

CPHE Newsletter, April, 2022

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR HEALTH EQUITY

When MEDICC's CPHE program first began in 2005, it offered Cuba as a magnet and a model of health equity and resilience. Over the past 17 years, CPHE has evolved into a network of 12 diverse and dynamic communities throughout the US – all hard-hit by COVID-19 and the political environment of the last 5 years. After almost 3 years, we hope to gather and reconnect at the CPHE National Network meeting in September, 2022 in Navajo Nation. The focus will be on environmental justice: how racism is embedded in the systems where communities of color and low-income communities have been disproportionately and negatively impacted by hazardous pollution and industrial practices. Communities most impacted by inferior housing, less access to healthy food, clean water, etc. need to be at the table when deciding how to correct these injustices. The CPHE meeting will bring the conversation back to the local level, and discuss strategies to move forward.

This issue of the newsletter highlights CPHE activities over the years, which will continue. Stay tuned!

CPHE PROGRAMS 2005-2022

- ◆ **Re-granting to CPHE communities for local projects they initiate**, (4-6 grants per year) (See examples of recent grants in the following pages).
- ◆ **Attendance at relevant conferences and workshops** (2-4 per year)
CPHE has initiated 50+ interactive experiences to help build the CPHE network in the US and provide visibility to CPHE, with presentations at APHA, Campus-Community Partnerships in Health, Policy Link, Social Medicine Consortium, Global2Local, Collective Impact Summit, Population Health Institute, Health Equity Institute, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and more. .
- ◆ **Cross site visits among CPHE participants** (1-4 visits per year) to learn from each other as they become their own agents of change
- ◆ **CPHE National Network Meeting:** (yearly when possible), with 30-60 CPHE members attending, to learn from each other, and develop solidarity in common struggles. Meetings are at different CPHE sites where attendees can see local initiatives.
- ◆ **Group experiences at sites of impact in US**, showcasing the history and challenges of specific US populations (ex: Legacy Museum in Alabama)
- ◆ **Exchanges in Cuba** (*temporarily on hold*). Between 2005-2019, CPHE offered week-long exchanges in Cuba for 250 community leaders and their academic partners from 12 US sites, to help inform and inspire health equity work back home.
- ◆ **Visits to US CPHE sites** by Cuban health and community leaders (*temporarily on hold*)
- ◆ **CPHE youth program**, offering capacity-building workshops and experiences for youth leaders in CPHE communities
- ◆ **Developing additional CPHE sites in the US**
- ◆ **CPHE Newsletter** (1-4/year), Zoom Meetings CPHE Updates, Facebook Group



In November, 2019, twenty young community leaders from Milwaukee, South Bronx, Albuquerque and Navajo Nation visited the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, AL, and participated in workshops to process the experience. (quote by Maya Angelou)

CPHE Community Leaders Form Their Own 501c3s

Terron Edwards: Fathers Making Progress, Inc., CPHE Milwaukee

Terron Edwards has been part of CPHE since traveling to Cuba in 2015. An active Milwaukee community leader, he worked for many years with Walnut Way and Running Rebels in the Lindsey Heights neighborhood of Milwaukee. In 2020, he formed his own 501c3 in 2020: *Fathers*



Terron Edwards (L) and a group of fathers making progress

Making Progress (FMP), whose mission is "to improve the community and generational cycles through strengthening fathers. Strong Fathers = strong families = strong communities. We are Real Dads doing our best at being our best!" The organization works for the next generation and breaking cycles of fatherlessness.

In 2020, MEDICC/CPHE awarded *FMP* a seed grant for its Boys 2 Leaders program, to engage the youth of the King Center with therapeutic activities, conversations and workshops to create a peer cohort of support, identify trauma, instill African centered culture and promote accountability and self-financial management.

Support for *FMP* was continued in 2021, for 18 intergenerational topic-based workshops between the facilitators of Fathers Making Progress and Juniors and Seniors primarily from Shalom High School. This school is geared to assist target youth that have struggled with the traditional high school setting. Topics include defining positive manhood, value systems, goal setting, community development, self-accountability, holistic wellness, finding a pathway to success, and healthy relationships.

Terron explains, "The poor social determinants in our neighborhoods have translated into the deep disparities we see today and demonstrate the urgent need for this focus. In our world effected by COVID-19, finding innovative ways to continue this work becomes increasingly important. "

"Our most malleable citizens, our youth, are subconsciously fed some very socially harmful values, individual over the greater good, ends justifying means, disconnection from the culture of their grandparents and ancestors before them."
- Terron Edwards

Linda Kemp: Bringing the Peace, Inc.

