



From the Founder's Desk

March 2022

Phyllis L. Rodgers, *Founder & CEO*

Warm Greetings!

Now's the time to think of spring cleaning, gardening, sorting out, and letting go while making room for more in the days to come. Our communal wish is that the blustery wind and rainy days are behind us, and we are awakened to the morning sun, birds chirping and the bright promise of Spring. **Peer Plus** is hopeful that we will soon be hosting *in person* events that address and promote health, and emotional, personal, and social well-being. Until that happens, we encourage you to stay vigilant, healthy and safe. We have all made those promises of doing better with our self-care—resting more, taking up a new hobby, learning a new skill, and all the things you just *knew* there would be time to get to. Please don't beat yourself up if you haven't gotten started.

There never seems to be enough time in a day to complete projects and make things happen. Encourage yourself to *take that time!* Be that courageous person you know you are, to take a chance and do something different. Step out, even just a little bit, on your faith and

your conviction. Your belief in you, and see how that works. It didn't work out? Not the best experience? You fell? Whine for a couple of minutes, then get up. Dust yourself off. And either try it again or do something else. We've all heard this: **Nothing** beats a failure like trying. Keep doing, keep growing, keep *living*. The heart and soul of **Peer Plus** is providing **Support, Services and Resources to all communities in need**, but we must remember to take care of ourselves, first. Try to do that, daily. If not you for you, then who?

Until next time, Be Well.

What You Should Know About **BA.2**



Contributed by **Nanette Snowden**, Retired Epidemiologist and Peer Plus Board Member

As SARS-CoV-2 gets better at spreading and evading some of the immune protection that people have built, through infections or vaccination, new variants inevitably arise.

That's been the case with Omicron (also known as BA.1), which has generated several sub-variants. The latest sub-variant, **BA.2**, has begun to surge in parts of Europe and the U.S. as countries loosen mask-wearing requirements and more people attend large public gatherings.

This latest version of Omicron can spread rapidly in communities. In early 2022, BA.2 started to be found in a larger proportion of new infections. Studies show that this new variant may be up to 30% more transmissible than the original Omicron—which means that without measures (i.e., mask-wearing, hand washing, social distancing, and getting vaccinated), individuals are susceptible to infection. The infections with Omicron BA.2 appear to be milder than the Delta COVID virus.

Save the Date!

April is **MINORITY HEALTH MONTH!**

Join us for an important zoom conversation:

**THURSDAY
APRIL 28**

NATIONAL MINORITY HEALTH MONTH
Give Your Community A Boost! | April 2022

In honor of National Minority Health Month
PEER PLUS EDUCATION AND TRAINING ADVOCATES
invite you to a straight talk ZOOM conversation:

HEALTH DISPARITIES
DIABETES - HYPERTENSION - CANCER - NUTRITION

Please join us! **Thursday, April 28, 2022**
[TIME TO BE CONFIRMED]

Event access info will be emailed upon registration.
Questions? Call Peer Plus at (312)914-1186.

AstraZeneca | Northwestern Medicine | arcc | janssen | Johnson & Johnson | Senior Talk Media | PEER PLUS "Care with Care" | www.peerpluscares.org

Event registration will be available soon at **peerpluscares.org**

Words of Encouragement

"Thank You for opening the door to Addus Homecare for me and my husband to get the help that was much needed. I was just about at my wit's ends. Now, I have a homemaker in training with Addus to help me.
— D. Watson [March 2022]

"This is a message to you to express the immense gratitude I have for your support after the death of my husband. I am beyond grateful for all the care that you have shown me throughout this time of grief. Thank you for your sympathy during this difficult time. Although it is challenging, I find comfort in the fact that my friends and family are thinking of me. I sincerely appreciate your support and encouraged by your kind note of condolence." — H. Colar [February 2022]

Recent Activities

PAIRINGS WITH A PRO



Phyllis Rodgers
Stage 3 CRC Remission



Jeff Sluman
1988 PGA Championship Winner
6x PGA TOUR Champions Winner

 **cologuard**
classic

Phyllis Rodgers was thrilled to participate on behalf of the Blue Hat Foundation in Chicago at the 2022 Cologuard Classic (Feb. 25-27). PGA Tour Champions Professional **Jeff Sluman** played in her honor, wearing a ribbon with her name during the competition, which was broadcasted worldwide on the Golf Channel!

Click [HERE](#) for his special message!

“What You Should Know About Clinical Research”

Thursday, February 24, 2022 / 9 - 10 a.m. (CST)



Phyllis L. Rodgers
Peer Plus ETA



Rea Blakey
OCE Project Community



Ramona Burress
PharmD / Janssen R&D



Candace Henley
Blue Hat Foundation, Inc.



Dr. Tonya S. Roberson
Governors State University

If you missed this [Peer Plus](#) zoom talk on the importance of diversity in clinical trials and research, click [HERE](#) to hear the event replay. We are extremely grateful for the support of our event sponsors:

ARCC (Alliance for Research in Chicagoland Communities)
The Blue Hat Foundation, Inc.
Governors State University
Senior Talk Media
U.S. FDA Oncology Center of Excellence / Project Community

Janssen R&D (*Lead Sponsor*)

www.researchincludessme.com

Who must be included in clinical research?
Everyone.

To learn more visit
researchincludessme.com

The Andrew Holmes Foundation along with [Peer Plus](#) and Dr. Vesna Markovic partnered for a Gun Safety event on Feb. 26th at The Black Fire Brigade in Chicago. The group

gave out free gun locks, meals and educated participants on gun safety. "Guns don't discriminate when they are fired to do bodily harm. There have been too many times that our children have been in harm due to gun violence. The Andrew Holmes Foundation is taking steps to secure our children's futures," stated Mr. Holmes.

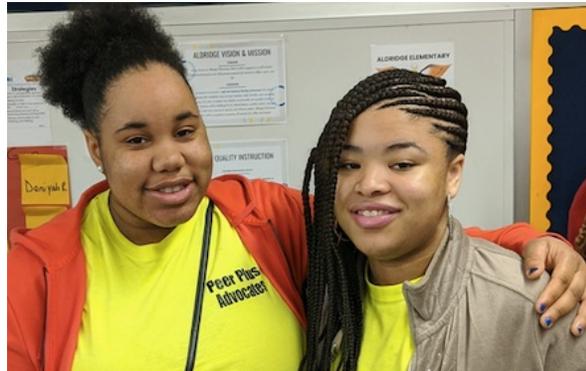


Thank You, Volunteers!



Tara Blue, a Peer Plus volunteer and now a community standards coordinator living in Arizona, has taken ownership of holding various pop-up events for teens every afternoon during Spring break. She will continue them on select weekday afternoons. *Bravo!*

National Volunteer Month in April celebrates the impact volunteers have on our lives and encourages active volunteerism in generations to come. Most often unpaid, they donate a part of their lives to do the work that nobody else likes to do — setting up for COVID-19 Testing, cleaning up after the events, delivering food to seniors and driving clients to appointments, or helping in other ways to show support.



This month, we salute Peer Plus volunteers for their unwavering services to our mission of service to people in need. And congratulations to two of our junior volunteers as they prepare for prom and go off to college this fall. *(Photo, L to R): LaVonta Cobbs-Brown (Southern Illinois University) and Trinity T. Rodgers (Lindenwood University) .*

Thank you for your service!

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