



University of Colorado  
Cancer Center  
Office of Community  
Outreach & Engagement  
By  
Chris Jones, MPH

# THE UCCC COE COMMUNITY-BASED COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING PROJECT

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES



Cancer Center

NCI-DESIGNATED COMPREHENSIVE  
CANCER CENTER

- Discuss COE background and aims
- Review COE approach to colorectal cancer screening and prevention
- Describe program implementation
- Detail program results, impact, and challenges





# THE TEAM

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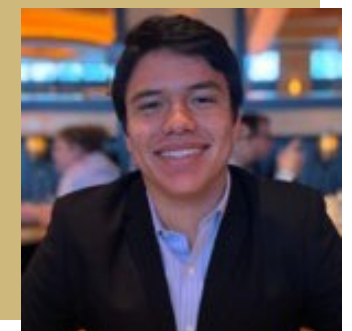
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*Practicum Student*



**Cesar Carreon**  
*Practicum Student*

## COE AIMS

- **Monitor and disseminate up-to-date data** on the cancer burden, risks, and disparities in the catchment (Colorado).
- **Facilitate community-engaged research across scientific programs and clinical trial participation.**
- **Engage communities in the implementation and dissemination of interventions in cancer prevention, control and survivorship.**



## FOCUSING IN: COLORECTAL CANCER

- Colorectal cancer is the **3rd most common** form of cancer in Colorado for Men and Women. It is also the **2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of cancer death**.<sup>1</sup>
- Unlike other cancers, colorectal cancer is often preventable with screening and highly treatable when detected early.<sup>2</sup>
- Current guidelines recommend **screening** for those who are **aged 45-75**.
- FIT** kits, or Fecal Immunochemical Test, are a cost-effective method for identifying the need for a colonoscopy.



Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)



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# PURSuing COMMUNITY PREVENTION

- In pursuit of COE aims, we set out to:
  - Disseminate free colon cancer screening tests (FIT Kits) to un- and under-insured participants at 365 fairs (formally 9Health) across Colorado
  - Facilitate comprehensive follow-up and navigation to care for all participants in need of support.





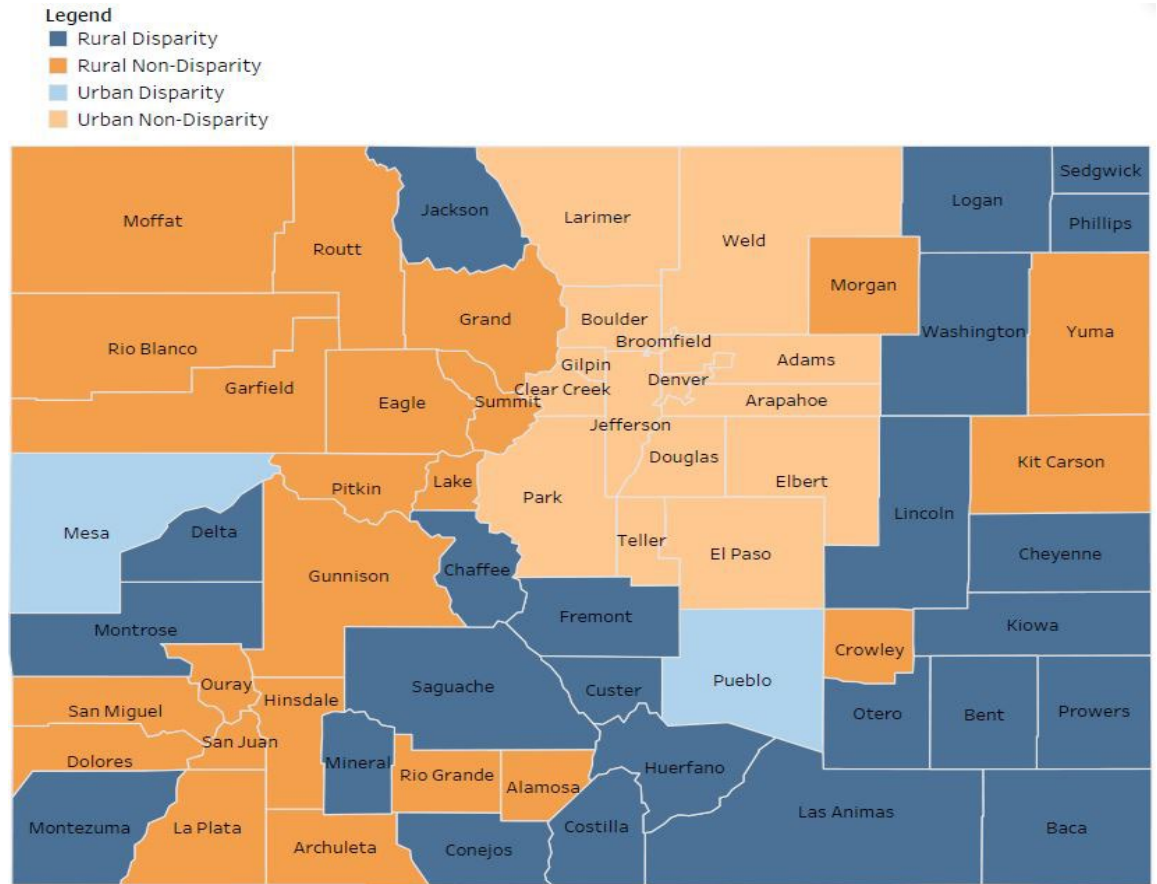
# DEVELOPING A PROGRAM WITH NEW PARTNERS