CPHE South Bronx

Linda Kemp has been a member of CPHE since 2013, and years before that had become an advocate from one of the high-risk neighborhoods in the Bronx NY. Linda has dedicated her work to educate, mobilized and feed her community. In 2019 she formed a 501c3. *Bringing The Peace, Inc*, devoted to education, social and professional development from the ground level. Programs include Sisters Supporting Sisters around breast cancer awareness for women of color and fostering understanding and peace through encounters between community members, police officers, and local politicians.

COVID has led *Bringing the Peace* to include many new outreach services to keep communities safe and healthy. Neighbors have been trained to help distribute food and PPE supplies; provide nutritional meals and fresh produce to Seniors and medically shut-in individuals.

Referring to a garden project outside Robert Fulton Terrace, Linda wrote, "COVID has been hard on many of us, especially our Seniors. Please take this opportunity to sit in the quietness, bring a book, bring some good thoughts and just rest yourself at our little Seniors garden Space."



Linda Kemp working to create a green space in the Robert Fulton Terrace housing project, South Bronx,

(Bringing the Peace continued)

Linda's passion for providing communities the ability to obtain food took her and a youth organizer, D-Mani M. to a unique training program last summer. CPHE supported these two South Bronx participants to spend four days in nature in upstate New York at **Soul Fire Farm**, moving the earth, planting and learning about the history and practices of indigenous African farming.

Soul Fire Farm is an Afro-Indigenous centered community farm committed to uprooting racism and seeding sovereignty in the food system. They raise and distribute life-giving food as a means to end food apartheid. "We bring diverse communities together on this healing land to share skills on sustainable agriculture, natural building, spiritual activism, health, and environmental justice. We are training the next generation of activist-farmers and strengthening the movements for food sovereignty and community self determination." www.soulfirefarm.org/



Navajo Nation CPHE Community 'Growing our Own'

CPHE provided a small grant to COPE, our partner organization in Navajo Nation, to help support their Red Mesa community, where Carmen George, Malysa Egge, Kerlissa Bitah and John Hosteen coordinated a number of projects. They sponsored several Navajo youth to attend a month long, virtual, Indigenous Youth Leadership training, sponsored by the national organization, Earth Guardians. They also were able to purchase 9 android tablets for use during the workshop, and available afterwards for youth, parents and teachers to use in the *DigDeep Water Project*. which educates children about the sanctity and scarcity of water. COPE was also able to purchase a video camera and accessories for the community to document community projects, especially the efforts to combat Covid.



As part of COPE's work during the pandemic, they provided PPE, trash pick-up supplies, art supplies and educational materials for families of the Tecnospos community. Families were encouraged to pick up

trash around their home during the Navajo Nation-wide lockdowns. A lot of families routinely experience food insecurity, but that increased dramatically during the pandemic, and snacks were important to provide. The PPE was crucial during this time when there were sanitizer shortages across the nation. Families were also encouraged to start their own home gardens so seeds and gardening supplies were also given to families. All these projects continue to support the team motto of 'Growing our Own'.



Walnut Way Conservation Corp

Growing Youth Leadership

Walnut Way Conservation Corporation has been our CPHE partner in Milwaukee since 2015. Founded by Sharon and Larry Adams, and nourished by the spirit and hard work of Joanne and Maanaan Sabir, Terron Edwards and others, Walnut Way has stayed connected to CPHE over the years. In 2020, CPHE awarded a grant to the Growing Youth Leadership program. Mr. Antonio Butts, current Executive Director of Walnut Way describes the success of this program.

“Eliminating the barriers to wellness, work and wealth requires connecting residents to resources and each other. Walnut Way’s Growing Youth Leadership Program in partnership with Milwaukee Public Schools delivered a productive growing season over the spring and summer of 2020-2021. Youth gained knowledge and skill on how to start and grow a small production garden and received personal finance coaching to improve their financial literacy and budget management.

The Growing Youth Leadership program is a 12-week, half-time, paid internship program for high school students focused on locally grown food production and distribution and overall community health. We employ teen interns who are interested in gardening, agriculture, arts, biology and other similar fields. Teens learn about and work in urban gardens, sell their harvest at local markets, and participate in learning labs that promote career preparation, health and wellness, and financial management skills.”



Seed Grants Awarded to Four CPHE Sites in 2022



John Hosteen, Navajo Nation CPHE, for production of a short film, a visual record of rural indigenous communities in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Francisco Ronquillo, Albuquerque CPHE, to develop a Community Health Specialist (CHS) model to leverage skills and expertise of health professionals who reside in New Mexico and who were professionally trained in other countries, but who do not currently have a role in the US Healthcare system.

