

Tar Heel Footprints in Health Care

*A periodic feature that recognizes individuals whose efforts—
often unsung—enhance the health of North Carolinians*

Gladys Lundy



Gladys Lundy's story is one of impressive perseverance, dedication, and leadership. After suffering 2 strokes and a heart attack caused by previously undetected heart disease, Ms. Lundy was left unable to speak and physically incapacitated. Ms. Lundy spent

4 years recuperating in a nursing home, regaining her mobility and speech, during which time she was determined to educate herself on women's health issues, particularly heart disease and stroke.

As Ms. Lundy recovered, she became involved with WomenHeart, the National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease, and served as a member of the national board of directors. Ms. Lundy is also the president and founder of The Minority Women Health Project, a non-profit organization that addresses health issues affecting women of color, and co-chair of the Triangle Stroke Education Outreach Initiative, which aims to reduce the incidence and impact of stroke by raising awareness through education programs focused on stroke prevention, risk factors, symptoms, treatment, and advocacy. Programs have included offering CPR training, healthy cooking demonstrations, various seminars, and a recent senior fun run sponsored in collaboration with community partners.

Ms. Lundy has dedicated herself to volunteer efforts to build awareness and educate North Carolinians around the issue of women's heart health and the signs of a stroke. She has convened support groups, led educational campaigns on stroke, talked to leaders in government and industry, and been a leader in local initiatives such as the Wake County Power to End Stroke Task Force.

"I want to help others and save lives by telling my story," Ms. Lundy says. "I ignored the symptoms of my first stroke because I didn't know enough. I feel empowered now, because I can share this experience

with others and make a difference." Her courage and dedication inspires those around her and her peers praise her tireless efforts.

Suzanne Banfield, PhD, a member of the WomenHeart board of directors, said of Ms. Lundy after working together on the national level for close to a decade, "In the time I've known her, Gladys has battled health challenges that would leave most of us isolated and fearful of the future. But she has emerged from each challenge with even more energy and a stronger voice to advocate for all those who suffer from health disparities in our country. Her physical and emotional courage in using her own experience as a springboard to help others is one of the things I most admire about Gladys."

Bettye Murchison, a retired senior administrator in the Wake County Public School System, who served with Ms. Lundy for several years on the Power to End Stroke Task Force and in The Minority Women Health Project says Ms. Lundy is a "community activist who has left an indelible imprint on health disparities, cardiovascular disease, and stroke prevention in North Carolina. Her dedication to educating the public is unsurpassable and stands as a shining example for others to emulate."

Ms. Lundy serves as a strong advocate for women's heart health in North Carolina and is excited to be continuing her admirable work as a recently appointed member of the Region-IV Health Equity Council, the members of which serve as leaders and catalysts to strengthen health equity and enhance collaboration between stakeholders, align initiatives, and leverage assets to more effectively reduce health disparities. **NCMJ**

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