- The CU Cancer Center committed **\$50K to purchase up to 1000 FIT kits for eligible participants** (for first year of program).
- Partnering with 365 health presented a unique opportunity for COE to disseminate an evidenced-based screening tool to individuals who may not otherwise have access to these tests throughout a statewide network of community driven health fairs.
- 365 partnership also provided diagnostic results from LabCorp.
- The target population for this program are un- or under-insured and/or un-documented adults living in Colorado who participate in one of the 365 fairs in 2023.



# CHARTING A COURSE

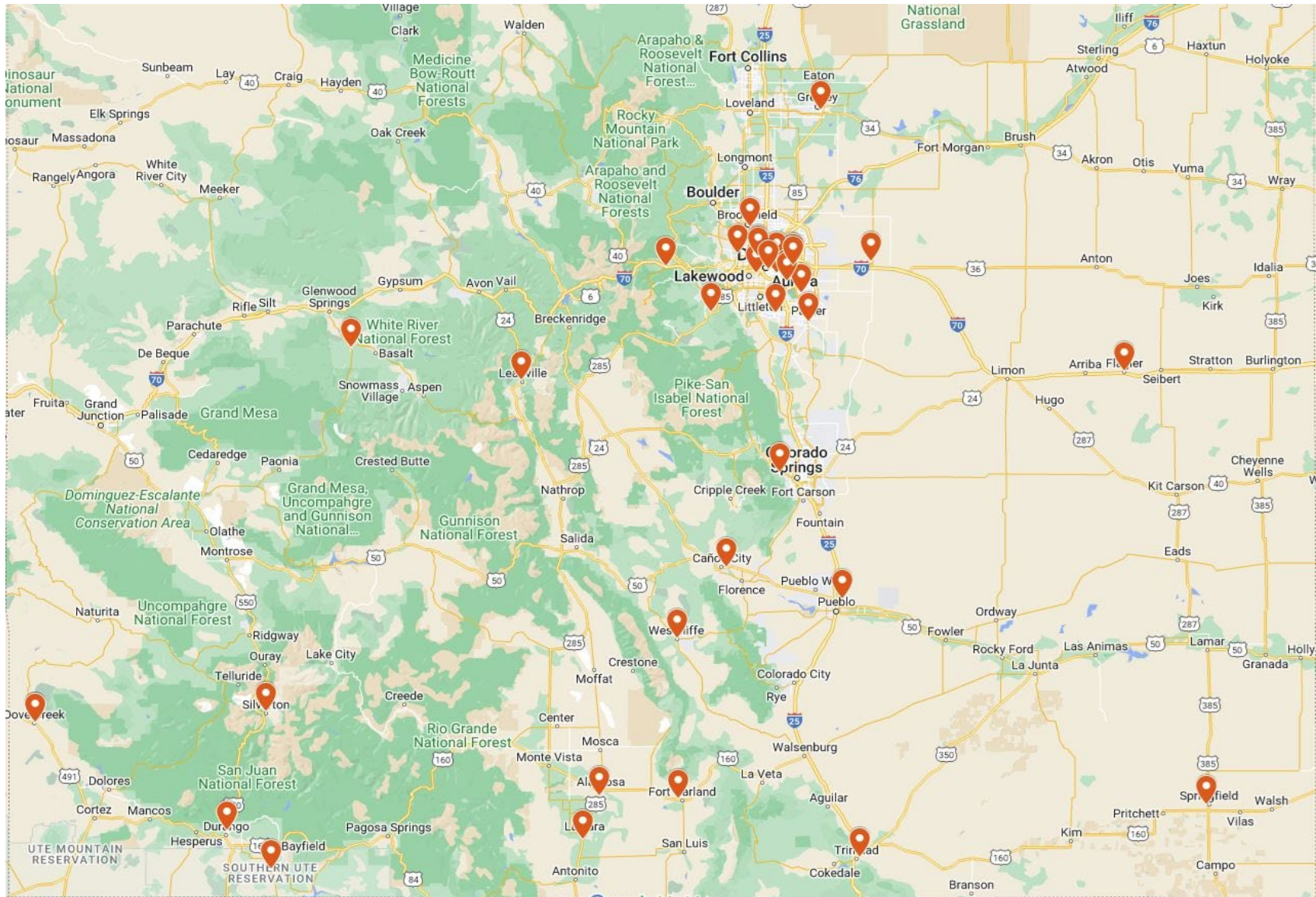
- COE staff analyzed cancer disparity indexes to plan health fair attendance and optimize reach to medically underserved communities.
- Staff were trained in screening guidelines and education to engage participants and integrate screening processes into existing health fair workflow.