Linda Kemp, South Bronx CPHE, to conduct 12 food justice workshops for youth and community members: *Soul Fire in the Bronx Food Justice*

Anna Dorman, Oakland CPHE, to pilot racial justice training at 3 sites in Oakland, one at each site where La Clinica de la Raza operates. *(below, La Clinica mural)*



CPHE AS PART OF TRANSFORMING THE NARRATIVE

In March, 2021, CPHE was invited to be part of a significant national project, *Transformative Narrative for Health Equity*. Heading up the project is Sheri Johnson who has been part of the Milwaukee CPHE team since 2015, and currently the Director of the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and Co-Director of the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps. The goal of the project is “to unmask and shift dominant narratives by building transformative narratives which will advance structural change for racial and spatial health equity.” This is difficult material to examine and process. Dominant narratives have been produced throughout history, framing policy around health, education, age, gender roles, body types, power, work, immigration, age, celebrating some and demonizing others.

Along with leaders from 20+ national health equity organizations, CPHE participants are Roberto Claudio and Jacelyn Bonilla, Bronx; Brianna Monge and Francisco Ronquillo, Albuquerque; Terron Edwards, Milwaukee; Danielle Burrell, New Orleans; John Hosteen, Navajo Nation; Diane Appelbaum and Claudia Benavidez, MEDICC. After a train-the-trainer model, they became facilitators for local cohorts, whom they then trained using the same materials.



Below are excerpts from CPHE cohort community reports:

-We are not honoring cultures because we listen to the dominant narrative: “We are all Americans. Forget where you came from, forget the past; you’re here now.” We have to recognize how this country was formed. It was not created by people peacefully eating pie and turkey.

- If a person of color is educated, they are seen as “How do you know so much?” or “You’ve come a long way.”

-“Until lions get historians, hunters will continue to be heroes.” Those who take control of the narrative make whoever they want their hero to deliver the “right” message.

-Fear is used so much in the dominant narrative. Capitalism IS the dominant narrative, and people equate more cooperative ideas with socialism or communism.

-Be critical and analytical of the stories being told and the truth they carry – Who is telling/writing the story and from what lens? Just because you won the war does not mean you get to write the story.

-At an early age, I lived in Africa and my parents always knew people that spoke 3 languages. I remember a man telling my parents, “I feel sooo sorry for you that you ooonly speak English, because you can only talk to each other. He said it like this the worst thing in the world. Now we are made feel ashamed if our first language is not English.

-Find ways to support traditional and



smaller community news outlets to write their own narratives.

-Re-frame narratives to value people. Less emphasis on competition, winning and losing. Work and strive for the common good.

-Be aware of the power of narratives when writing descriptive articles, grant proposals, promotional material and program planning for your organization. Re-frame your message to convey the values that you hold.

Eventually, the Narrative Project plans to “support the development and diffusion of shared, transformative narratives – initially in the fields of public health and healthcare – and then expanding to community development and community power-building.” You can read more in the blog of County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, written by Jonathan Heller, Marjory Givens and Sheri Johnson, “Building Narratives to advance health and racial equity.” <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/news-events/building-narratives-to-advance-health-and-racial-equity>

Drawings by Yolanda Liman, who created the images while listening to discussions in the train-the-trainer sessions.

<https://drawingchange.com/>

SHOUT-OUTS AND FELICIDADES

South Los Angeles CPHE



Karren Lane, formerly Vice President of Policy at the Community Coalition, South LA is the program director for the Leading Power for Change portfolio of The California Wellness Foundation, which seeks to amplify the voices, leadership, and power of people of color, and other people who have historically been excluded from full participation in civic society. Karren became part of CPHE in 2016, traveling to Cuba with members of the CPHE network. Afterward, she was then lead coordinator for the Community Coalition's Parks Prescription Program, an initiative supported by CPHE.

Joanne Kim, formerly COO of the Community Coalition in South LA, is the Senior Advisor for Councilmember Marqueeese Harris-Dawson, who represents South Los Angeles. Joanne oversees planning land use and economic development.



New Orleans CPHE



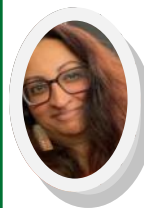
Jamillah Peters-Muhammad, (Mama Jamilah), the Health and Wellness Coordinator for Ashé Cultural Center, and coordinator of New Orleans CPHE, announced an Ashé activity that has been resumed: "*Sistahs Making a Change* is a multigenerational, multi disciplinary health and wellness class held twice a week. We meet in a circle of mutual support to wiggle our way to wellness and dance to our hearts content." <https://www.ashenola.org/sistahs-making-a-change>

Albuquerque CPHE

Enrique Cardiel is the Executive Director of the Health Equity Council in Albuquerque. He works to redistribute power to reach social and health equity. Enrique is running as an independent for district 19 in Albuquerque.

