UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE
PARTNERSHIP FOR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

2018 Annual Report
Letter from Director

Changing conditions where people live, learn, work, pray, and play – to give everyone the opportunity to be healthy

“Achieving greater equity in health outcomes will require collaboration and collective action across sectors and new forms of community engagement and partnership.”

– NATIONAL ACADEMIES OF SCIENCES, ENGINEERING AND MEDICINE

DEAR PARTNERS,

As we reflect on the inaugural year of the Partnership for Health Communities (PHC), we are humbled and transformed by our experiences working with you to improve the health and well-being of Delaware residents. We’ve seen so many signs of engagement – including community partners inviting us to work alongside residents, students and faculty sharing their research and scholarship, youth advancing the concept of a teen warehouse in an urban environment, and children in Wilmington and Dover asking us to “come and play.” These experiences and relationships cultivate our collective ability to heal, thrive and create the healthy communities that everyone deserves.

This annual report will give you insights into our work to date and also set the stage for our ongoing engagement. There is increasing recognition that the environments in which people live, work, learn, pray and play have a tremendous impact on their health. Re-shaping people’s economic, physical, social and service environments can help ensure opportunities for optimal health and support healthy behaviors.

Promoting equity is a key strategy for the Partnership for Healthy Communities, and that effort is enhanced through the collective engagement and effort of multiple sectors, including those impacted firsthand by inequities. As we advance healthy equity on the ground, our scholarship investigates the policies and practices that create and continue these inequities as well as those that ameliorate them.

This fall, the Partnership for Healthy Communities will launch our Policy Academy for faculty, students, staff, state and local government leaders and representatives, advocates, community partners and residents. Our goal is to engage in policy discussions that lead to refinement, adoption and implementation. The Policy Academy has several aims: increase our collective understanding of key issues that impact the health of communities; give voice and clarity to why certain communities are most impacted by health inequities; facilitate authentic partnerships; and advance informed decision-making related to the complex nature of health inquiries and the policies that impact them. As we enter our second year, we are excited to collaborate on policy efforts.

Thank you for your partnership – we are honored to work with you and be a part of such meaningful engagement. In Health and Wellness,

RITA LANDGRAF
Director,
Partnership for Healthy Communities
“Thank you for all your support and time dedicated to Play Streets. Truly appreciate our UD family!”
– RYSHEEMA DIXON, Wilmington Playstreets Coordinator

WORKING IN AUTHENTIC PARTNERSHIP

The Open Streets Initiative has been very successful in bringing together a number of entities to work on the same goals.
– CHANDRA JACKSON, Community Engagement Specialist, NCALL Research, Inc./Restoring Central Dover

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The University of Delaware has a long tradition of applying knowledge and creativity to the critical challenges facing communities — in Delaware and around the world. In 2015, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching designated UD as a community engaged university, acknowledging UD’s deep commitment to addressing social issues and contributing to the public good. To sustain and strengthen UD’s contributions, the Community Engagement Initiative was created, followed by a university-wide Civic Action Plan with strategic objectives and action steps. The Partnership for Healthy Communities (PHC) is a critical component of that plan to expand UD’s role in cultivating active citizens through real partnerships that impact civic needs.

**Spotlight:**
PHC conducted a campus-wide survey in Fall 2017 (n=392) that focused on assessing health-related community partnerships.

**Findings:**
There is much work to build upon: 73 respondents reported they were currently engaged in 91 health-related partnerships. Some partnerships were active for 25+ years.
- **Top Focus Areas of Partnerships:** Inequities, Health care Transformation, Population Health, Health Policy

There is momentum for future opportunities: Of those not currently engaged, 53 reported interest in pursuing health-related partnerships.
- **Top Interest Areas:** Children & Youth Development, Health Literacy/Coaching, Racism/Discrimination/Bias, Health care Transformation

“I liked the inclusion of all people from inside and outside the UD community.”
- UD STUDENT
Our Vision: Heal thy Thriving Communities for All

Health is affected by more than what happens in the doctor’s office. Critical factors include the community where we live, work, attend school, play and pray. Residents in communities that lack the resources needed for good health often shoulder a disproportionate share of threats or risks to their health. On the other side, communities with affordable, high-quality housing, well-paying jobs, good schools and welcoming community spaces translate into positive health outcomes for their residents.

Our Mission:
The mission of the UD Partnership for Healthy Communities is to align and strengthen University of Delaware research, educational and service capabilities to improve the health and well-being of Delaware communities and beyond through effective community partnerships.

Our Role:
PHC’s role is to facilitate and enhance connections in both directions between UD and the community to advance ‘upstream’ thinking for building healthy communities and addressing the social determinants of health. We prioritize partnerships working toward collective impact. We focus especially on building partnerships to support communities currently experiencing social inequities.

