Over the past 18 years, Dr. Linda Larkey has collaborated with others in a number of studies, at multiple universities, focusing on improving the energy levels of breast-cancer surviving women. Dr. Larkey has led more than a dozen research grants focused on health promotion in underserved populations, especially the Latino community. In a study that was recently funded by the National Cancer Institute at NIH, Dr. Larkey has re-engaged past staff, including Julie Gonzalez, Program Manager, and Nancy Howe, Project Coordinator. Gonzalez has managed over 50 different staff across 5 different long-term studies in cancer prevention and survivorship over the past 19 years with the Larkey Lab. Howe has more recently rejoined this work. She is a 20-year cancer survivor herself who believes that through movement and education women can improve their overall well-being.

Please describe the program and the need for this project.

Dr. Linda Larkey: This project, titled Recovery and Rejuvenation, aims to explore ways to help breast cancer survivors find their way back to a healthier and more energetic self through rejuvenating movement classes. Eligible participants would have gone through their primary treatment six-months to 10 years ago. The woman’s original diagnosis includes those Staged 0 to 3, excluding Stage 4 diagnosis, and to participate they must be between the ages of 45-75.

Julie Gonzalez: Fatigue is the most common side effect that survivors experience, regardless of the type of cancer. Our project hopes to help reduce some of the fatigue and other symptoms they experience. The study can also provide recovery motivation through a support group and education.

Nancy Howe: In any cancer diagnosis, the primary focus is on the treatment and care of the patient. Even when treatment and care end, side effects can persist for months or even years. Resources that help a patient cope with the lingering aftermath are often hard to find. Many people are unaware that simply getting off the couch can be the most effective response to help manage fatigue. Our study's rejuvenating movement activities can help participants get up and get going.

How is the project conducted?

J: Women are recruited through hospitals, networking, marketing, social media, and other community organizations and businesses. We use three different interventions in the study. Two are more activity-based (incorporating various gentle movements that can be easily practiced by those who are fatigued), and one is an educational support group—all are focused on ways to approach fatigue.

Dr. L: The women will participate in a variety of health assessments and activities over the course of the study, eight weeks total, to include pre- and post-health testing, and free hour-long sessions taught by our study instructors.

Where are the project sessions held?

Dr. L: It is important to be culturally sensitive and aware when working with any community. Projects “survive” better when implemented and conducted within their neighborhoods, communities, and are familiar or easily accessible and in comfortable locations. Additionally, providing multiple locations for study participants helps them want to participate as it’s much easier and gives them the opportunity to meet other participants in their area.
The new Spanish-language cohorts will be held in Maryvale, a small neighborhood in the west area of the Phoenix valley, starting in late September. Also starting later in September are sessions in the East Valley on the ASU Polytechnics campus, in Central Phoenix at Cancer Support Community, and in the West Valley on the ASU Thunderbird campus.

Part of the Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention's (CHPDP) mission is to work with community partners. What community partners and organizations are involved with this project?

Dr. L: Community partnerships are imperative to our research. Each partner plays an important role in the project and we would not be able to do what we do as researchers in the CHPDP without them and our community participants. From avenues for recruitment and expertise to donating locations for classes, this project alone partners with many healthcare providers actively recruiting for us and multiple organizations hosting one (or more) of our cohorts: Banner MD Anderson, Honor Health, Maricopa Integrated Health System, University of Arizona Cancer Center at Dignity Health, American Cancer Society, Cancer Support Community, and Maryvale Community Service Center. It is definitely a multi-group effort to improve and change the lives of our community members in need.

How does your project fit with the CHPDP Mission and benefit all partners on the project?

Dr. L: Our Recovery and Rejuvenation project is led by a multifaceted team of researchers from ASU's College of Nursing and Health Innovation and the School of Nutrition and Health Promotion. The project also includes ASU student workers on all levels, from undergraduates to PhD students. This training, in a high-level sense, allows students hands-on experience in recruitment, data gathering and management, lab time, and even the possibility of postdoctoral funding through federal grants.

J: The Recovery and Rejuvenation project has assembled an exceptional team with a range of expertise to design and carry out this study to examine an innovative approach to addressing fatigue and the symptoms often associated with fatigue. We have solid community and hospital relationships and expertise in multicultural community populations.

N: Our recruitment efforts and our partnerships are rooted in the very specific needs of Phoenix communities. Our skilled instructors teach free classes and help breast cancer survivors across the Valley gain skills that can boost their recovery and potentially lower the risk of relapse. Our project reflects the shared needs of cancer survivors and the healthcare community in order to find the most effective approach for addressing cancer-related fatigue, and identify the most successful way to deliver such care.

Read more about THE Recovery and Rejuvenation project [here](#).

Visit [Dr. Linda Larkey's research site](#) to learn more about her research and current projects.