

Redes En Acción: What It Means

To Hispanic undergraduate students and recent college graduates

During Years 2-5 of the program, each of the Regional Network Centers will recruit at least four student summer interns to assist project leaders and others in literature reviews, data collection and other research tasks. The goal is to provide experience in cancer research. Placement in postgraduate training opportunities with the Regional Network Centers is possible.

To Hispanic junior faculty

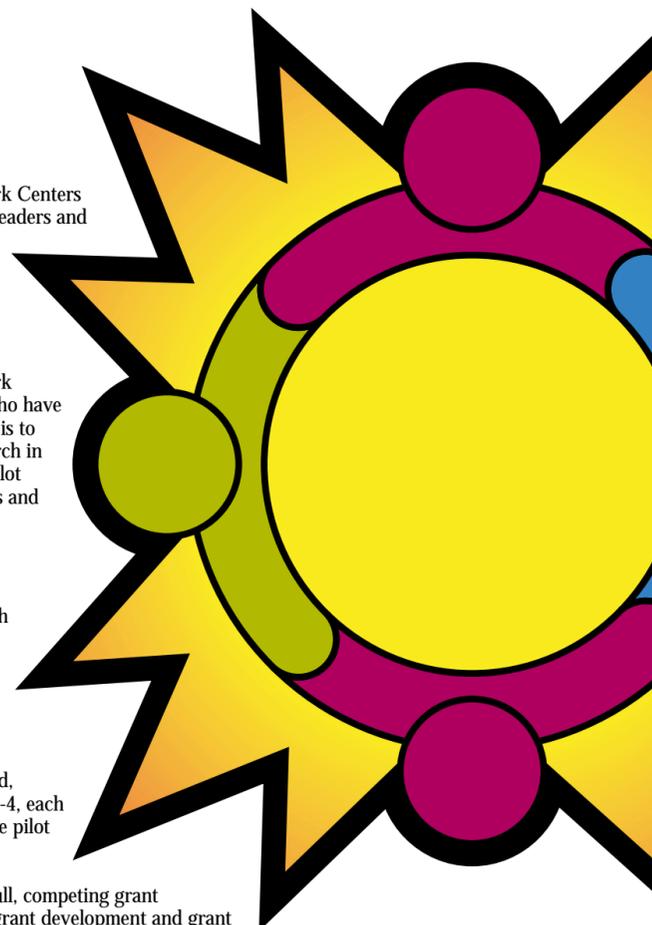
During Years 2-5 of the program, each of the Regional Network Centers will recruit at least four junior faculty members (those who have completed doctoral training within the past four years). The goal is to provide opportunities for supported mini-sabbatical cancer research in Hispanic populations. Participation will be in conjunction with pilot projects, researching priority cancer topics with network partners and writing scientific reviews of selected topics.

To Hispanic pre/post-doctoral trainees

During the course of the program, efforts will be made to pair Hispanic pre- and post-doctoral individuals with ongoing research projects targeting cancer in Hispanic populations. Each of the Regional Network Centers will develop a cancer resource directory, identifying investigators who are conducting Hispanic cancer research projects in the region.

To Hispanic cancer researchers

Over the course of the program, pilot projects will be developed, focusing on Hispanic cancer prioritization topics. During Years 2-4, each Regional Network Center will be responsible for completing three pilot projects, funded by the NCI (\$50,000 maximum). The National Network Center will develop an NCI-approved RFA and review process. The eventual goal will be to develop pilot projects into full, competing grant applications. *Redes En Acción* will provide technical assistance for grant development and grant application submission.



The Next 5 Years, Phase-to-Phase

Redes En Acción activities, initiating this year, are scheduled to occur on the following timetable:

Phase 1 (Year 1): Infrastructure and capacity building

- Establish a National Network Center and National Steering Committee
- Establish 6 Regional Network Centers, organizing Regional Community Advisory Committees for each
- Survey Hispanic health experts and community leaders
- Identify and prioritize Hispanic cancer issues
- Initiate a communication campaign to promote cancer research, training and awareness among Hispanics
- Identify Hispanic cancer research, training and awareness participants for development of regional resource directories

Phase 2 (Years 2-3): Development of mentoring, research and education partnerships

- Recruit summer student interns (current or recent college graduates) to provide program and research assistance
- Recruit junior faculty (less than 4 years since completion of doctorate training) for research and training opportunities
- Recruit pre/post-doctorate trainees and match with ongoing research projects
- Develop pilot research projects

Phase 3 (Years 4-5): Development of projects for grant applications to initiate studies in cancer control and prevention

- Provide technical assistance in developing pilot projects into full, competing grant applications
- Submit grant application

From *NHLIC: En Acción* to *Redes En Acción*

Where one major initiative in the battle against cancer among Hispanics leaves off, another picks up. That's the case with the new *Redes En Acción* program.

