

We have planned a series of exciting events including the second annual symposium for junior investigators sponsored by the Center for Integrative Approaches to Health Disparities (CIAHD); www.ciahd.org, a research and capacity building symposium and dinner honoring our JHS scholars all on Wednesday September 22; a landmark scientific conference on September 23 and 24, a gala, and our participant's annual birthday/reunion on Saturday, September 25.

On the evening of September 22nd, Dr John Ruffin, the Director of the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities will speak at a dinner event at Tougaloo College. The dinner is by invitation only and will commemorate the JHS Scholars program, which has produced a number of young scientists, physicians, and humanists from the ranks of Tougaloo College undergraduates and Jackson high school students.

The next morning will mark the beginning of the Scientific Conference.

Five presidents of the American Heart Association; numerous chairs of medicine, neurology, preventive medicine and biostatistics, renowned population geneticists, internationally noted social scientists and young investigators, are on the roster for presentations and panel discussions over the course of 2 days. Focused working groups during the mid afternoon will give conference participants an opportunity to contribute to the development of recommendations for the future research focus of the JHS.

On Friday, September 24, 2010, the Friends of the Jackson Heart Study will sponsor a Gala at which I will chronicle the evolution of the JHS and recognize the contributions of visionaries who are among the persons who helped to transform the JHS idea into the reality that it is today. We will be entertained by brief presentations from celebrity guests, music and lastly an opportunity for dancing.

Saturday, September 25 will mark the 10th birthday/reunion celebration for our participants who have been and remain faithful and committed to the study. Congressman Bennie Thompson will be our guest speaker and Dr. Susan Shurin, Interim Director of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute has been invited to bring special greetings. I have been told that the Jackson Heart Study Choir will sing and that other surprises are being planned.

I am extremely proud of the achievements of the Jackson Heart Study over the 10 years from September 2000 to the present, and I look forward to celebrating with you and our guests from around the nation on September 22–25. Further, I look forward to the recommendations that will emerge from the scientific conference that will help us to develop our application for renewal and chart the course for the JHS beyond 2013. It is my hope that in this process we will continue to systematically move toward the goal of resolution of cardiovascular health disparities.



Friends of the Jackson Heart Study

Rita Wray, President, Advisory Council

In addition to the 10th anniversary of the Jackson Heart Study (JHS), this year also marked the founding of an advisory group for the study, *Friends of the Jackson Heart Study*. This non-profit group's primary charge is raising private funds to help support JHS research, training, advocacy and community-service initiatives.

The Jackson Heart Study is fortunate to be funded through the National Institutes of Health, but federal dollars cannot be spent on certain costs. Through *Friends of the Jackson Heart Study*, we provide material support, such as books, supplies and equipment, for student researchers, travel expenses for young faculty dedicated to the JHS mission, community outreach and coverage of other related costs.

Membership in *Friends of the Jackson Heart Study* is voluntary and open to all who support the Jackson Heart Study by providing financial support and serving as a volunteer source. Advisory Council members are expected to provide counsel and contribute monetarily. Meetings of the Advisory Council are held quarterly.

I invite you to become a Friend of the Jackson Heart Study by making a financial donation, through corporate



partnership or sponsorship, individual sponsorship, fund raising events and ticket sales to the first annual Jackson Heart Study Gala on September 24, 2010. All contributions are tax deductible. Donors will receive a copy of an annual report of fund activity. Any and all contributions are sincerely appreciated and will be acknowledged with a thank-you letter. Donor information and/or on-line giving are available on the Jackson Heart Study Web Site www.jhs.jsu.edu. Additional questions and/or concerns can be addressed by calling 601-979-8700.

On behalf of the *Friends of the Jackson Heart Study*, I would like to personally thank you for your consideration of becoming a Friend of the Jackson Heart Study.

Schedule of 10th Anniversary Activities

Day	Date	Activity	Description
Wednesday	9/22/2010	Research Symposium/ Capacity Building Dinner Honoring JHS Scholars	University of Michigan CIAHD Junior Investigator's Symposium to be held in the UMMC Conference Center (an all day event). Please contact Melverta Bender-Brown 601-979-8739 for more information. There is no fee to attend, but seating capacity is limited to 50.
Thursday	9/23/2010	Day 1 of 2-Day Scientific Conference @ Jackson Convention Center	Plenary, panel and poster presentations, audience participation in discussion and break-out groups. Poster session begin at 7 A.M. Conference presentations 8 A.M.–5 P.M. Poster Presentations and reception, 5–6 P.M.
Friday	9/24/2010	Day 2 of 2-Day Scientific Conference @ Jackson Convention Center	Plenary, panel and poster presentations session begin at 7 A.M. Conference presentations 8 A.M.–5 P.M.
Friday	9/24/2010	Gala	7 P.M.–11 P.M. at Jackson Medical Mall. Guest Speaker TBA. Early visionaries and organizers of the JHS will be honored. Surprise celebrity cameo appearances. Full sit-down dinner followed by dancing. Tickets \$50.00.
Saturday	9/25/2010	Participant's Annual Reunion/Birthday Event at UMMC Conference Center	Participants and their families, JHS staff and guests will participate. Congressman Bennie Thompson is the guest speaker. Dr. Herman A. Taylor, Jr. will present JHS updates. The JHS choir will sing. Lunch will be served. There is no cost for this event.