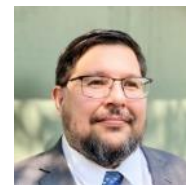


Anjali Taneja is the Executive Director of Casa de Salud. "I'm wildly honored to be recognized by the New Mexico Ethics in Business Awards for this year's "Individual Excellence in Ethical Business Practice" award. Anjali is recognized for a body of work ranging from the innovative radical healthcare work at Casa de Salud to statewide and local advocacy and policy work, to emergency room work in Navajo Nation, to national work connecting healthcare workers and healers."



Javier Martínez is the Executive Director of Partnership for Community Action, working to build healthy communities in Albuquerque. He is the New Mexico State Representative from District 11, and serves as the House Majority Floor Leader and as a member of the House Taxation and Revenue Committee and the House Commerce and Economic Development Committee.

Joaquin Baca was former Director of Health Equity for the New Mexico Department of Public Health. He is currently Director of MedEd Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion for the American Medical Association (AMA). He traveled to Cuba with the Albuquerque CPHE in 2011 and again in 2017 as part of a special delegation of National Health Equity leaders. Joaquin works to embed health equity across all the work of the AMA. He is co-author with Dr. Aletha Maybank of an article on *Race, Racism and the Policy of 21st Century Medicine*, published in the *Yale Journal of Biologic Medicine*, March, 2021, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33795992/>



Shout-Outs and Felicidades (cont)

Milwaukee CPHE

ROOTED MKE

Ashley Valentine has launched Rooted MKE, a BIPOC centered children's bookstore, tutoring hub and makers space." <https://www.rootedmke.com/> "Our goal is to create a Black, Indigenous, People of Color children's literacy destination that includes experiences that visitors value and services that help our customers be their best selves."



In addition to a wide selection of books for children and teens, Rooted MKE also provides classes, academic coaching and tutoring. Ashley is a former Milwaukee Public School teacher with a background in special education. She was recently interviewed in a CBS feature story: <https://www.cbs58.com/news/on-the-page-rooted-mke-puts-inclusion-front-and-center?> Rooted MKE was also featured in an article in Urban Milwaukee: <https://urbanmilwaukee.com/business/rooted-mke/>



SHERMAN PHOENIX

Joanne Johnson Sabir has been the facilitator and leader of the CPHE Milwaukee team which traveled to Cuba in 2015-2016, and the site coordinator for the 2016 Milwaukee CPHE Network meeting. Most recently, Joanne was featured in the April, 2022 issue of *Essence* Magazine to highlight Sherman Phoenix, a high-quality community space for 27+ small businesses of color, as well as a cultural center. Joanne, her husband Maanaan Sabir, and partner Juli Kaufmann launched Sherman Phoenix in 2018, restoring a former bank that was damaged by fire in 2016 during a protest over a fatal police shooting. From their website "Rising from the ashes and harnessing the spirit and assets of the neighborhood as a catalyst for unity, this is Sherman Phoenix." <https://www.shermanphoenix.com/vision.> Joanne has also been recognized as the *BizTimes* 2017 Community Leader of the Year and one of the *Milwaukee Business Journal's* Community Executives of the Year. She and Maanaan are co-owners of Shindig Coffee, previously known as The Juice Kitchen, (Those who attended the CPHE Network gathering in Milwaukee will remember the Juice Kitchen site visit!)



Navajo Nation CPHE

Echohawk Lefthand, MPH was the health promotion specialist for the Indian Health Service in Red Mesa, Arizona and traveled to Cuba with the Navajo Nation CPHE 2016. In 2017 he began work in Omaha, Nebraska as Director of Omaha Public Schools Native Indigenous Centered Education (NICE) program. There he coordinates Title VII Indian Education Grant programming, and initiates educational and cultural activities. The NICE program's purpose is to support Native students to meet state test standards, create opportunities for cultural enrichment, and provide support to district personnel with culturally and effective methods to support Native students.



Rex Lee Jim, is a poet, playwright, community leader and former Vice President of Navajo Nation. He authored a collection of poetry: *Saad Lá Tah Hózhóón, a collection of Dine poetry*. He is one of the founders of La Casa Roja, a non-profit organization to promote healthy, sustainable solutions to problems that indigenous youth face. La Casa Roja has its roots in Navajo country, its heritage, traditions, culture, values, songs, prayers, and stories. Recognizing that youth are the answer to the current problems that plague the world, La Casa Roja is invested in providing leadership opportunities for indigenous youth globally.



CPHE MEMBERS SAVE THE DATE!

Announcing the next National CPHE Network Meeting
in beautiful Navajo Nation
September 22-25, 2022
Farmington, New Mexico

FOCUS on Environmental Justice

STAY TUNED ...

SPECIAL ACTIVITY

The gathering will include site visits, hosted by members of Navajo Nation CPHE team.

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