"*Redes* is designed to expand the existing infrastructure of the National Hispanic Leadership Initiative on Cancer: *En Acción*," noted Dr. Amelie Ramirez, program Principal Investigator. "At the same time, we will be taking the knowledge and experience gained from the NHLIC: *En Acción* program and not only applying it to *Redes* but taking our efforts to the next logical level by mounting an unprecedented campaign of nationwide collaboration and cooperation."

Under the direction of Dr. Ramirez from 1992 to 2000, the NCI-funded NHLIC: *En Acción* initiated the first comprehensive assessment of cancer risk factors among the major populations of Hispanics: Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cuban Americans, and Central and South Americans. The multi-site research and community outreach program developed and implemented state-of-the-art cancer prevention and control strategies tailored to these diverse groups.

In developing Regional Network Centers across the country, *Redes En Acción* will utilize the organizational framework already in place in Miami, Brooklyn, San Francisco, San Diego and San Antonio, and expand to the Midwest with a new North Central Regional Network Center in Chicago.

Redes En Acción is both academic- and community-based. Leadership within the National Steering Committee represents organizations that serve over two-thirds of Hispanic students enrolled in higher education. It also includes professional associations with such organizations as the Society of Hispanic and Native Americans in Science, the Center of Advancement of Hispanics in Science and Engineering Education, La Raza, the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to name a few. In addition, partnerships include cancer centers, academic institutions, federal agencies and community-based research centers.



Redes En Acción

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Redes En Acción: New Initiative Spotlights Hispanic Cancer Issues

A major new initiative funded by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) is bringing together the most extensive collection of organizations ever assembled nationwide to collaborate in the fight against cancer among this country's Hispanic populations.

The 5-year program, *Redes En Acción*. Cancer Training, Research and Awareness, is developing a broad-based coalition of cancer research centers, community-based organizations and federal partners to foster a national infrastructure for Hispanic cancer prevention and control activities. The groups are organized geographically, with coordinating centers in six regions across the United States.

Redes En Acción (Networks in Action) is directed by Amelie G. Ramirez, DrPH, Associate Professor of Medicine and Deputy Director of the Chronic Disease Prevention and Control Research Center at Baylor College of Medicine (BCM). The program's National Network Center is BCM in Houston and San Antonio, Texas.

"This is a milestone event – a major commitment to setting, prioritizing and effecting an agenda of cancer issues impacting Hispanics all over the country," said Dr. Ramirez, Principal Investigator of the program. "*Redes En Acción* represents the most ambitious effort ever to draw upon the expertise of local, regional and national groups and work together to



reduce the burden of cancer among Latino populations."

In addition to developing regional networks, *Redes En Acción* will establish training and research opportunities for Hispanic students and researchers, foster research projects on key cancer issues affecting Hispanics, and provide support for cancer awareness activities among Hispanic communities.

Key components of future *Redes* activities include surveying opinion leaders and Latino physicians to help determine a prioritized agenda of Hispanic cancer issues, and developing regional resource directories of Hispanic cancer research projects, training opportunities and outreach programs.

Redes En Acción is part of a new \$60 million effort recently announced by the NCI to address the unequal burden of cancer within certain special populations in this country over the next five years. Eighteen grants at 17 institutions are creating or implementing cancer control,

prevention, research and training programs in minority and underserved populations.

The Special Populations Networks for Cancer Awareness, Research and Training are intended to build relationships between large research institutions and community-based programs, said Richard D. Klausner, MD, director of the NCI.

"This initiative is one of the largest of its kind in the federal government," Dr. Klausner noted. "It is intended to encourage people from the community to work with scientists to find ways of addressing important questions about the burden of cancer in minority communities."