Rural and Urban Disparity Counties (24 of 64 Counties)  
Cancer Disparity Index: Cancer incidence, mortality, late-stage disease.



## SO WHERE DID WE END UP?



# SO WHERE DID WE END UP?

6,331

Count of Participants

527

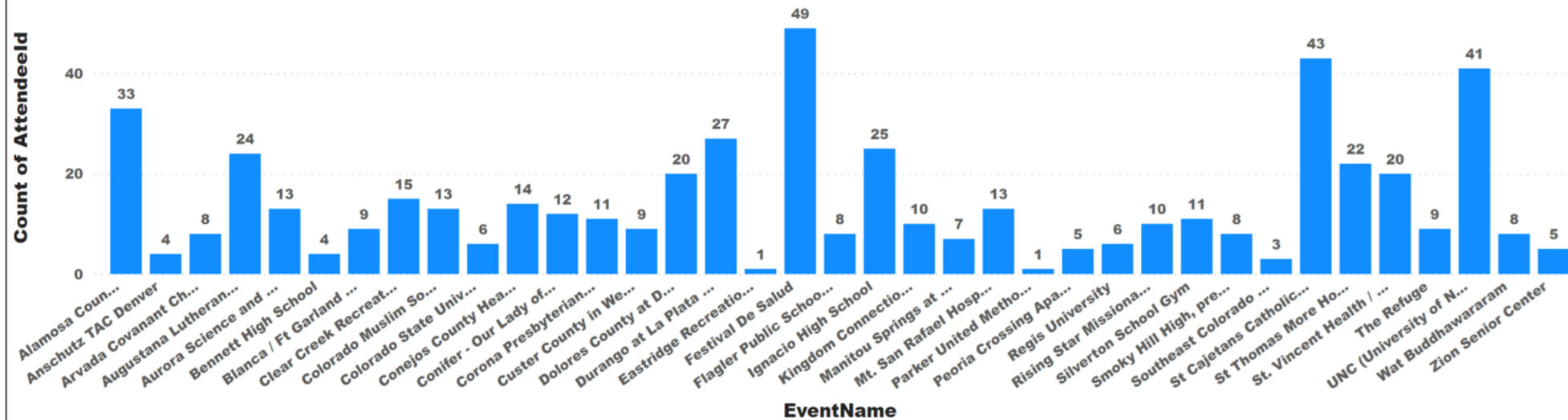
Received Colon  
Cancer Screening Kit  
Vouchers

