From:	Stephen Abel
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CDC recognizes local diabetes prevention program

Designation honors programs for minority populations

Asheville, N.C., Nov. 17, 2020 – Buncombe County Health and Human Services has earned full recognition from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for its Minority Diabetes Prevention Program, which is presented by the YMCA of Western North Carolina with support from the Asheville Buncombe Institute for Parity Achievement (ABIPA).

This national designation is a result of key milestones reached during BCHHS's three-year administration of the North Carolina Minority Diabetes Prevention Program (NCMDPP) in North Carolina Region 2, covering Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Henderson, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, and Yancey counties.

To become a National Diabetes Prevention Program, an organization must prove it can meet CDC standards and effectively deliver a diabetes prevention lifestyle change program.

The Y has partnered with BCHHS and ABIPA since 2018 to help prevent or delay type 2 diabetes in minority populations.

"The Y is proud to partner with Buncombe County HHS to address the health disparities affecting our community," said Paul Vest, president and CEO of the YMCA of WNC. "COVID-19's dramatic impact on black and brown communities, combined with its heightened mortality in people with pre-existing conditions like type 2 diabetes, reinforces how critical this program and partnership is to WNC."

During this year-long, evidence-based program, participants focus on incremental and measured lifestyle changes with the guidance and support of a CDC-certified coach. The goal is to achieve 5 percent to 7 percent weight loss by the end of the program through healthy eating and physical activity. Classes cover a variety of health and wellness topics, including meal planning, tips for eating healthy away from home, and ways to increase daily activity.

"For me, it's meant a return to life," said program graduate Omaria Maldonado. "Even though it's not easy, the program has helped me in many ways. My son, my husband, and I have lost weight. The fatigue I felt before is gone, and I've learned to value, take care of, and love myself and my family."

Despite the challenges presented by COVID-19 this year, NC MDPP successfully transitioned from in-person to virtual classes without losing the close-knit group support. Over the next year, all classes will continue to be held online to maintain participant health and safety.

"Effective and evidence-based opportunities for health are extremely important to improving health outcomes in our community," said Buncombe County Public Health Director Stacie Turpin Saunders. "Positive health changes today can mean better overall health in the future. Congratulations to the program coordinators and all the participants who made the initiative successful through

their commitment to health."

The Region 2 NCMDPP is led by Zo Mpofu, Buncombe County Public Health, and NC MDPP Regional Coordinator Monica Tucker of the YMCA of WNC.

For more information on the Buncombe County Region 2 Minority Diabetes Prevention Program, visit https://ymcawnc.org/mdpp.

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Download images of Minority Diabetes Prevention Program participants from North Carolina Region 2.

About the YMCA of Western North Carolina
The nonprofit YMCA of Western North Carolina strengthens local communities through youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. Founded in 1889, the YMCA of WNC engages more than 100,000 people – regardless of age, income, or background – to empower young people to reach their full potential, improve individual and community well-being, and give back and inspire action in the community. It does this through eight YMCAs, dozens of program sites, and YMCA Camp Watia. As the state's largest provider of licensed school-age child care, it gives more than 1,000 children a day the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive. For more information, please visit ymcawnc.org.

About Buncombe County Health and Human Services
Buncombe County Health and Human Services is an integrated Health and Human Services agency consisting of Economic Services, Public Health, and Social Work Services. Our purpose is to strengthen our communities by advancing health, safety, and opportunity. We do this through a range of mandated and core services and strong community partnerships that support all ages and stages in Buncombe County.

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The Y. For a better us.
The YMCA of Western North Carolina is a Diversity, Inclusion, and Global Innovation YMCA.

ymcawnc.org/give