Setting Goals, Aiming High

Major goals of the *Redes En Acción* program are to:

- ▶ Develop national and regional networks of cancer research centers, community-based organizations and federal partners to foster a national infrastructure and develop priorities for Hispanic cancer awareness, research and training
- ▶ Establish training and research opportunities for Hispanic students and researchers
- ▶ Develop pilot research projects on key cancer issues impacting Hispanics
- ▶ Develop pilot projects into full, competing grant applications
- ▶ Support cancer awareness activities

Partners in the Program

National Network Center Principal Investigator



Amelie G. Ramirez, DrPH

Dr. Amelie Ramirez, Principal Investigator (PI) for the *Redes En Acción* program, is Associate Professor of Medicine and Deputy Director, Chronic Disease Prevention and Control

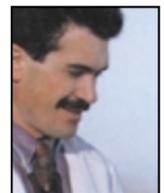
Research Center (formerly the Center for Cancer Control Research), at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas. She also serves as Associate Director for Community Research and Program Leader for the Cancer Prevention and Health Promotion Program of the San Antonio Cancer Institute.

"*Redes En Acción* represents the first nationwide effort to bring together federal and state partners with community leaders to identify a comprehensive set of Hispanic cancer priorities," said Dr. Ramirez. "Our goal will be to develop a national agenda for each of the three Hispanic cancer areas: research, training and awareness."

In addition to serving as PI of *Redes En Acción*, Dr. Ramirez is Program Director of the Replication of the *A Su Salud En Acción* Program, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and Principal Investigator of smoking prevention programs funded by the Texas Department of Health and the Texas Board of Higher Education. From 1992 to 2000, she was Principal Investigator of the NCI-funded National Hispanic Leadership Initiative on Cancer: *En Acción*.

She received a White House appointment to the National Cancer Advisory Board and formerly served on the National Cancer Policy Board of the National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine and Commission of Life Sciences. Dr. Ramirez also has been appointed to the Secretary of Health's National Heart, Lung, and Blood Advisory Council of the National Institutes of Health and the Latino Council on Alcohol and Tobacco Board of Directors.

Northwest Regional Network Center: San Francisco, California



Eliseo J. Pérez-Stable, MD

Dr. Eliseo Pérez-Stable is Professor of Medicine and Chief of the Division of General Internal Medicine, Department of Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco. He practices and teaches primary care internal medicine.

A native of Cuba, Dr. Pérez-Stable is bilingual and bicultural, and is one of five Latino full Professors in the university's School of Medicine. He has been Principal or Co-Principal Investigator on five NCI grants focused on cancer control studies in Latino populations in the San Francisco Bay Area. He continues as Co-Director of the Medical Effectiveness Research Center for Diverse Communities, working with diverse faculty in developing a research program on minority health care issues.

"I expect *Redes En Acción* to establish a Latino Agenda on cancer that includes prevention and treatment research," said Dr. Pérez-Stable. "We are in dire need of more Latino participants in clinical trials and observational cohort studies in order to convince ourselves of the generalizability of medical advances."

"The country also must address work force concerns if we are to deliver culturally competent clinical care. We need more Latinos in the health professions at all levels but especially in leadership roles. This will help mobilize the community."

"Finally," he added, "we are witnessing a new revolution in medicine as advances in genetics begin to affect all aspects of clinical medicine. Latino issues must be on this agenda for research, education and service."

Southwest Regional Network Center: San Diego, California



Gregory A. Talavera, MD, MPH

Dr. Gregory Talavera is a bilingual, bicultural physician trained in public health and preventive medicine.

During the early part of his career he practiced medicine in the Spanish-speaking, underserved communities of San Diego's border region. As a family practitioner he saw how Mexican cultural beliefs interfered with patients' timely diagnosis and treatment. Even for people with health insurance these culture-specific beliefs can act as barriers to quality cancer care.

Recently he joined the faculty at the School of Public Health, Division of Health Promotion at San Diego State University. As a cancer researcher trying to recruit Latinos into clinical trials he again noticed that culture plays a role in the fact that Latinos are rarely represented in clinical trials.

