

## COLORECTAL CANCER

The cancer *you* can prevent.

A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-funded media campaign  
Cooperative Agreement 5U58-DP0026



*In addition to endorsing staff participation in the coalition, Good Shepherd Hospital sent information out to employees and 22,000+ residents, and donated ads including a prominent billboard in Hermiston.*

**The Cancer You Can Prevent** completed a tremendously successful mini-campaign in Eastern Oregon. A strong and dedicated local coalition, passionate spokespeople, community partnerships and leveraged ad buys were only some of the factors that contributed to the campaign's ability to effectively motivate local residents to get screened for colorectal cancer (CRC) ... and then talk about their experience and encourage others to get screened, too.

The Oregon Health Authority's goals to decrease health disparities related to this cancer and other chronic diseases were well-served by the campaign. Rural Oregonians have higher rates of CRC diagnoses and experience increased barriers to getting screened. The mini-campaign in Eastern Oregon played an important role in addressing these barriers and was a focal point in the statewide rollout of the campaign.

### On the Ground

Preparation for the campaign began in June 2011. Janet Jones, the public health educator for the Umatilla County Health Department, pulled together a coalition consisting of representatives from Good Shepherd Hospital, two local radio stations, Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center, as well as Shelley Wight from the Morrow County Health Department, each of whom brought resources to the campaign.

The coalition recruited a diverse group of spokespeople to be the local faces of the campaign including, 1) the benefits manager at the Wildhorse Resort & Casino and member of the Umatilla Indian Tribe; 2) a regulatory specialist for the city of Pendleton; and 3) a prominent corn farmer involved locally and nationally with rural electric companies.

### 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.

The approach was successfully tested during a pilot campaign in Clatsop County in early 2011.

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



*“The campaign helped me reach out to community partners about an important prevention message AND strengthen relationships with community partners who we have been working with on tobacco prevention and healthy community policy issues. Every time I did a presentation on CRC prevention, I had businesses or community leaders ask me for Quit Line cards, or more information about Worksite Wellness.”*

– **Janet Jones**, the public health educator for the Umatilla County Health Department and campaign coalition member



**Bryan Wolfe**  
Hermiston, Oregon



**Karen King**  
Pendleton, Oregon



**Robin Alexander**  
Umatilla Indian Reservation

*“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

and to their staff, and included information about the campaign in their e-newsletters, employee paycheck stuffers and employee mailboxes, and on their websites and social media channels.

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.

With partnership participation from:

