



Partnering for Public Health

EDNCPHA Conference at Kill Devil Hills

The 63rd annual EDNCPHA conference was held the last week of April 2023 in Kill Devil Hills, NC. Several MTW staff spoke on various panels and MTW's Andrea Freeman was installed as EDNCPHA President for the 23-24 year. Julie Tunney also featured on an ARPA panel.

MTW Photos from MTW
Facebook page



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NENCPH Board Corner - Love Letter to NC Public Health

Submitted by Amy Belflower Thomas

To All My Dear NC Public Healthers,

To those who know me, you know that I am not the touch-feely or overly emotional type. So, you probably won't be surprised to learn that I have never written a love letter. I think now is the time. This is my pitiful, yet heartfelt attempt at a love letter to public health in NC.



As many of you know, May 10 will be my last day with the NC Institute for Public Health in directing our Community Assessment and Strategy team and administering the NC accreditation program. I am moving on to help direct research and evaluation efforts at the Public Health Accreditation Board- work that is more national in nature, yet still directly tied to local public health system infrastructure improvement.

This is certainly a transition in my career, the second in the past decade that I couldn't have predicted. Just like I never thought I could leave local public health in 2015 to come to UNC-CH, I never thought before this year that I would move on from NC-based public health. However, I think I was right with my move in 2015 and have worked hard to serve NC public health partners in being the best they can be- not in direct contribution, but in a capacity-building way. Now, I believe more than ever in the need for systems-level change in public health and the current 5-year (hopefully more!?) focus on public health infrastructure transformation in the U.S. is right where I want to be and where I think I can best contribute at this point in my career.

That being said, I am NOT a talking head. And though I may have spent the last 7+ years in academia, I am not an academic philosopher nor a true researcher. What I am is a public health champion shaped by *you*. I am taking my years of working in state and local public health, as well as my past years in consulting with you all and learning so much, into my new work. National-level leaders and decision-makers NEED to hear from public healthers on the ground. They NEED to hear from health departments that provide safety-net clinical services, those that serve populations of 5000 people yet do so amazingly with little resources, those who are restricted by county government from accepting funding with the word "equity" tied to it, those who receive \$0 in local contributions, and the list goes on. They need to hear that you are tired of being assessed without getting data or resources back and be pushed to take action to change this. They need to quit pushing out new "dashboards of the week" without knowing what your true needs are and exactly how you need the information to create impact in your work and community.

I know these things because of what I have learned from NC public healthers over the past 17 years. I have passion to create infrastructure and systems-level change because I see the tremendous work you do every day and know you deserve to work in a system that actually supports your success. There is no group of people I respect and will miss interacting with on a daily basis more than you. What you do is vitally important to your communities. Though you do not hear or feel it nearly enough, know that I appreciate and value you for all that you do- both as a colleague, but also as a citizen of this great state. I hope to carry your voice forward in my future work and can't thank you enough for all you have given me in sharing of knowledge and perspective over the years.

Stacie Saunders asked me recently if I would really miss ALL of you guys. Point understood, but yes, I will miss you all because even criticism and controversy has helped shaped my understanding of the diversity of the public health system. I will just miss some of you more than others, I imagine!

All the best,

Amy

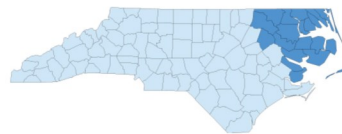
Amy Belflower Thomas
NC Institute for Public Health

Farewell to Amy Bellflower Thomas, NENCPPH Board Member

The Northeastern North Carolina Partnership for Public Health (NENCPPH) says farewell to Amy Bellflower Thomas, NENCPPH Board member for five years. Amy's enthusiasm, care, and contributions to the Partnership will be missed. Amy served as a Board member from 2018 to present, on the Finance Committee from September 2021 to present, and as Secretary/Treasurer from January 2023 to present. All the best, Amy, from your friends in NENC Public Health.

Megan Vick, Health Director for Northampton County, will take over as Board Secretary/Treasurer for the Partnership this month, May 2023.