"The launching of *Redes En Acción* in San Diego is very timely since the University of California, San Diego has announced its goal of establishing a comprehensive cancer center," noted Dr. Talavera. "The *Redes* program could assist the University in reaching out to the Latino community of San Diego."

South Central Regional Network Center: San Antonio, Texas



Martha A. Medrano, MD, MPH

Dr. Martha Medrano is the Director of the Hispanic Center of Excellence at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. She also is on the faculty with the Department of Psychiatry Division of Alcohol and Drug Addiction.

The Hispanic Center of Excellence (HCOE) is a project funded by the Health Resources Services Administration, Bureau of Health Professions, Office of Health Professions Diversity. Its mission is to improve the health of Hispanic communities, and goals include increasing the number of Hispanic medical students in research careers and assisting the UTHSCSA Hispanic faculty in career development.

"The HCOE is very excited about partnering with *Redes En Acción*," said Dr. Medrano. "We have a common mission and we have common goals."

Through Dr. Medrano's leadership, the HCOE has developed a number of networking systems and advisory boards.

"Partnership between community organizations and academic institutions is a win-win situation," she emphasized. "Cancer prevention efforts will be effective if the academic scientific institutions transfer research information to community organizations that can in turn interpret these findings into language the community can understand."

"We need to educate all Hispanic regardless of their socioeconomic status what they can do to prevent and protect them from cancer."

North Central Regional Network Center: Chicago, Illinois

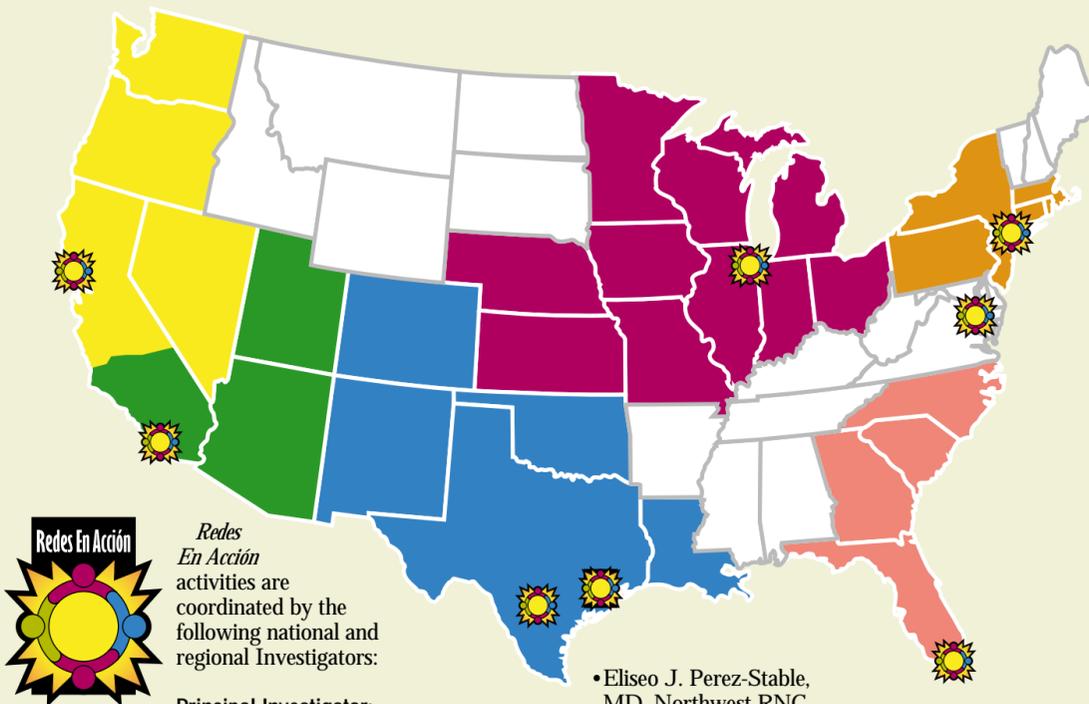


Aida L. Giachello, PhD

Dr. Giachello is an Associate Professor at Jane Addams College of Social Work (JACSW), University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). In 1993, as a result of a grant from

the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, she established the UIC-JACSW Midwest Latino Health Research, Training and Policy Center, where she has been conducting health outcomes research and training new minority investigators.

