



ELBA NIEVES
PREVENTION AND SCREENING ADVOCATE

It's OK To Ask For Help

M-POWER Provides Patient Access And Navigation

By Cathy Clark

Photography: Jeremy Peplow

Elba Nieves knows the importance of reaching out for help – and not putting herself last.

But it was not always that way.

“I was one of the ones who never checked herself,” the native of Puerto Rico says softly in Spanish. Communicating with help of a Moffitt Languages Services interpreter, Nieves says she never realized the importance of breast self-exams and mammograms previously.

M-POWER community outreach team members have found it is not uncommon for Hispanic women to put themselves last, because they focus on their work and their families – often waiting until they are sick before going to the doctor.

The Moffitt Program for Outreach Wellness Education and Resources (M-POWER) provides the community with health

education in the areas of prevention, early detection, and screening. The program is part of Moffitt Diversity, Moffitt Cancer Center’s broad-based initiative to increase the access to care. This is achieved by enhancing Moffitt’s image among underserved communities as an organization delivering cultural and linguistically competent care through prevention education and mutually beneficial partnerships. The aim is to serve as a resource, as well as to identify opportunities to increase Moffitt’s preparedness when serving diverse communities.

Through M-POWER, health educators and community outreach workers give workshops on topics related to prevention of various cancers, healthy lifestyle and more. With the cultural,

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linguistic and health literacy needs of the community in mind, the educators present the programs in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole.

M-POWER aims to fill gaps identified through a community health needs assessment that Moffitt conducted in 2016. The most pressing needs relate to screening and prevention – especially for prostate, breast, colorectal and lung cancers – along with smoking cessation efforts and a focus on access to care.

For people like Nieves, M-POWER’s services translate access to screening and prevention services and, if needed, access to care – one person at a time.

Through M-POWER, Nieves got a voucher for her mammogram. She went to the Moffitt McKinley Outpatient Center, where an interpreter from Moffitt’s Language Services helped her. Nieves says Language Services boosted her confidence when going in for the mammogram procedure.

“For me it is important to be healthy, because that enables me to spend time with and help my family, and also to help others,” said Nieves, who recently celebrated her 40-year wedding anniversary. She and her husband have four children and nine grandchildren.

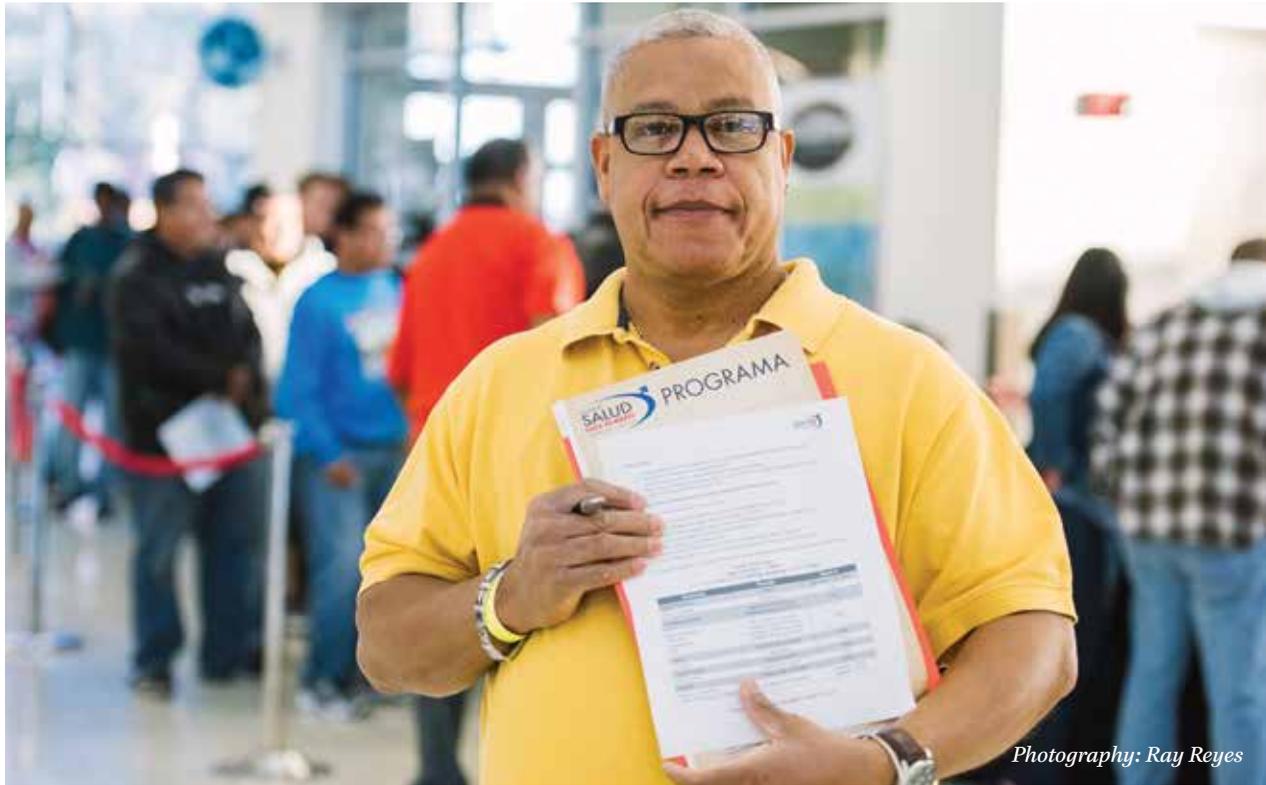
Fortunately, Nieves had a good outcome. Her mammogram results were negative. For people who test positive, their cancers are easier to cure because they were detected early.