We seek to:
- Connect community-based organizations and state agencies with existing University resources and faculty to advance shared interests in health promotion.
- Build the University’s capacity for translational research—including interdisciplinary and multi-sector research and evaluation—that focuses on the development of healthy communities and populations.
- Engage the University and broader community in health-related teaching and service that promote improved health outcomes at the population level and reduced health inequities.
- Inform state and national health policy discussions through research, program evaluation and dissemination that focus on social determinants of health and health system improvements.

What is a Healthy Community?

A healthy community goes beyond quality medical care and is reflected in the social and environmental factors that promote well-being. It is a place where all are free from discrimination and oppression and there is equitable access to the resources needed for optimal health.
PHC is engaged in over 40 strategic initiatives to support local and national partnerships. This ranges from alignment via board and committee memberships to engagement in campus-community partnerships to impact social and environmental factors that promote well-being.

- **Open Streets**
  - Kent County ranks as the least healthy county in Delaware, with higher rates of obesity, less physical activity among residents, and fewer parks or safer paths. To overcome these challenges, the Dover/Smyrna Healthy Neighborhoods, with implementation led by NCALL/Rebuilding Central Dover and funding from Delaware’s State Innovation Model (SIM) federal grant, began conducting monthly “Open Streets” in spring 2018. Select streets close to vehicle traffic and are turned into temporary recreation spaces with activity hubs. Early data from a UD research team of faculty and students coordinated by PHC to provide evaluation support show the following:
    - 71% of participants surveyed strongly or somewhat agree that they intend to be physically active in the next 7 days as a result of Open Streets.
    - 55% of those surveyed say they learned about places to use recreational facilities.
    - 71% of participants surveyed strongly or somewhat agree that they learned about places to use recreational facilities.
    - 96% of respondents said that their participation in Open Streets will very much or somewhat increase their use of recreational facilities.

- **Play Streets**
  - In the summer of 2017, following outrage of numerous shootings including that of a 6-year-old boy who marked the ninth child to be struck by gunfire in the city that year the Chronic Disease and Healthy Living Task Force of the Wilmington/Claymont Healthy Neighborhoods recognized that creating safe and nurturing collective spaces is paramount to healthy living. As a result, the Wilmington Play Streets initiative was launched in Summer 2018, thanks to funding by Christiana Care Health System and leadership from Wilmington Parks and Recreation. Play Streets temporarily closes a neighborhood block to traffic and provides play equipment to create safe, fun, and healthy spaces for children, families and neighbors to connect. Play Streets was held each Monday through Thursday, rotating across eight neighborhoods for 26 total events, drawing 64 people on average. PHC coordinated an interdisciplinary team of UD students and faculty to collect data and gather information to tell the story of Play Streets, while working closely with UD Cooperative Extension who helped plan logistics and activity hubs with over 20 community partners.

- **Strengthening Partnerships in Health and Education: Delaware and the Nation**
  - In October 2017, the University of Delaware launched the Partnership for Healthy Communities at the 10th Annual Vision Coalition Conference. Over 500 people attended the conference in Clayton Hall with a keynote provided by Joe Biden. 47th vice president of the United States. A UD alumnus and founding chair of UD’s Biden Institute. An afternoon seminar and workshop allowed members of the education and health fields to share ideas and offer solutions to the critical challenges facing Delaware communities. The day concluded with a planning forum for the UD Partnership for Healthy Communities led by Tony Allen, provost and executive vice president for Delaware State University.

- **Westside Health Summer Fellows**
  - In summer 2018, PHC coordinated a College of Health Sciences donor-funded project at Westside Family Healthcare to support service learning for cross-college graduate and undergraduate students. The PHC, Westside Health Fellows planned, coordinated and implemented the Westside Family Healthcare’s third annual community event at their Northeast Wilmington location. This event brought the highest participation since the event’s inception: 679 attendees, 444 health screenings, 42 vendors, 126 Food Bank food boxes and over 400 backpacks.

- **National Public Health Week 2018**
  - In spring 2018, PHC led local efforts with the Delaware Public Health Association and 12 campus and community partners to plan and coordinate National Public Health Week (NPHW). The week celebrated the power of prevention, advocated for healthy and fair policies, shared strategies for successful partnerships and championed a strong public health system. Students, faculty, staff, and community partners hosted 16 events and 25 hours of programming. Campus and community partners had similar levels of engagement and the campaign increased awareness of NPHW. Participants reported that they were likely to use the information provided, with 100 percent of respondents asking for continued programming. This experience also increased community members’ likeliness to engage with UD again in the future. PHC plans to sustain and expand NPHW programming within UD, across Delaware communities and in partnership with other colleges and universities, including members of the Mid-Atlantic Campus Compact Council, the largest organization committed to civic engagement of higher education.
Advancing Research and Policy

PHC enhances research capacity and translation in areas of community health promotion, social determinants of health, health inequities, and health policy. The Partnership initiates these briefs and develops specific ones in response to local requests. PHC briefs aim to translate research into practice, provide resources and education for policymakers, practitioners, and others; provide a new approach and re-frame knowledge, creation, and maintenance of healthy communities and the social determinants of health; highlight the work of the University of Delaware and community partners around evidence-based approaches to addressing health and the social determinants of health; and promote the Partnership for Healthy Communities agenda, aligning with our mission and focus. All briefs undergo peer review internally and with external subject matter experts. Three policy briefs, white papers, and other publications are in development.