Her research agenda focuses on issues of cost, efficiency and quality of care as well as on chronic conditions such as cancer, asthma, diabetes, hypertension, injury, and maternal and child health. The Center follows a participatory action research model and uses the research findings to impact public policies.



Redes En Acción activities are coordinated by the following national and regional Investigators:

Principal Investigator:

- Amelie G. Ramirez, DrPH, National Network Center, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston and San Antonio, Texas

Co-Principal Investigators:

- Jose R. Marti, MD, Northeast RNC (Regional Network Center), The Brooklyn Hospital Center, Brooklyn, New York
- Edward J. Trapido, ScD, MSPH, Southeast RNC, Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, University of Miami, Florida
- Aida L. Giachello, PhD, North Central RNC, Midwest Latino Health Research Center, University of Illinois at Chicago
- Martha A. Medrano, MD, MPH, South Central RNC, Medical Hispanic Center of Excellence, University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio

- Eliseo J. Perez-Stable, MD, Northwest RNC, University of California, San Francisco

- Gregory A. Talavera, MD, MPH, Southwest RNC, Graduate School of Public Health, San Diego State University, California

- Elena Rios, MD, Executive Director, National Hispanic Medical Association, Washington, D.C.

Consultants to the *Redes En Acción* program are Alfred L. McAlister, PhD, School of Public Health, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston; and Lucina Suarez, PhD, Texas Department of Health. Also participating as a partner in the program is the Cancer Information Service in San Francisco, Houston, Miami and New York City.

"We the staff of the Midwest Latino Health Research, Training and Policy Center are extremely pleased to be part of *Redes En Acción*," said Dr. Giachello. "Working together we will be able to make a difference in developing community cancer awareness and engaging in cancer education and research. We are particular concerned with addressing the types of cancer that impact our Latino communities the most, including breast, cervical, lung and prostate cancers."

"Through the *Redes* program, we will be able to train new Latino investigators as cancer researchers, and we will work to assure that eligible Latinos participate in cancer clinical trials. Also, we will be able to impact public

policy that will increase access to early cancer detection, screening, treatment and rehabilitation."

Northeast Regional Network Center: Brooklyn, New York



Jose R. Marti, MD, FACS

Dr. Jose Marti is Chief of Surgical Oncology at The Brooklyn Hospital Center in Brooklyn, New York. The hospital serves a diverse area that

includes a large Hispanic community.

"Working with oncology patients everyday, I see the effects of cancer on families as well as individual patients," said Dr. Marti. "As a surgical oncologist, I see the hope that we can present to patients when they are diagnosed with early stage disease, and that is why I am so committed to the concepts of *Redes En Acción*. We know that cancer awareness is key to an earlier diagnosis of cancer and that is the essential element in a successful outcome."

Dr. Marti's cancer-related responsibilities and activities have included serving as a Regional Board member for the American Cancer Society, membership on the Boards of SHARE and The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, and

participation in Y-Me programs.

"I've had the opportunity to contribute to many community education programs that have been focused on Hispanic needs, since we strive to provide culturally sensitive as well as culturally competent care," he noted. "However, I have also seen the scarcity of Hispanic researchers in our area, and I think that this can be remedied by recruitment and training programs that can reach the talented young people in our community and direct their efforts so that we can focus on the future needs of our people."

"The NHLIC: *En Acción* program was an important beginning point here in Brooklyn," he added, "and we feel that the next five years with *Redes En Acción* will lead to even greater achievements that we will share with all of the nation."

Southeast Regional Network Center: Miami, Florida



Edward Trapido, ScD

Dr. Edward Trapido is the Associate Director of the University of Miami Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, and oversees

the Center's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control.

The mission of the Cancer Center is to reduce human burden from cancer through research, education, prevention, and the delivery of quality patient care. The Center plays a crucial role in addressing the needs of the large Hispanic community in Miami-Dade County, which is approximately 57 percent Hispanic.

Other relevant activities under Dr. Trapido's direction are the Florida Cancer Data System, for which cancer rates among Hispanics are being analyzed, and the Coastal Cancer Information Service, covering Florida, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands (this office is one of three Spanish language call centers for the nation).