Jackson Heart Study Community Health Advisors: All Heart Since 2001

For nearly a decade the Jackson Heart Study has enjoyed the support of a core of volunteers known as the Community Health Advisors (CHAs). The 70 or so CHAs we have worked with over the years possess the characteristics that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (1998) reported makes effective CHAs. They are approachable, non-judgmental, honest, respectful, compassionate, caring, resourceful, knowledgeable of the strengths and weaknesses in their community and committed to helping others.

Mr. Bobby Vinson of the Bolton/Edwards Community Health Advisor Network (CHAN) is a typical CHA. He is a retired Physical Science and Biology Teacher. He has been a community activist for more than 50 years, working with the Western Hills Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), assisting in the 1st Congressional election of Congressman Bennie Thompson and serving as a steward at Asbury United Methodist Church. According to Mr. Vinson, “Jackson Heart Study works because they advocate for health care the way older institutions like the Utica Institute advocated for human rights for African Americans.”

We do promote health and wellness in the Jackson Heart Study community and the CHANs in Bolton/Edwards, Canton, Clinton, Jackson and Rankin have helped us achieve this goal by:

- Promoting awareness of our initiatives,
- Informing the lay community of our findings,
- Providing culturally appropriate heart health information to their families, friends and neighbors,
- Providing free venues for meetings, trainings, health fairs and community walks,

- Planning and implementing health fairs, community walks, and forums, and
- Increasing the number of community agencies, churches and health care providers willing to partner with JHS.

Recently, some of the CHAs have been certified to train other community health advisors using the “With Every Heartbeat is Life: A Community Health Worker’s Manual for African Americans.” The manual consists of 12 sessions that address heart disease prevention by teaching lay persons to read nutrition labels, know heart attack signs, understand how the heart functions, and control their blood pressure, cholesterol and blood glucose levels.

Our CHAs are also partnering with the Office of Preventive Health, Arthritis Integration Dissemination Project of the Mississippi State Department of Health to offer *Motivated to Live a Better Life: Jackson Heart Study workshops**. This six (6) week workshop is designed to help those with chronic illnesses learn to manage their health conditions. They are taught to set attainable goals, work with health care providers, deal with pain and fatigue, eat for better health and to ultimately make daily tasks easier.

We salute and thank Mr. Vinson and his colleagues in the Jackson Metro area for providing heart health education programs and activities like those listed above. We are acutely aware that they are the “heart” mind, hands, feet and life blood of our health education, awareness and outreach office.

**Workshop is also known as Motivated to Live a Better Life: MSDH and Stanford University Chronic Disease Self-Management Program.*

The Jackson Heart Study Council of Elders: Ten Years of Collaborative Guidance and Wisdom

The Jackson Heart Study Council of Elders was born out of the need of the Jackson Heart Study Researchers to infuse the spirit and wisdom of some of the ARIC participants into the Jackson Heart Study (JHS) recruitment and retention processes. For more than a decade, a few ARIC volunteers and Jackson Heart Study community persons have served as members of the JHS Council of elders. They have contributed to the humaneness of the study by reminding the JHS team of their moral, ethical, and cultural obligations to the JHS cohort and community. Other support has been physical, such as, providing information

to others about the study, providing its members transportation, and assisting with mail-outs.

Since the Council of Elders serves a dual role as JHS participants as well as JHS volunteer/ancillary workers, the members provided feedback about their experiences as participants in the study and their interaction with the JHS clinic staff. The Council of Elders had a great deal of praise for the professionalism of the Clinic Staff and their precision in defining requirements, providing directions, and imparting health information. Special gratitude was expressed for the calls made to remind members of meet-

ings and the periodic referrals made to their primary care physicians when the need arose.

The presentations made by JHS employees to area churches and community groups have been especially helpful in providing heart healthy tips and motivating community members to modify negative behaviors to improve their health, control weight and blood pressure, and balance their nutritional intake. The Council of Elders understands the historic nature of the JHS, and as a result,

embraces the opportunity to participate on a level outside of the participant requirements. They especially enjoyed the sessions that alerted the community of the importance of reading food labels, and the value of getting regular physical examinations.

Council members would like to see updated, efficient guidelines introduced that would clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the council members.



