

B.E.E.P. to Host Workshops in Bolivar County

Delta State University Center for Community and Economic Development's Breast Education and Early-detection Project (B.E.E.P.) is seeking churches, schools, businesses and organizations that are willing to host breast health education workshops in Bolivar County. Workshops can be scheduled Monday- Friday from 8 a.m. until 6:30 p.m. and Saturday's from 9 a.m. until 12 noon.

B.E.E.P. is funded by the Susan G. Komen for the Cure Breast Cancer Foundation. The mission of the Breast Education and Early-detection Project is to "Eradicate cancer as a life-threatening disease through provision of innovative and creative approaches in teaching breast cancer awareness and prevention to residents within the Bolivar County community who have limited access to preventive care."

The statistics for breast cancer are alarming -- one out of eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime. "Knowledge and early-detection are powerful and can be life saving" states Alfreda Cowins, AmeriCorps*VISTA member and coordinator of BEEP workshops. "That is why our workshops, and findings host for our workshops is so important."

Along with hosting smaller workshops, BEEP plans events for Breast Cancer Awareness Week in October of each year. In 2007, the program offered many activities to enlighten the public about this disease: a breast cancer forum, paint the town pink efforts by adorning pink ribbons on trees and businesses, a fund-raising professional women's breakfast, B.E.E.P. t-shirts were sold, a partnership with DSU Athletics allowed paint the stadium pink at a DSU football game, and a fireworks display, sponsored by Billy Marlow of North Sunflower Medical Center after the game.

Over 800 women, men and youth have received educational awareness from BEEP sponsored workshops, health fairs, and other program sponsored activities. The program has a registered nurse on staff to conduct all of the fun and educational workshops that also includes BEEP bingo, which provides an overview of what the workshop participants have learned. These workshops provide a relaxed atmosphere where you can learn, ask questions and receive educational materials.

Thus far, B.E.E.P. has provided over 48 free clinical breast examinations and mammograms. Along with the free screening services, the program also offered transportation scholarships when needed, to those individuals receiving the services. To be selected for the free services, one must attend a workshop and must meet the program's eligibility requirements. If you are interested in scheduling a workshop please call Alfreda Cowins, AmeriCorps*VISTA Member at 662-846-4784 or visit the Center for Community and Economic Development at 1417 College Street in Cleveland, Mississippi.