Additional responsibilities include the Research and Evaluation Coordinating Center for the Florida Tobacco Pilot Program, coordinating the analysis of the effectiveness of the state's anti-tobacco program in a variety of populations, and the Florida Comprehensive Cancer Control Initiative, which is focusing on reducing the disparities in cancer among minorities.

Dr. Trapido also heads the teaching program in Epidemiology and Public Health, a potential source of students and trainees for *Redes En Acción*.

"I am truly excited to be part of *Redes En Acción*, and to have the Southeast and coastal areas be part of the national network," said Dr. Trapido. This program should set the stage for building capabilities of research by and about the Hispanic population, especially related to cancer."

National Hispanic Medical Association: Washington, D.C.



Elena Rios, MD, MSPH

Dr. Elena Rios is the President and founder of the National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA), a nonprofit organization representing Hispanic licensed physicians. She

served as the Coordinator of Outreach for the White House Health Care Reform Task Force and began the NHMA organization in 1994 as the demand for Hispanic physician participation at the national level increased during this time.

"The NHMA recognizes that cancer is the second leading cause of death in the country and one of the six priorities of the Department of Health and Human Services Race/Ethnic Disparities in Health Initiative," said Dr. Rios. "NHMA is proud to be a part of the national steering committee for the *Redes En Acción* program that will encourage physicians to address the awareness, training and research of cancer in the Hispanic community over the next five years."

A Mexican American from Pico Rivera, California, Dr. Rios has served as Advisor for Regional and Minority Women's Health for the Department of Health and Human Services in the Office of the Secretary, Office on Women's Health and was responsible for developing the network of 10 regional offices and all state/territorial contacts, including leadership development.

In addition to her role as President of NHMA, since September 1998 Dr. Rios has served as Director for a new organization, the Hispanic-Serving Health Professions Schools, Inc., representing 21 medical schools with 9 percent Hispanic student enrollment and committed to developing Hispanic faculty, research and student recruitment.

She also serves on the Board of the Intercancer Cultural Institute, National Hispanic Leadership Agenda, Hispanic Health Coalition, American Medical Association Minority Affairs Consortium and was recently appointed by Secretary Shalala to the Advisory Panel on Medicare Education.



Program Consultant Lucina Suarez, PhD

Dr. Lucina Suarez, a Senior Scientist at the Texas Department of Health, will collaborate on the *Redes En Acción* program as a consultant and as Co-Chair of the Clinical and Research Committee. She will assist in the design of the prioritization opinion leaders and physicians surveys, as well as with development of pilot projects, and participate in development of the regional networks.

"My hope is that *Redes En Acción* will bind our collective strengths into a powerful force for cancer prevention and control," she said.

Dr. Suarez has contributed significant expertise in Latino health concerns as a participant in NHLIC: *En Acción* and the Replication of the *A Su Salud* program, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. As an epidemiologist-biostatistician, her primary research focuses on cancer-related issues in Latino populations including evaluation methods, survey research, and statistical analysis of data.

She is an active member of both the American Public Health Association and the Society for Epidemiologic Research, and was the official liaison to the American College of Epidemiology Committee on Minority Affairs, in an effort to increase Hispanic representation in the field of epidemiology. She has served on numerous scientific review committees for the NCI and other cancer-related agencies and has published extensively on Latino health.

Program Consultant



Alfred L. McAlister, PhD

Dr. Alfred McAlister, Professor of Behavioral Sciences, School of Public Health, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, will serve as consultant for the

development, administration and analysis of the *Redes En Acción* prioritization and physician surveys.

He also was a collaborator on the NHLIC: *En Acción* program, assisting in the development of research, education and training activities for Hispanic populations and for individuals and agencies involved in cancer control among Hispanics.

"The *Redes En Acción* program will build on the accomplishments of the NHLIC: *En Acción* program and provide a broad range of new opportunities for expanding cancer research and education activities in this country's diverse Hispanic populations," he noted.

Dr. McAlister has developed several major cancer prevention projects for Hispanics and played a major role in well-known international disease prevention studies such as the North Karelia Project in Finland.

He will provide behavioral sciences and health education/promotion consultation for *Redes En Acción*, and will advise on the behavioral aspects of the media campaign (print and broadcast). In addition, he will serve on the program's National Steering Committee, including its two subcommittees, and aid in the South Central Regional Network development.