64.36

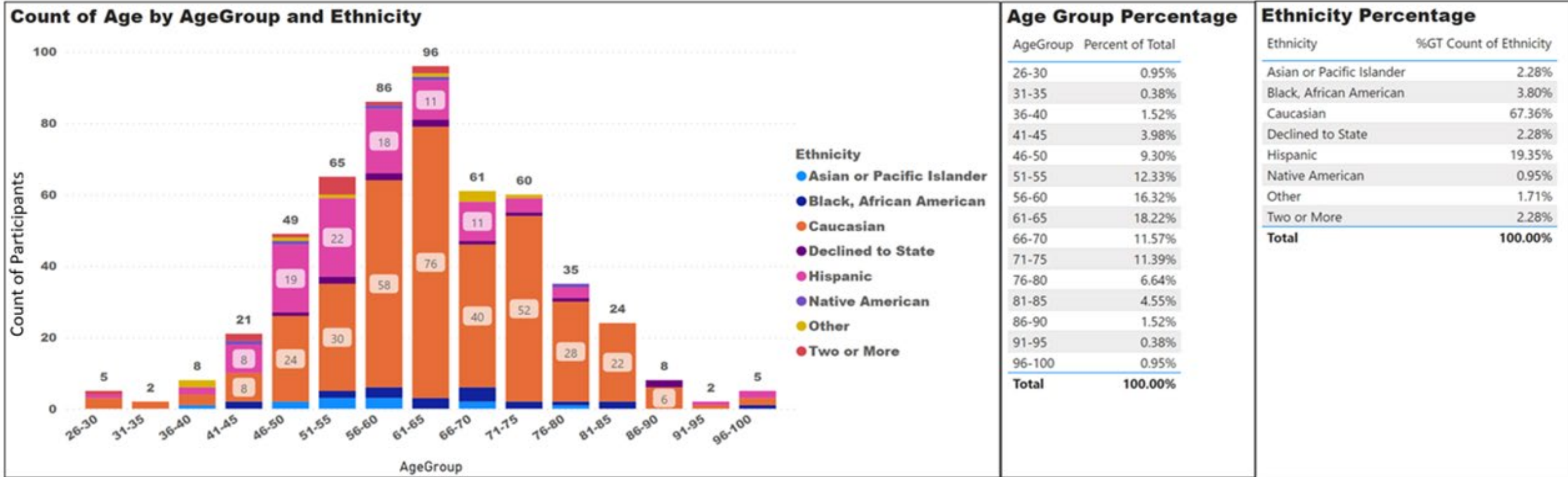
Average Age

Count of AttendeeId by EventName and VoucherRedeemed

VoucherRedeemed ● Y



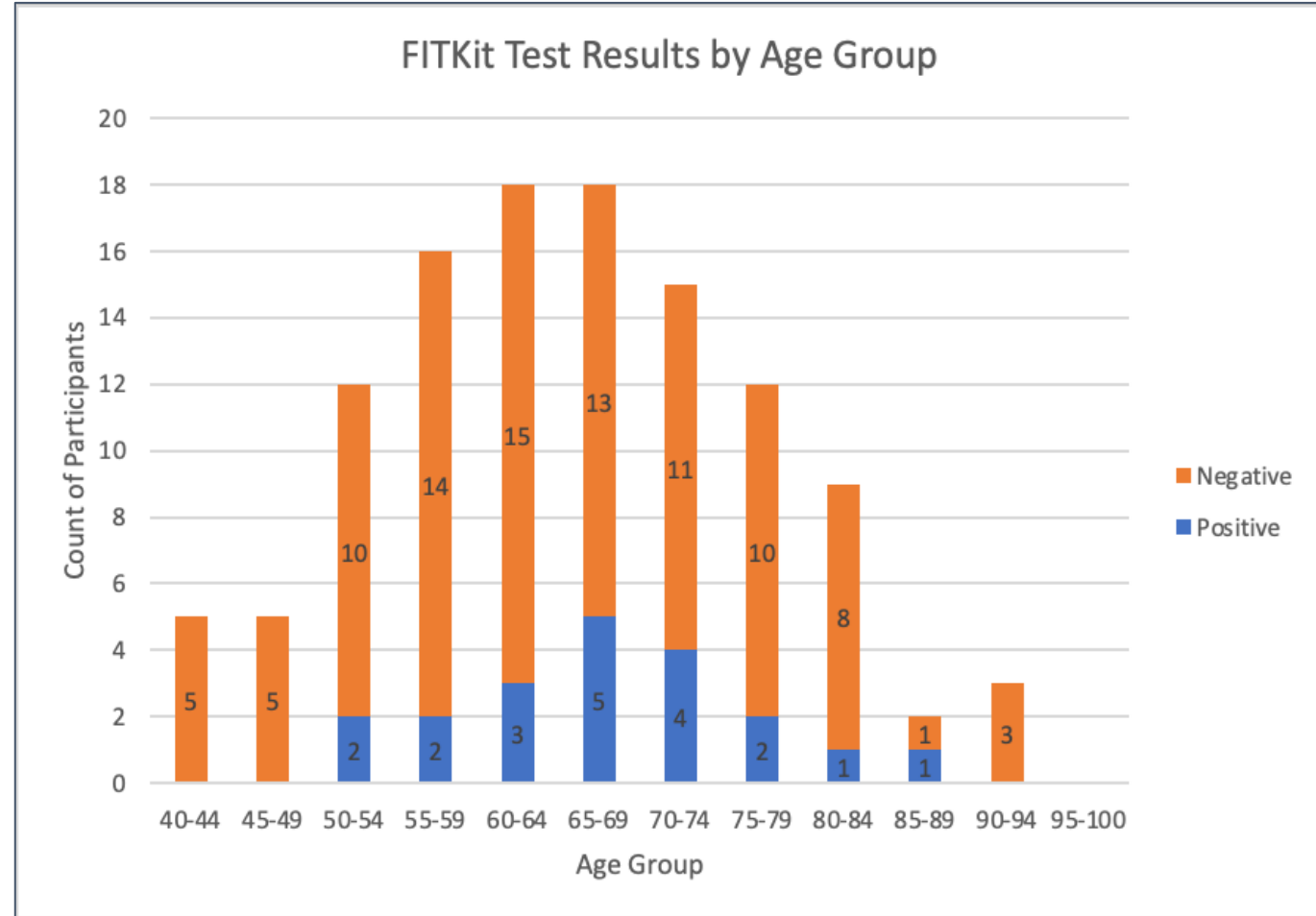
# FIT KITS DISSEMINATION





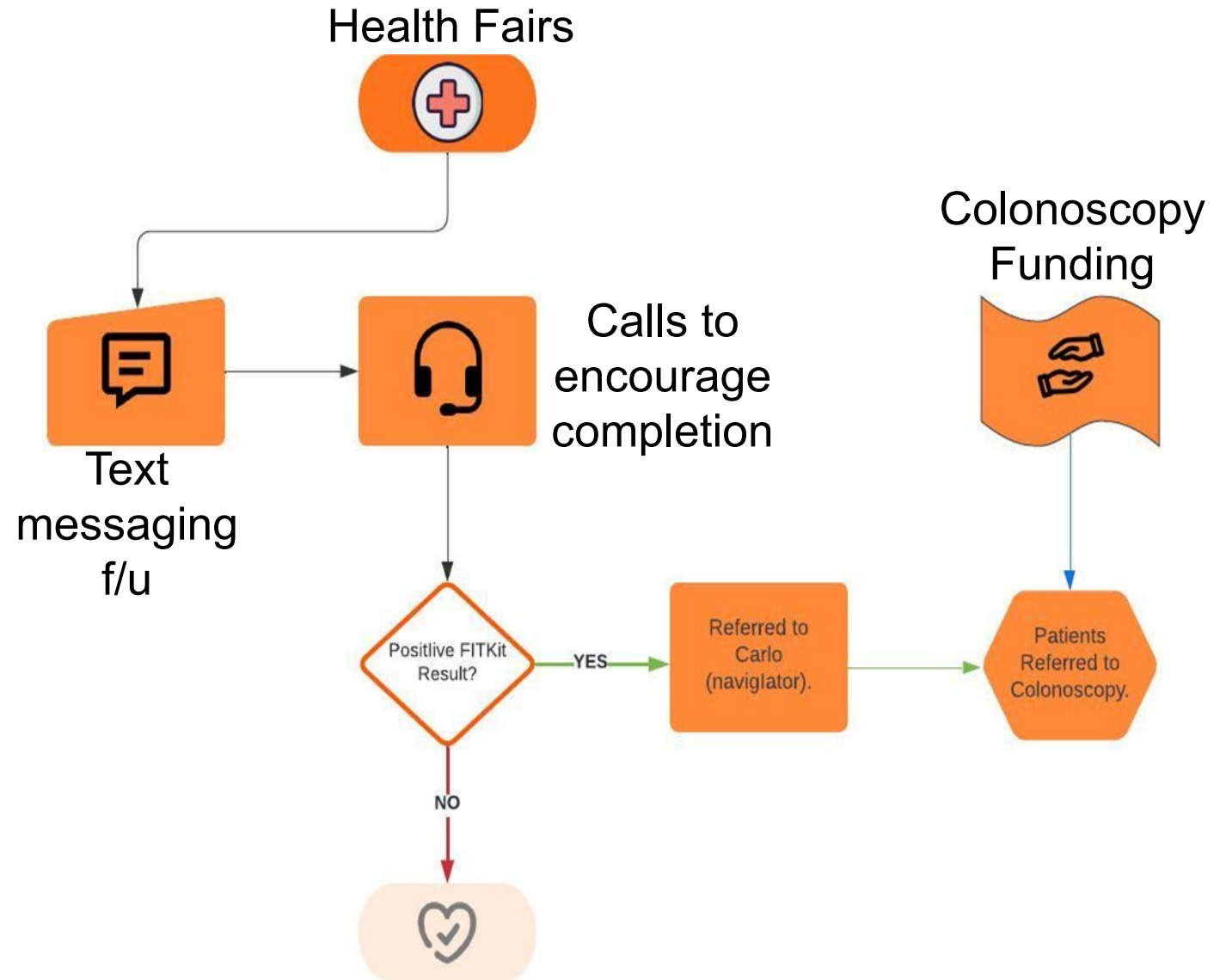
# FIT KITS RESULTS THUS FAR

- Of our 527 participants, 412 people were in the recommended age for colorectal cancer screening (45 - 75 years).
- Total Number of FIT Kits Returned: **134**
- Positive: 22– **16.4%**
- Negative: 95 - **83.6%**
- Key Takeaways: 134 out of 527 participants returned their kits. (21.8% return rate), all 22 positive participants have been offered navigation services.
- Higher positivity rate than similar program results with FIT Kits which often see <10% positivity.<sup>3, 4</sup>