The NENCPPH started in 1999, and continues to meet regularly to lead and support regional community health improvement through collaboration and collective impact. The NENCPPH comprises eighteen counties in northeastern North Carolina, including: Beaufort, Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Edgecombe, Gates, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, Martin, Northampton, Pamlico, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell, and Washington Counties. The Board of Directors includes the Health Directors of the Health Departments covering these counties plus representatives from the Division of Public Health in the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, the NC Institute of Public Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the Department of Public Health in the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University. To learn more about the Northeastern North Carolina Partnership for Public Health you can visit the website here: <https://nencpph.net>.

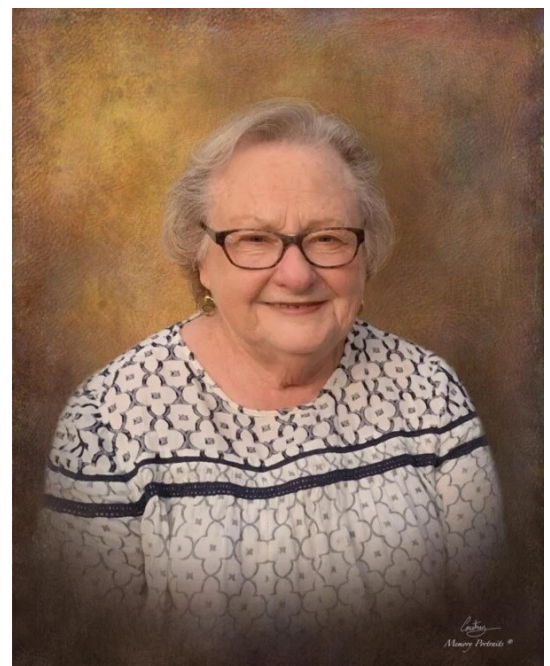


NENCPPH

Northeastern North Carolina Partnership for Public Health

Condolences

It is with great sadness and a heavy heart that Northampton County Health Department shares the news that Mrs. Rosemary Royce, Health Department Nurse Practitioner, has passed. Mrs. Royce began her employment with the Health Department in August of 1994, retired in August of 2011 and came back to contract with NCHD in September of 2011. This Fall would have marked her 29th year serving Northampton County citizens as the Family Nurse Practitioner for Northampton County Health Department. Please keep her family, friends, and coworkers in your thoughts and prayers during this very difficult time.



ARHS Participates in Career Days With Chowan County Schools

Submitted by Wanda Stallings, Albemarle Regional Health Services

Albemarle Regional Health Services (ARHS) received some funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to develop strategies throughout the region to increase workforce development in the public health field. ARHS partnered with Chowan County Schools to offer an Introduction to Public Health Careers through a hands-on career fair. We introduced students to health prevention activities, environmental health exploration, as well as how public health is integrated with all facets of the community. We feel like this event gave students an opportunity to explore Public Health and public health careers, to enhance their knowledge, and encourage them to consider a career in public health.

We participated in a Career Day at Chowan Middle School to promote public health careers. Staff working in infectious Disease, Health Education, Triple P, Tobacco Free Living, Social Work and Environmental Health were represented. We were able to talk with the students about what we do on a day-to-day basis, educational requirements, our route to public health careers and the many options that public health has to offer.



Above: ARHS at Chowan Middle School

Below: ARHS at JAH High School



ARHS also hosted a Careers in Public Health Day at John A. Homes High School in April. Eight sessions were led with students in the classroom and we were available at lunch to capture more students with our message. The students were very engaged and it got many of our staff into a new role of sharing with a group as opposed to their usual one-on-one sessions. Many of the students, as well as staff, were surprised at the services we had to offer and the fact that multiple county health departments fall under the name of Albemarle Regional Health Services. The event was viewed as a success by all and we were pleased to work with Chowan County Schools.

ARHS Participates in Career Days at JAH High School



More ARHS Events...



Week of the Young Child

Week of the Young Child Event to celebrate young children, sponsored by Albemarle Alliance for Families and Children (AACF), was held in April. AACF invited families and ALL childcare facilities in our 5 counties (Bertie, Camden, Currituck, Gates and Pasquotank).

Community partners provided an interactive activity for the children to participate in.



There were fun things for the kids to do such as face painting, visiting community vehicles and meeting the staff, a DJ was present, car seat checks and lunch was provided. It was on the windy side but the weather was great and lots of great items and educational information was shared with families. Albemarle Regional Health Services had participants from WIC, Safe Kids, Triple P and Healthy Beginnings on the scene.

Get Fit!

A free exercise and walking program designed for adults 18 and over to increase physical activity levels and lead healthier lifestyles. At the kickoff and wrap-up sessions, health screening are offered, healthy living information is available, a Zumba class is enjoyed and participants are given a healthy lunch. Classes such as Zumba, strength training, bowling, Pilates, line dancing, yoga, pickle ball and kickboxing are offered in three of our counties region. A favorite this fall and spring has been pickle ball! You should try it if you have not had the chance, it is like a large scale ping pong game. Three Rivers Healthy Carolinians has purchased rackets and balls so people in the county can use on the inside or outside court at the Northern Chowan Community Center. Find one in your area and see what you think!



Halifax County Happenings

Submitted by Laura Ellis, Halifax County Health Department

Halifax County Health Department Celebrates Wear Blue Day

The Halifax County Health Department participated in **Wear Blue Day** showing support for child abuse prevention. The health department planted pinwheels outside of the health department. The pinwheel is reflective of the bright future all children deserve and our belief that we all have a stake in nurturing positive childhoods. We ALL play a role in strengthening families and building the foundation for our future, because prevention happens in partnership.



Halifax County Health Department Celebrates Public Health Week



Halifax County Health Department celebrated Public Health Week the first week of April. Employees enjoyed a variety of events throughout the week including a Public Health Week Scavenger Hunt, puzzles, parfaits and more. The theme this year, Centering and Celebrating Cultures in Health, was promoted on social media outlets throughout the week. Our amazing Public Health team was celebrated and appreciated for their dedication, hard work and commitment to the work of Public Health with a lunch and gift bag. Thank you to all the employees at Halifax County Health Department for their commitment to Public Health and the citizens of Halifax County.

Halifax County Blood Drive

Halifax County Government sponsored a blood drive held on Tuesday, April 11, 2023. The Halifax County Blood Drive team registered 62 donors and collected 46 pints of blood, recruiting 10 first-time donors and 8 productive procedures (16 products) Power Red. Red Blood cells are the most commonly transfused blood component, and therefore the most needed. Since they carry oxygen

throughout the body, they are essential to hospital patients. Give a Power Red donation and you can help more patients. Thank you, Halifax County employees, for giving your BEST! We had a wonderful turn out for our County drive!



Peer Power Continues to Make a Positive Difference

By Michelle Wagner, Public Health Educator, Dare County Department of Health and Human Services



For more than two decades, Dare County high school students who are enrolled in the Peer Power Program have been learning about healthy lifestyle choices – and they use that knowledge to empower younger peers to make the right decisions when it comes to healthy living.

Developed in 2002 as an approach to chronic disease prevention, Peer Power is led by public health education specialists with the Dare County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Offered at First Flight and Manteo high schools as well as Cape Hatteras Secondary School, it includes a semester-long class which students take for credit that focuses on nutrition, mental health, physical activity, the harmful effects of tobacco/vaping and alcohol, and teaching styles. Once students are informed on the topics and trained as peer educators, they create fun and engaging lesson plans and activities that they then present to middle and elementary school students.

“Not only are students learning to make their own lesson plans, but they are also learning critical life skills,” said Hunter Williams, a DHHS public health education specialist and Peer Power instructor. “They are building their public speaking skills while also learning how to create and maintain relationships with those around them.” In addition, Williams added, the high school students are learning to be leaders in their communities by learning to make healthier choices and by influencing those around them to do the same.

The Peer Power Program, provided through a partnership with Dare County Schools, was developed at the Management Academy for Public Health. The program has been successful in receiving grant funding in the past, however it is now funded solely by local government monies, according to DHHS Health Education & Outreach Supervisor Kelly Nettnin Fleming.

“Peer Power has far exceeded the anticipated outcomes and proven to be a catalyst for improved health behaviors throughout the community,” Fleming said. The students are good role models who are committed to living a healthy lifestyle, and they are trained and eager to influence younger students’ health behaviors in a positive way.

Fleming noted the positive behavioral added that there have been benefits of the program in the community to local government

Peer Power students achieving positive through their efforts. campaign to encourage smoke free before that change in 2010.



Above: First Flight High School Peer Power students created holiday pinwheels with First Flight Elementary fourth grade students as part of a December lesson.

program’s success in promoting change in local youth, but been a number of unintended consequences as well. These include reduced public awareness campaigns and making presentations to officials.

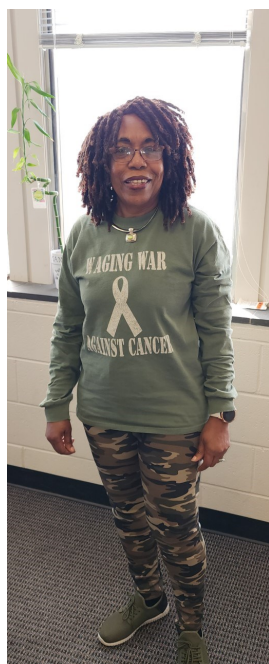
have been successful at change in the community. One of those successes was a ban on age restricted restaurants and bars to North Carolina’s law enforced

Other initiatives Peer Power students have been a part of include: the merchant education partnership with Alcohol Law Enforcement; drug drop off events; After-Prom parties; healthy vending machine options at Parks & Recreation; education about electronic nicotine delivery systems and e-cigarettes; and summer camp programs.

Edgecombe Celebrates Public Health Week

Submitted by Lantanis Hinton, Edgecombe County Health Department

The Edgecombe County Health Department celebrated Public Health week 2023 April 3rd-7th with the theme being "Centering and Celebrating Cultures in Health." Our staff had an amazing time celebrating each day in addition to having a DAILY walk & talk when staff met down in the lobby at 10:00am and 3:00pm (if available) to walk together around the block for 15 minutes while sharing cultural/family traditions. Here's how our week went:



Community Monday: If you have participated in a community event (Relay for Life, Run the Tar Race, Heart/Stroke Walk, etc.) wear the t-shirt for that event with jeans! *Photo Challenge: Take a picture enjoying the community in which you live.



Violence Prevention Tuesday: In recognition of Child Abuse Awareness Month, wear as much blue as possible with jeans. *Photo Challenge: Take a selfie or group selfie in your blue.



Food & Nutrition Wednesday: Wacky Wednesday and potluck day! (12-1pm in the 1st floor conference room) All staff wear bizarre clothing (mismatched, inside out, crazy hat, etc). *Photo Challenge: take a selfie or group selfie in your bizarre attire.



Mental Health Thursday: Practice self-care by doing something that eases your mind, relaxes you, and gives you a sense of joy. *Photo challenge: Take a selfie while practicing self-care.

Regional Tobacco Free Living

By Teresa Beardsley, Regional Tobacco-Free Living Coordinator

Gates County Strengthened Tobacco-Free Policy

In collaboration with Gates Partnership for Health and Gates County Commissioners, Shayla Hayes, Health Educator with Albemarle Regional Health Services, and Teresa Beardsley, Region 9 Tobacco Prevention and Control Manager, worked to strengthen Gates County Tobacco-Free policies. The 2021 Community Health Assessment data for Gates County indicated the top 3 leading causes of death as: heart disease, cancer, and cerebral vascular disease. Unfortunately, tobacco use has a direct correlation with all three of these diseases. Additionally, the Community Preventive Services Taskforce recommends smoke-free policies to:

- Reduce exposure to secondhand smoke;
- Reduce the prevalence of tobacco use;
- Increase the number of tobacco users who quit;
- Reduce the initiation of tobacco use among young people;
- Reduce tobacco-related morbidity and mortality, including acute cardiovascular events; and
- Reduce healthcare costs substantially.

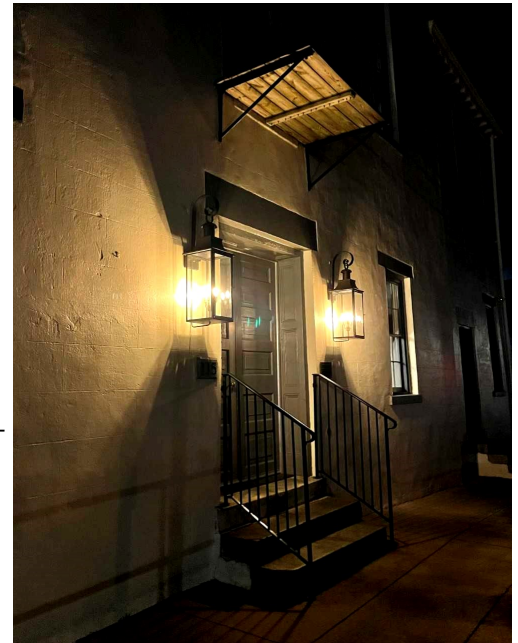
After fourteen months of work, Gates county commissioners voted unanimously to adopt a tobacco free policy for government buildings, grounds, vehicles, parks and recreation areas on February 15, 2023. Currently we are working with Gates County on education, QuitlineNC information, signage, doormats, and window decals.

Gates, Currituck, and Northampton Counties have the strongest tobacco-free policies in Region 9. We look forward to promoting comprehensive tobacco free policies throughout the rest of our region to increase health outcomes of all community members. For assistance on tobacco-free work within your county, contact Teresa Beardsley at Teresa.Beardsley@arhs-nc.org.

Tobacco-Free Living Partners with the Community

Over the last several months, Teresa Beardsley has worked with ARHS to spread awareness within the communities and schools regarding the importance of tobacco-free living and cessation.

Wanda Stallings, Health Educator with Albemarle Regional Health Services, and Teresa Beardsley, Region 9 Tobacco Prevention and Control Manager, met with students at Bertie Early College High School regarding vaping, tobacco use, tobacco-free policies and the importance of positive healthy choices. Students received education along with a “Falcon Pride Put Tobacco Aside” t-shirt.



Tobacco Free Living

The team collaborated with Bertie High School at a Health Resource Fair where parents, students, and staff received education and resources regarding tobacco-free living and positive life choices. Mallynda Whittington, Health Educator with Albemarle Regional Health Services, along with Tina Brown, Healthy Beginnings Coordinator, also attended.

ECU Health invited the team to collaborate at a Health Resource Fair held at the College of the Albemarle in Elizabeth City. This resource fair was specifically for staff members of the college. Again, tobacco cessation resources were shared with staff members that use tobacco along with parent and teacher vaping resources to utilize with students and at home.



Beaufort Holds “CarniFULL Day of Fun”

Submitted by JaNell Octigan, Beaufort County Health Director

On April 21st Beaufort County Health Department held our first “CarniFULL day of Fun” event for Beaufort County Schools 9th graders. We had about 200 9th graders from Southside, Northside, and Washington High Schools. We had over 20 vendors attend who focused on teen health, future planning, life skills, and community. It was a great and enjoyable event for all!





Pamlico County Health Department Happenings

Submitted by Melanie Campen, Pamlico County Health Director



Emergency Preparedness and Environmental Health Staff at a Hurricane Preparedness Event handing out information and supplies.



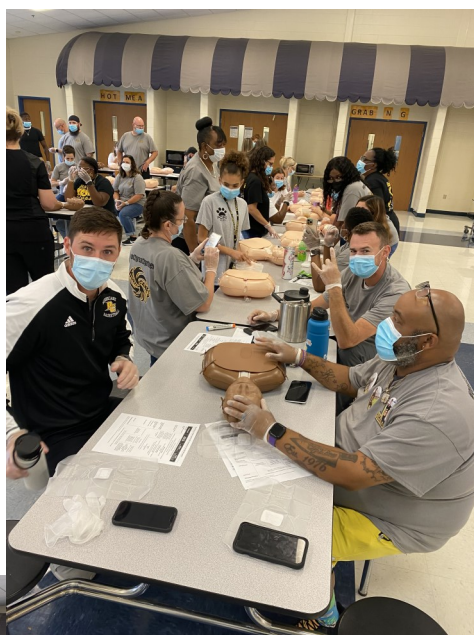
Pamlico Christian Academy delivering treats to PCHD and HOPE Clinic Staff.