Clinton CHAN 2002 graduating class



Rankin CHAN graduation 2004



Canton CHAN Walkers in 2006



JHS CHAs participating in UMC "Taste of U" 2010

The Jackson Heart Study Recruitment Experience

Laverne Thigpen, BS, BBA, MPPA as told to Cynthia Dorsey Smith

Anniversaries allow us to reflect on the contributions of “unsung” heroes. The Recruiters of the Jackson Heart Study lead the list of our quiet heroes. From August 2000 to March 2004 they accomplished the daunting task of contacting 14,000 people and completing over 6,000 interviews. Their persistence enabled the Jackson Heart Study to enroll 5,310, the largest number of participants in a single site study. Ms. Laverne Thigpen describes her recruitment experience below:

- 1. What type of training/orientation did the Recruitment position at Jackson Heart Study require?** A). The job description for the recruiter/interviewer position required two (2) years of interviewing experience. We were prepared for our positions as recruiters by going through a very thorough training with staff members who were experts in the field of heart disease. Training also included; cultural diversity/sensitivity, interviewing skills and tracking techniques.
- 2. What type of recruiting experience did you bring to the position?** A). I had previously worked as a recruiter with a non-profit community service corporation. While there I taught eligible students from Copiah, Lawrence and Lincoln counties a course in computer operations.
- 3. Can you describe a typical recruitment visit?** A). We visited homes throughout the day. We also conducted evening and weekend visits. It was easier to locate people who worked during the day, evenings and weekends. All of our home visits were cold calls—a knock on the door with no advance notice. We did the interview at that time if they were available or scheduled a future appointment when needed. This took a lot of time. Sometimes we made as many as five (5) contact attempts before the person agreed to become a Jackson Heart Study participant. Most interviews were completed in homes; however, I have done interviews on the participant’s jobs, in the JHS office and in public libraries.
- 4. What other challenges did you and your colleagues encounter while trying to reach the goal of recruiting**

6500 participants? A). The most challenging aspect of recruiting initially was the lack of public knowledge about the Jackson Heart Study. Another hindrance to enrollment was the mistrust African Americans have for research and researchers. I was able to overcome these challenges by speaking softly, listening actively and developing rapport with the interviewees. The challenges were nothing compared to the reward of involving others in the study.



- 5. Why did most participants agree to enroll in the study?** A). Most participants agreed to enroll in the study because they were interested in improving their health.
- 6. What has been the most rewarding aspect of recruiting participants for the Jackson Heart Study?** A). It has been rewarding seeing participants show more concern for their health and the health of their children and grandchildren. Many of them make inquiries about their relatives becoming part of the study. I see that as growth for the community. Personally, the experience of recruiting participants for an African-American Heart Disease Observational Study means that I have had a hand in creating a healthier and more knowledgeable future for following generations.

Somebody Said it Couldn't Be Done

By: Frances C. Henderson R.N., Ed. D.

There were those who said it couldn't be done,
But the Jackson Heart Study Community replied
That maybe it couldn't, but no prize is won
At least until you've tried.

The recruiters searched all over town,
Looking for participants to be a part.
And participants came from all around
To join in the study on the heart.

The Clinic staff took special care,
They even gave a snack.
We care, they said, that you are here
And we want you to come back.

The Partnership staff pulled out their hair,
The time was short and the numbers were low,
They had to prove that Jackson cares,
It was time to put on their best show.

The Director worried but still had a smile,
The numbers were up and down and then
He counted and held his breath awhile,
Because the number was 5,310

Article Submissions

JHS Heartbeat is published semi-annually to enhance health awareness and understanding of cardiovascular disease among the community by presenting research findings, articles, book reviews on cardiovascular disease, diabetes, hypertension, strokes, cholesterol, physical activity and nutrition. Additionally, the newsletter facilitates communication among Jackson Heart Study staff, investigators, cohort members, contractors and the extended JHS family.

Articles are being selected for the following upcoming issues:

<i>Submission Date</i>	<i>Newsletter Publication</i>
March 15	Summer Edition
September 15	Winter Edition

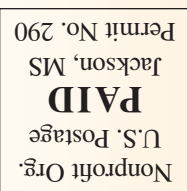
Submissions should be about 800 words or less. Relevant pictures, illustrations and/or charts may be submitted with the articles. Information regarding forthcoming educational conferences and/or meetings is also requested. All material is subject to copyediting. Please include the author's full name and credentials, the agency's full name, street and web address and the author's contact information, including telephone, fax and e-mail. Information should be e-mailed or mailed to **Ms. Brenda Jenkins**, at:

By mail: JHS Newsletter, 350 W. Woodrow Wilson Drive, Suite 701, Jackson, MS 39213, or

By e-mail: brenda.w.campbell@jsums.edu

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