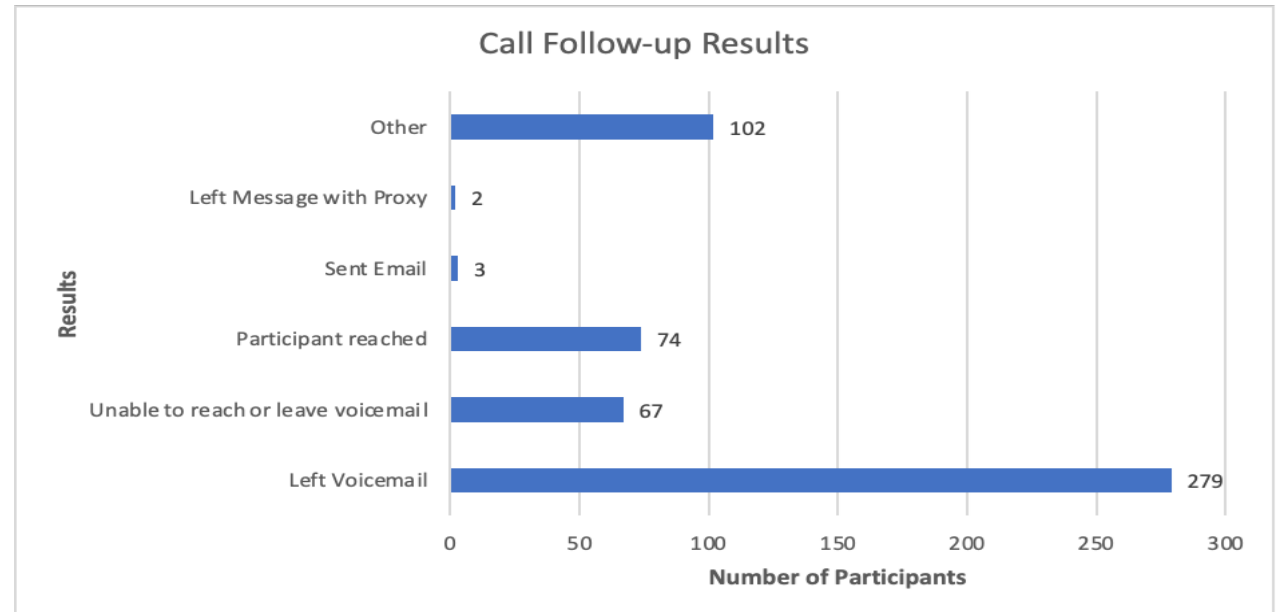
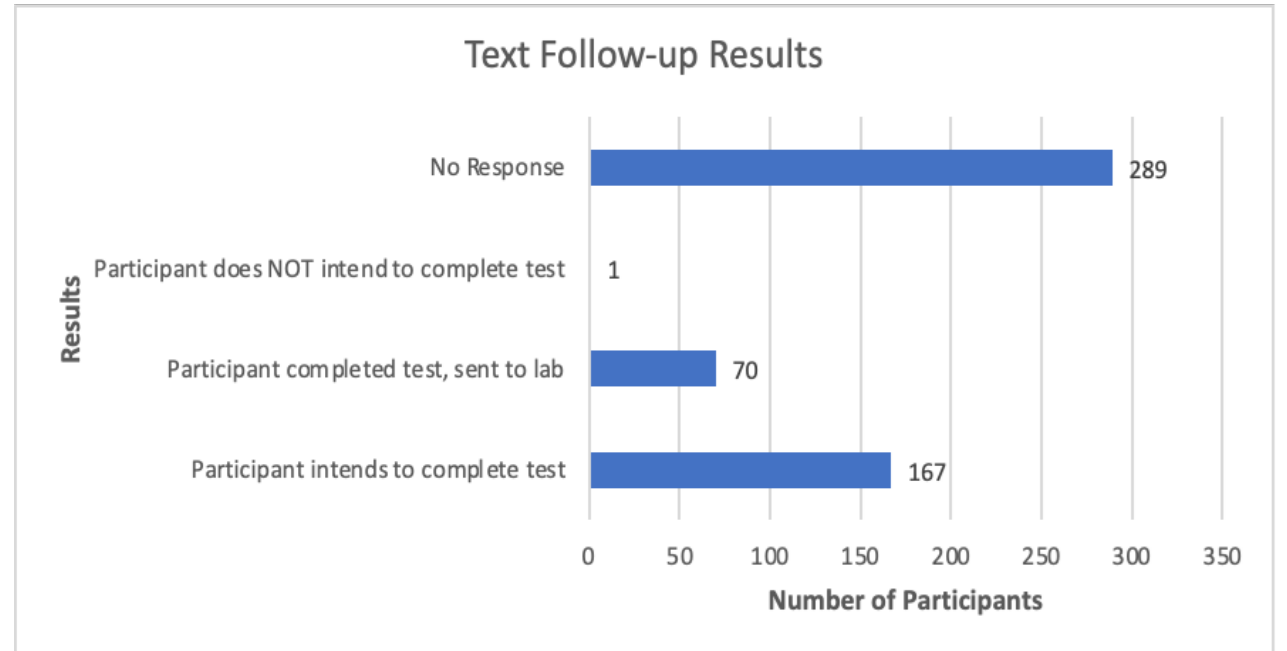
# COMPREHENSIVE FOLLOW-UP & NAVIGATION

- COE supported by practicum students who conducted follow-up to all 527 participants.
- Combination of text messaging and phone calls to encourage completion of FIT kits.
- Secured funding through the Colon Cancer Coalition & Colon Cancer Alliance supports colonoscopies with comprehensive navigation services provided to all.
- Our protocol for follow-up and navigation to care for all positive results aligns with new CO law, HB 1198, requiring hospitals to provide care for persons without insurance.



# FOLLOW-UP RECEPTION

- Text messaging proved much more successful than phone calls.
- Practicum students **logged a 45% return rate for text messaging!**
- Follow-up is ongoing as plans for the coming health fair season pick up pace.







# ADDITIONAL SERVICES

- COE took this opportunity to provide services and education on additional cancer topics:
- We provided radon test kits, education, and follow-up.
- Skin cancer prevention education and resources.
- COE also expanded outreach through existing partners such as the Colorado Black Health Collaborative and the Center for African American Health with plans to expand partnerships!






