

RECENT EVENT: PEACE Community Open House

Thank you to those who made it to our first-ever PEACE Community Open House. On August 2nd, at the Second Baptist Church in Ypsilanti, our community — including individuals affected by fibroids, families and friends, researchers and medical providers — ‘Broke the Silence’ on fibroids. Our speakers inspired us with their fibroid journeys, treatment insights, and drive to improve the fibroid experience; our attendees offered engaged feedback, modeling how to lead PEACE toward equitable and community focused care solutions.



Around the room and throughout the day, our event stations reflected our Center’s goal to improve health for all. At the ‘Healthy Eating Station’ and ‘Health Screening Table,’ attendees were able to gather fresh food and receive A1C and anemia testing. At our ‘Period Party,’ period packs filled with menstrual supplies were given away, along with books to educate young girls on their bodies and surmount menstrual stigma. Our ‘Post-It’ stations asked attendees to reflect on their and their loved ones’ fibroid experiences, and share comments on their treatment, support networks, and hopes for future change. All the while, our ‘Kid’s Activity Table’ offered on-site entertainment and age-appropriate ‘school supplies’ to bring home. Together, all attendees had an opportunity to share their experiences and gain new knowledge over great food and with support of one another. It was truly a day of celebration and a powerful step toward breaking open awareness on fibroids.



UTERINE FIBROIDS
COURTNEY S. LIM, MD
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

KEYNOTE: DR. COURTNEY STACY LIM, MD

VENUS WILLIAMS
“I CAN GET HELP, I DON’T HAVE TO LIVE THIS WAY.”

FIBROIDS
• AFFECT 80% OF PATIENTS
• RARELY CANCEROUS
• SYMPTOMS BASED ON PLACEMENT AND SIZE
• AFFECT BLACK WOMEN MORE

PELVIC PAIN
• BLOATING
• INFERTILITY
• HEAVY PERIODS

FAMILY HISTORY
• ULTRA-SOUND
• MRI

SOME MEDS CAN HELP WITH BLEEDING
THERE ARE PROCEDURAL OPTIONS TOO

SURGICAL OPTIONS:
• MYOMECTOMY
• HYSTERECTOMY

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOC:
• WHAT ARE RISKS?
• HOW MANY HAVE YOU DONE?
• WHERE WILL THIS TAKE PLACE?

UNKNOWN: DIET, GENETICS, ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY | onWHARD | PEACE



PEACE CALENDAR: WHAT’S COMING UP?

List of Selected Upcoming
Team Events + Offerings

AUGUST

CHASS Mercado @ CHASS from
9 a.m.-1 p.m.: **8/21 & 8/28**

Parkridge Summerfest @
Parkridge Park from 1-3 p.m.: **8/23**

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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

SEPTEMBER

CHASS Mercado @ CHASS
from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.: **9/4, 9/11,
9/18, & 9/25**

Ypsilanti Farmers Market @
16 Washington St. from 9 a.m.-
1 p.m.: **9/6, 9/13, 9/20, 9/27**

	1	2	3	4	5	6
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

OCTOBER

CHASS Trunk or Treat @ CHASS:
Details TBD

Highland Park Event @ Highland
Park: **Details TBD**



PEACE is supported by NIH Grant 1P50HD115356-01

PEACE IN Action

SUMMER
2025

“Partnering for Equity: An Academic and Community Alliance to Eliminate Disparities throughout the Fibroid Experience” Study

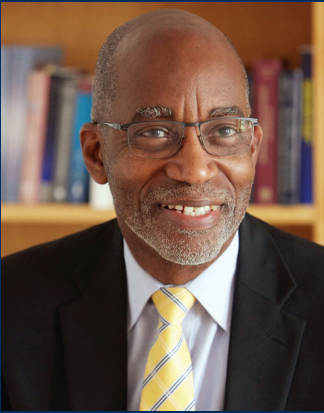
Welcome to PEACE

Welcome! In this newsletter, we’re excited to share quarterly updates from PEACE — our Center focused on *Partnering for Equity: An Academic and Community Alliance to Eliminate Disparities throughout the Fibroid Experience*. We know that’s a long title, so in this inaugural summer edition we’re starting more simply: offering an overview of our Center and an update on some of our recent and upcoming activities.

PEACE is the result of a five year center grant, provided by the National Institutes of Health, to address one of the most significant disparities in reproductive health: uterine fibroids. The work of PEACE is led by a dynamic team of Principal Investigators (PIs):

- Dr. Erica Marsh (University of Michigan), a global expert in reproductive health and community-based research
- Dr. Ganasa Wegienka (Henry Ford Health), an epidemiologist specializing in fibroid incidence and care
- Dr. David Williams (Harvard University), a leading scholar on social determinants of health

Together, the PIs and the wider PEACE team bring a shared commitment to transforming fibroid care through community-engaged science, supporting the 70%+ of US women affected over their lifetimes.



The PEACE PIs: Dr. Erica Marsh, Dr. Ganasa Wegienka, and Dr. David Williams

Our Center is grounded in a CBPR model (see Page 2), meaning that community voices are central to every piece of our work. The team includes physician-scientists, community leaders, and multi-level stakeholders, many of whom serve on our Community Stakeholder Advisory Board (CAB). This CAB plays a pivotal role, guiding our research priorities and informing our outreach efforts (including those on display in this newsletter).