Below: Pamlico County 150th Celebration - Pamlico County Heritage Center-PCHD information booth



At Right: Career Day at Pamlico County High School, April 19, 2023

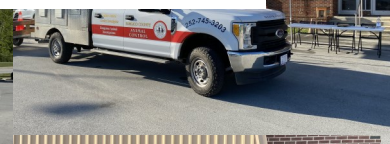


American Red Cross Adult and Pediatric CPR/First Aid/AED training for Pamlico County Schools (coaches, staff, first responders, school nurses). August 26, 2022.

Also, provided training to Pamlico County Senior Services' staff (fall) - no pictures.



More from Pamlico County



PCHD Staff performing Epidemiology preparedness activity (Bloodborne Pathogens, Handwashing, PPE). Collaboration with Communicable Disease and Preparedness.

Thanks to Libby Nelligan, NENCPPH Regional Intern

Submitted by Kellen Long, Region 9 Public Health Workforce Development

NENCPPH would like to thank our regional intern, Libby Nelligan, for her work this spring semester on the NENC Connect substance use information campaign (<https://www.nencconnect.org/>). Libby will be graduating in May with a Masters in Public Health from the University of Florida. During Libby's time with the partnership she has made recommendations, as well as implemented improvements with the help of our webpage designer, to make the NENC Connect substance use webpage and materials more user friendly and resourceful. As a part of Libby's research, she was also able to participate in several substance use coalitions in the partnership region, as well participate in the regional substance misuse idea exchange to understand the current issues, initiatives, and needs in the region. Libby also developed some infographics which can be used by the local health departments. We wish you the best in your future in Public Health!



Scan or Call for Local Substance Use Help or Information



Connecting People to Prevention, Support, Treatment & Recovery Services

1-866-437-1821

Free, Confidential, 24/7

www.nencconnect.org



Click the QR Code at left or go to www.nencconnect.org for local substance use information and services.

Halifax County Wellness Program, NC Cooperative Extension and Halifax County Health Department have partnered together to encourage, educate, empower employees and community members to get outside and learn about gardening and enjoying the harvest, participating in cooking demonstrations, garden classes, fellowship and community involvement and enjoying healthy food options locally grown.

GARDEN PARTNERS

Halifax County
PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM
— Caring Hearts, Helping Hands —

Halifax County, NC

HALIFAX COUNTY WORKING ON WELLNESS PROGRAM "W.O.W."

NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

NC A&T STATE UNIVERSITY NC STATE UNIVERSITY

HALIFAX COUNTY GARDEN

ABOUT US
To encourage, educate, empower community members to get outside and learn about gardening while meeting new friends and enjoying the harvest.

SCAN TO REGISTER OR CONTACT A GARDEN PARTNER

THOSE WHO SIGN UP TO PARTICIPATE WILL RECEIVE

- ✓ Healthy Food Options
- ✓ Cooking Demonstrations
- ✓ Garden Classes
- ✓ Physical and Mental Health Benefits
- ✓ Fellowship and Community Involvement

Sign up to help in the Halifax County garden. Volunteers will reap the benefits of their hard work and receive fresh produce throughout the summer months.

W.O.W. members are encouraged to sign up to volunteer.
Contact Denise 585-5021 ext. 6290
wellnessehalifaxnc.com

Banana Nut Med Muffins

Next time you have overripe bananas lying around, don't throw them out – make these delicious and healthy muffins instead! These muffins utilize ripe bananas for natural sweetness and nuts for heart-healthy fats. Great for a breakfast on the go or a mid-afternoon sweet treat, these muffins provide you with sustaining energy any time of day.