“It is important that people find information, that they get educated. They should not be afraid and they should ask for help,” said Nieves. “It is very important that they do the breast self-exam so that if they find something they can go to the doctor right away. They should not wait until it is too late.” 🗣️



*“They should not be afraid
and they should ask for help.”*

Photography: Jeremy Peplow



Photography: Ray Reyes

17 Years and Counting

Men's Health Forum Fosters Screening And Prevention

A growing number of men living in the Tampa Bay area don't have access to regular health care screenings and services. The reasons include lack of insurance, awareness and access to doctors.

To combat this, Moffitt Cancer Center and nearly 80 other community organizations partner in a yearly Men's Health Forum. The forum is a shared effort by area hospitals, health care organizations, churches, community organizations and businesses. The forum offers free health screenings, such as blood pressure, cholesterol, HIV/AIDS/STI, skin cancer and more assessments, to men who are 18 years and older and uninsured, underinsured or do not have a regular health care provider. The forum also provides health education workshops and fitness demonstrations.

Baseball legend Ken Griffey Sr. attended the event. At age 55, doctors discovered he had prostate cancer. He underwent robotic surgery to remove it. Since then, Griffey has become an advocate for cancer screening, and in particular prostate cancer screening. He lost four uncles to prostate cancer and is convinced that his mother's encouragement to be screened saved his life.

Hillsborough County commissioners and cancer survivors Les Miller and Mike Suarez also attended to lend their support to the cause of cancer prevention and men's health.

The 2017 Men's Health Forum provided participants with a range of exams that are critical to health and longevity.

- Of 395 men examined, 60% were uninsured or underinsured
- Of 304 men tested, 46% had pre-hypertension and another 28% had high blood pressure
- 82 men were educated on the importance of prostate testing and received vouchers for free prostate testing at Moffitt Cancer Center
- Of 214 men receiving skin cancer exams, 24% had suspicious skin findings and needed further follow-up by a physician
- Of 295 men tested, 15% were identified as at-risk for diabetes

"The Men's Health Forum is a wonderful opportunity for men in and around Tampa Bay to learn about cancer screening and get appropriate screening for a number of health-related issues," says Julio Pow-Sang, M.D., chairman of Genitourinary Oncology at Moffitt. "It is a way for health care professionals to work directly with men who may otherwise not have access to quality health care."

Sponsors of the 2017 Men's Health Forum include Moffitt Cancer Center, Bayer/Men Who Speak Up, The Wawa Foundation, Tampa General Hospital, Genesis 68oAM, Florida Blue, WMNF 88.5 FM, The Urban Cafe, HART, Spectrum and the New York Yankees.