

Welcome and Program Overview

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I. Welcome

Good morning and welcome to the first collaborative symposium between the Center for Cancer Research and Therapeutic Development, Clark Atlanta University, and Prostate Net. We initiated our focus on prostate cancer in 2004 at which time we defined three main components to the center: basic research, research training, and community outreach and community service. We have been working with various organizations that are active within community. In 2008, we had a National African-American Prostate Cancer Leadership Conference here, which was very successful. Earlier this year, we met with eight different organizations and started a new alliance, which we are working on now.

Joseph Silva, PhD, Provost, VP Academic Affairs, Center for Cancer Research and Therapeutic Development, Clark Atlanta University

We are excited about the possibilities at our Center, which we consider to be the poster child for what a center should do not only in terms of the campus life but also in terms of the greater community life. We look at it in terms of what it does by way of disseminating information and creating new knowledge to discovery and innovation, which is what we think excellence is all about.

Virgil Simons, Prostate Net

The fight against prostate cancer has several legs, the patient and advocate community, the research community, and the legislative community, all which must work together to end the impact of this disease upon the community. We want to gain information to help craft our programs more effectively and to use this information to make changes out in the community.

ARS: Part of the fight against prostate cancer must occur early on in terms of prevention and early detection; we need to do more at the primary care/family practice level to get that message out. Also, family, friends, and partners of patients play an important role in being able to get the patient into the system. Additionally, there has been a concern about overtreatment and overdiagnosis. We need to address this concern; patients are not always receiving the best standard of care nor proper and thorough follow-up.

Clinical trials are important in the fight against prostate cancer. Many people are afraid to participate in trials. The SELECT trial was relatively simple in terms of participation, not requiring a great deal of invasive or advanced therapies.

New drug development is one area of promise, encompassing potential options such as vitamin E and selenium, vitamin D, 5-alpha-reductase inhibitors, statins, and other agents.

We know this disease affects African-Americans disproportionately. What is important in solving that disparity issue? Is it something more than access to care? This is a complex disease in terms of genetics, access to care, and environment.