

James & Esther King Biomedical Research Program

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*Epidemiology and Public Health
University of Miami*

*2010 Program
Research Project Grant
(3-year project)*

Project Title: A Community-Focused Smoking Cessation Intervention

Project Summary: Research indicates that friends and close family members of people who smoke cigarettes are themselves more likely to smoke, forming a type of social network (e.g., “birds of a feather flock together”). It is possible that smokers in these networks who quit smoking will also be successful in helping their friends and family members to quit smoking as well, particularly if they receive training in how to provide assistance and support. However, this approach has yet to be tested. Our research group at the University of Miami has developed a partnership with community groups in a neighborhood that we have identified as having higher-than-expected rates of tobacco-associated cancers, including lung and oral cancers. Together with our community partners, we have completed a pilot study that documented smoking rates that are more than two times higher than the rates in the greater Miami metropolitan area. This study will develop a unique smoking cessation program that will involve training former smokers living in this community to help current smokers interested in quitting. We will monitor the success of the program and conduct interviews with both smokers and their smoking cessation counselors to identify ways we can improve upon the success of this unique way to help smokers quit smoking.