A Brief Background on the Campaign

Colorectal cancer is the second most deadly form of cancer, but it doesn’t have to be. Screening can prevent the cancer or catch it early when it’s highly treatable. But too few men and women in Oregon are being screened.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention awarded a grant to the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to increase screening rates among Oregonians ages 50 to 75 from a current rate of approximately 66 percent to a target rate of 80 percent by 2014.

Research found that most Oregonians are screened because they were encouraged by someone they know and trust. Thus, the campaign takes a unique approach that asks already-screened Oregonians to encourage people in their lives to get screened too.

Later that year, the campaign rolled out statewide including the mini campaign in Eastern Oregon, featured here.

Two of them had been screened because of a family history or because they knew someone who had been affected. One did just because he knew it was the right thing to do. What made them truly effective spokespeople was that they were unexpected messengers and were willing to share their stories in unexpected venues with a good balance of humor and seriousness.
In addition, the coalition identified existing relationships and pathways to possible business and community partners. Using the partnership materials in the grantee toolkit, the coalition successfully reached out and secured campaign partners including:

- Local businesses (electric companies, Umatilla Pacific Railroad, agricultural companies, hospitals/clinics and other large employers)
- Membership organizations (local Chambers of Commerce, Rotaries, Altrusa and Lions Clubs)
- Public entities (cities, school districts, the community college, the county health departments and the Two Rivers Correctional Institute)

As partners, these organizations distributed campaign materials at their events and worksites, asked coalition members and spokespeople to speak at meetings

“I personally know of at least five people who got screened as a result of this campaign. And that’s just my personal network. I know that there were many, many more. But we know there is still more work to be done. Building off of the campaign, we have made it a commitment to continue this effort in our community until we totally prevent this preventable cancer.”

– Juli Gregory, Education Director at Good Shepherd Hospital and campaign coalition member

“Bryan (one of the campaign’s spokespeople) was the keynote speaker at the Community Services Awards Banquet and in the middle of his speech in front of 250+ people, broke into the story about his screening experience. He sure got everyone’s attention and drove home the importance of getting screened. It was disclosures like this in several venues that got people coming up to him to ask him about his screening experience. He talked to the garbage collector for 45 minutes about getting screened!”

– Lou Ann Wolfe, Bryan’s wife and member of the campaign coalition

For example, the Pendleton School District put information about the campaign in their employee newsletter and later included the campaign flyer in their all-staff email. These multiple touch points helped ensure widespread reach and absorption of the message.

Taking a fully comprehensive approach, the coalition also secured free and leveraged media that included news and editorial columns featuring campaign spokespeople and greatly reduced, if not free, ad space in daily and tribal newspapers and on community radio stations. These efforts played an important role in expanding the campaign’s reach.

The result was greater than we could have expected. Because of the strong efficacy of the approach demonstrated in the pilot, the campaign relied on anecdotal/qualitative data for evaluation purposes. We heard from the coalition and community members alike that the campaign moved already-screened residents to talk about their screening experience with others and unscreened residents to go get it done.