PEACE is organized around three core areas of research:

1. **Disparities in Care Pathways** – studying differences in diagnosis and treatment
2. **Stress and Resilience** – examining how life stressors and resources affect fibroid development

3. **Patient-Centered Tools** – developing a digital support tool informed by patient and provider experiences (see Page 3)

Supporting this work are two key cores: the Administrative Core (coordinating our operations, ensuring compliance, administering pilot grants) and the Community Partnerships, Education, and Outreach Core.

Working together, our Center is poised to create knowledge that will benefit the health of *all women*. We’re proud to share a glimpse of our work in this newsletter. Thanks for joining us!



WHO ARE WE?



STAFF HIGHLIGHT: Arthi Ramakrishnan

Arthi is the Research Operations Manager for the Women's Health and Reproductive Research (onWHARD) Collaborative, led by Dr. Marsh at the University of Michigan. PEACE is housed in onWHARD, and Arthi is central to its research administration.

She holds undergraduate degrees in Microbiology and Nutrition/Dietetics, and earned a Master's Degree in Clinical Research Administration. A certified Clinical Research Professional, Arthi lends her extensive expertise in managing complex, multi-site research initiatives to the many spinning plates that make up PEACE. Prior to joining onWHARD, Arthi served as Project Manager for the Cancer Quality Improvement Consortium and as Site Manager for the Neurological Emergencies Treatment Trials (NETT) Network.

As reflected in her varied experience, Arthi is passionate about advancing equitable, actionable, community-engaged research. She is thrilled to bring this passion to bear, across onWHARD's many women's health studies — and to benefit the ambitious objectives of PEACE, in particular.



PARTNER HIGHLIGHT: Ella Greene-Moton

Ella brings over 40 years of experience in public health advocacy, policy, CBPR, and community programming in Flint and surrounding areas. Her work in public health ethics focuses on raising awareness, amplifying community voices, and promoting inclusiveness at state and national levels. She has deep expertise in building

and sustaining community-academic-practice partnerships, leading grassroots projects, and developing training programs with schools, public health agencies, and community organizations.

From 2006–2019, Ella served as Community Education Coordinator and “Bridge” at the University of Michigan School of Public Health's Center for Public Health and Community Genomics. She now serves as Administrator for the CBOP Community Ethics Review Board and works as an Independent Community-Academic Consultant with institutions nationwide. Ella also serves on numerous advisory and steering committees and expert panels across the country.

A dedicated leader in the American Public Health Association (APHA), Ella is its Immediate Past President, a former Michigan Affiliate Representative to the Governing Council, and an active member of the Michigan Public Health Association, the Community Based Public Health Caucus, and the National Community Based Organization Network. She is a tireless champion for community voices, bridging research and real-world impact to advance public health for all.

SPEAKING THE SAME LANGUAGE: What is CBPR?

At PEACE, we believe the best way to create change is by working together — an approach that is the foundation of what is known as “Community Based Participatory Research” (CBPR). Saying PEACE is a CBPR project means that our work, at every step, is designed to ensure the community is not only involved, but centered. The goals of PEACE are not possible without the active investment of women affected by fibroids, of people who care for these women, and of the communities in which these individuals live and seek support. In short: the community is our team.

PEACE is about more than research — it is a community-academic partnership built on understanding, trust, and empathy. Our work will be done hand-in-hand with communities through our network of advisory boards and outreach programs; the decisions we make and work we undertake will reflect the lived experience and needs of our community. Our CPBR approach is a commitment to making collaborative change via an action-oriented Center that will model how to eliminate health disparities through the uterine fibroid experience. Together, we will build a world where no one faces the challenge of uterine fibroids alone.



RECENT EVENT:

Weathering Book Club: *A Powerful Evening with the Author*

On July 30th, PEACE in collaboration with the onWHARD team, hosted an evening with Dr. Arline Geronimus, author of *Weathering: The Extraordinary Stress of Ordinary Life in an Unjust Society*. In honor of Fibroid Awareness Month, the evening's conversation explored the book's themes of chronic stress and the intersection of this stress on uterine fibroids and broader women's health.

Dr. Geronimus shared compelling reflections on her research and the concept of “weathering” — the term she coined to describe the physical toll that social injustice and structural inequalities can impart on individuals. Attendees engaged in a lively and open dialogue, focused on the challenges of weathering — particularly in the context of uterine fibroids.

The event was a powerful reminder of the value in coming together in community. We are grateful for Dr. Geronimus' time and look forward to future book club events!



science UPDATE: PEACE PROJECT 3

PEACE Project 3 is focused on developing patient-centered health tools. However, before work can (or should!) move toward tool development — we first need to focus on the *patients, their providers*, and current barriers to patient-centered care.

To understand these barriers, our Project 3 team is currently tackling the first two of three major aims: 1) Interviews with fibroid patients and, separately, providers (our ‘Qualitative Study’), and 2) a National survey of fibroid patients. These aims are important, allowing us to gather different kinds of data that will — when looked at together — offer both a highly descriptive portrait of individual care experiences (Qualitative), as well as a countable portrait of the features and views that characterize fibroid patients broadly (Quantitative).

As of August, recruitment for our patient interviews has begun! We are interested in speaking to women who have, or have had, fibroids and who would be willing to have a conversation about their care journey. If you, or someone you know, may be interested, you can email us (PEACE-study@med.umich.edu) OR you can follow the QR code directly to our screening survey.