Expanding Educational Opportunities

PHC works to expand public health-related educational opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students through new and expanded instructional programs and enhanced experiential learning. A “Public Health in Practice” course was developed and offered spring semester 2018 with cross-college recruitment. A faculty workgroup has been established to develop interdisciplinary public health graduate offerings in the College of Health Sciences and College of Arts & Sciences. In the future, PHC plans to offer research grants, academic enrichment grants, faculty fellows, and undergrad and graduate student stipends.

Enhancing our Service Capacity

PHC aims to enhance the University’s capacity to partner with and support community-based organizations and state agencies that address health and well-being of residents living in the highest need communities in Delaware and beyond. This academic year, PHC has participated in over 40 strategic initiatives and helped support and foster new and expanded partnerships. With PHC’s support, the UD Center for Community Research and Service received a new state contract to lead the Delaware State Health Improvement Plan. Moving forward, we aim to have UD recognized as a model of excellence in community-engaged research and service around healthy communities.
Leadership & Support

PARTNERSHIP STAFF

Rita Landgraf  
Director, Partnership for Healthy Communities;  
Professor of Practice and Distinguished Health and Social Services Administrator in Residence,  
College of Health Sciences

Erin Knight  
Assoc. Director, Partnership for Healthy Communities;  
Assoc. Director, Center for Community Research & Service;  
Asst. Professor, School of Public Policy & Administration,  
College of Arts & Sciences

Noël Sincere Duckworth  
Program Coordinator, Partnership for Healthy Communities

STUDENT SUPPORT

Kalyn McDonough  
Graduate Research Asst.

Sarah Noonan Davis  
Graduate Research Asst.

Hira Rashid  
Summer Graduate Fellow

Alisia Drew  
Summer Graduate Fellow

Sophia Choudhry  
Summer Graduate Fellow

Penelope Velasco  
Summer Undergraduate Fellow

Morgan Debnam  
Undergraduate Fellow

STEERING COMMITTEE FY 2017-2018

The UD Partnership for Healthy Communities is guided by a Steering Committee with leadership and membership from both the community and the University, including all seven colleges.

INTERNAL CO-CHAIRS

Kathleen S. Matt  
Dean, College of Health Sciences

George Watson  
Dean, College of Arts & Sciences

EXTERNAL CO-CHAIR

Robert Laskowski  
Professor of Clinical Medicine, Thomas Jefferson University;  
President and CEO, Christiana Care Health System (retired)  
Principal Laskowski Advisors

MEMBERSHIP - University of Delaware

Estella Atekwana  
Dean, College of Earth, Ocean and Environment

Elizabeth Farley-Ripple  
Director, Partnership for Public Education, School of Education

Lt. Gov. Bethany Hall-Long  
Professor, School of Nursing

Carol Henderson  
UD Vice Provost for Diversity

Kristi Klick  
Deputy Dean, Professor of Materials Science and Engineering, College of Engineering

Sheryl Kline  
Deputy Dean, Professor of Hospitality Business Management, College of Business

Jerome Lewis  
Director, Institute for Public Administration, School of Public Policy and Administration

Barret Michalec  
Associate Dean, Interprofessional Education, Joint Appointment in College of Health Sciences and College of Arts and Science

Lynette Overby  
Deputy Director, Community Engagement Initiative;  
Director, Partnership for Arts and Culture; Professor of Theater

Steve Peusquet,  
Director, Center for Community Research & Service, School of Public Policy and Administration

Dan Rich  
Director, Community Engagement Initiative;  
Professor, School of Public Policy and Administration

Michelle Rodgers  
Assoc. Dean; UD Cooperative Extension, College of Agriculture & Natural Resources

Michael Vaughan  
Assoc. Dean for Academic Affairs, College of Engineering

Chrissey Visher  
Director, UD Center for Drug and Health Studies

Valerie Yancy  
Program Coordinator, Student Central

MEMBERSHIP - Community Partners

Bernice Edwards  
Executive Director, First State Community Action Agency

Cara Gomez  
Asst. Professor, Dept. of Public and Allied Health Sciences, Delaware State Univ.

Omar Khan  
President and CEO, Delaware Health Sciences Alliance

Joe Myer  
Exec. Dir., Nat’l Council on Ag Life and Labor Research Fund, Inc. (NCALL)

Brian Rahmer  
Vice President of Health and Housing, Enterprise Community Partners