COLORADO BLACK  
HEALTH COLLABORATIVE  
**COLORECTAL  
CANCER  
AWARENESS**



Actor Chadwick Boseman aka  
Black Panther, passed away  
from Colon Cancer at 43.




**FREE  
COLORECTAL  
CANCER  
SCREENING KITS**



**COLON CANCER FACTS:**

- African Americans are about 20% more likely to get colorectal cancer and about 40% more likely to die from it than most other groups.
- Unlike most cancers, colorectal cancer is often preventable with screening and highly treatable when detected early.
- If you are 45 and older, you should get screened!

USE THE QR CODE AND  
DISCOUNT CODE BELOW  
TO HAVE A FREE  
SCREENING KIT MAILED  
TO YOU.



Discount code at  
checkout:  
**FreeFitKit23**

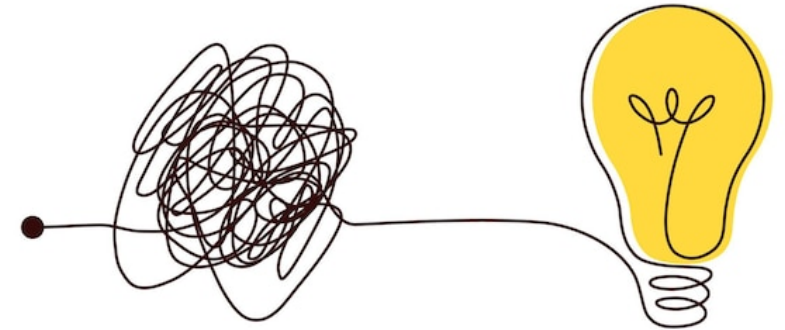


The Colorado Black Health Collaborative, in partnership with the University of Colorado Cancer Center, Office of Community Outreach and Engagement and 365Health is excited to offer free Colon Cancer Screening Kits as well as free follow-up care for any positive results.



# CHALLENGES

- A primary challenge for the UCCC COE team lies with the expectation to serve a large catchment area that covers the entire state of Colorado with limited staff and funding.
- Reducing time to follow-up was critical, systems in place initially delayed follow-up by a week or so and we pushed hard to reduce that as much as possible.
- There is still a ‘COVID fog’ that has reduced in person engagement at health fairs as well as general concern for cancer – people have a lot of other stressful concerns in life (housing, economy, mental health, substance misuse etc.)





# TAKE AWAYS

- 365 Health partnership represents a cost-effective, labor conscious, innovative partnership allowing COE to engage with communities around the state on colorectal cancer screening for those experiencing high cancer disparities. It also allowed us to connect with portions of the population with the least amount of healthcare access and screening rates.
- Text messaging is a time-saving follow-up method that proved successful but phone calls are still important!
- Be prepared for lower return rates compared to programs where tests are paid for by participants.
- Developing a comprehensive follow-up system is critical!**





# IN THE END, ITS ALL ABOUT ENGAGEMENT

COE was able to engage with communities across the state – an invaluable and critical part of our aims.



# THANK YOU!

## QUESTIONS?

### *Works Cited*

- 1) *State Cancer Profiles: Colorado*. State Cancer Profiles > Quick Profiles. (n.d.). <https://statecancerprofiles.cancer.gov/quick-profiles/index.php?statename=colorado>
- 2) *What is colorectal cancer?*. Colorectal Cancer Alliance. (n.d.). <https://www.ccalliance.org/colorectal-cancer-information/what-is-colorectal-cancer>
- 3) Cheng SY, Chen CF, He HC, Chang LC, Hsu WF, Wu MS, Chiu HM. Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on fecal immunochemical test screening uptake and compliance to diagnostic colonoscopy. *J Gastroenterol Hepatol*. 2021 Jun;36(6):1614-1619. doi: 10.1111/jgh.15325. Epub 2020 Dec 2. PMID: 33217055; PMCID: PMC7753615.
- 4) Issaka RB, Akinsoto NO, Strait E, Chaudhari V, Flum DR, Inadomi JM. Effectiveness of a mailed fecal immunochemical test outreach: a Medicare Advantage pilot study. *Therap Adv Gastroenterol*. 2020 Sep 9;13:1756284820945388. doi: 10.1177/1756284820945388. PMID: 32952612; PMCID: PMC7485154.