Serves 12

Serving Size: 1 muffin

Prep Time: 10 minutes; bake time 20-25 minutes



Ingredients

- 2 overripe bananas
- 1 ½ cup chopped apples
- 1 cup chopped nuts (walnuts, pecans, or almonds) and/or dried fruit like raisins.
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup old fashioned oats (not quick cooking)
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon (you can use Chinese 5 spice for a different flavor)
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400° degrees.
2. Line 12 muffin tins with an even layer of rice. Then line with muffin papers and spray with non-stick cooking spray.
3. Mash bananas with a fork in a medium bowl.
4. Add apples, nuts, and eggs to the bananas; mix well.
5. In another bowl, mix dry ingredients.
6. Add the dry ingredients to the banana mixture and mix until just combined.
7. Spoon the muffin mixture into muffin cups.
8. Bake for 20-25 minutes until the internal temperature of the muffin is 165° degrees.
9. Remove the muffins from the muffin tin and place on a wire rack for cooling.

Once cool, store in the refrigerator for 4-7 days or individually wrap and freeze for up to 3 months.

Nutrition Information per Serving

Serving Size: 1 muffin (made with walnuts)

- Calories: 130 calories
- Carbohydrates: 13 grams
- Fiber: 2 grams
- Protein: 4 grams
- Fat: 8 grams
- Sodium: 294 mg

Lifhack: to prevent the muffin tin paper liners from becoming too damp or soggy pour a small amount of regular (not instant) rice into the muffin tin before placing the paper liners. You'll want the rice to evenly coat the bottom of the muffin tin. The rice acts like a sponge, soaking up excess moisture during the cooking process. Take muffins out of the tin after baking and allow them to cool on a wire rack. Toss the rice after baking.

<https://esmmweighless.com/banana-nut-med-muffins/>

Northeastern NC Partnership for Public Health



Bertie · Beaufort · Camden · Chowan · Currituck · Dare · Edgecombe
Gates · Halifax · Hertford · Hyde · Martin · Northampton · Pamlico
Pasquotank · Perquimans · Tyrrell · Washington

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"Healthy Communities Through Leadership and Collaboration"

www.nencpph.net



www.facebook.com/nencpph

Calendar of Events

May 24	Regional EPI Teams Training
May 25	Leadership Call
June 8	NENCPPH Regional HR Directors Idea Exchange
June 9	PICH Tobacco-Free Living and Healthy Foods Coalition Meetings
June 19	NENCPPH Finance Committee Conference Call
June 23	NENCPPH Board Meeting
June 27	NENCPPH Regional Harm Reduction/Health Education Idea Exchange
July 27	NENCPPH Leadership Call
Aug 24	NENCPPH Leadership Call
Sept 12	NENCPPH Regional Finance/Billing Idea Exchange
Sept 22	NENCPPH Annual Board Meeting
Nov 1 and 3	PH Champions Conferences

For full calendar view: <https://www.nencpph.net/calendar>

Board of Directors

Luana Gibbs, NENCPPH Chair
Director, Hyde County Health Department

Michelle Etheridge, NENCPPH Vice Chair
Director, Edgecombe County Health Department

Amy Belflower Thomas, NENCPPH Secretary-Treasurer
NCIPH at Gillings Global School of Public Health, UNC at Chapel Hill

Melanie Campen,
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Janell Octigan
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Bruce Robistow, NENCPPH Board
Director, Halifax County Public Health System

Stacie Saunders
Division of Public Health, NC Dept of Health and Human Services

Ashley Stoop
Director, Albemarle Regional Health Department

Megan Vick,
Director, Northampton County Health Department

What is the Northeastern North Carolina Partnership for Public Health?

The Northeastern North Carolina Partnership for Public Health (NENCPPH) is a partnership of health departments in Northeastern NC which have come together with support from the Division of Public Health, East Carolina University, and the NC Institute of Public Health at UNC Chapel Hill, to collectively address the community's health by sharing best practices and resources. Currently the NENCPPH represents nine health departments and eighteen counties.