

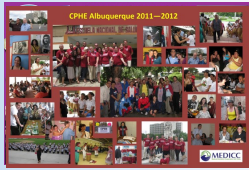
Community Partnerships for Health Equity



CPHE NEWSLETTER

Multiple sites from various states working together as one Network..

April 2023



ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO



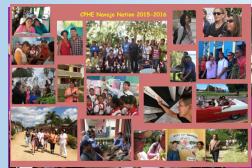
BRONX, NEW YORK



LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA



MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN



NAVAJO NATION, NEW MEXICO



NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA



OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA



CPHE will be taking a group to Puerto Rico!

Why Puerto Rico?

- Puerto Rican people have a lot of recent experience with environmental disaster and have had to be innovative survivors. With the CPHE focus on environmental justice, it offers a learning experience for CPHE members, as well as a solidarity experience for Puerto Rican communities and CPHE members alike.
- Given COVID isolation and the renewed energy of the Network Meeting, it is a good time to offer something to keep up the momentum and strengthening the CPHE Network.
- It will be an 'impactful experience' for CPHE members to experience together - in the same way as exchanges in Cuba and the visit to the Legacy museum.
- It has a unique history with mainland US – with a strong movement to be independent and not considered a colony.
- There might be an opportunity to do some post-hurricane service there.

This visit was carefully selected based on our CPHE's interest and community priorities regarding social justice, environmental issues and equity.

We truly value every single person that is part of our network. We appreciate and support your advocacy, work and engagement at the community level.

As you know, over the years, we have provided unique opportunities to visit Cuba, each other and special impact visits.

This is one of those Impact Visits where we will take a smaller group on this journey!

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Claremont Neighborhood Center Youth Selected To Participate In New York Yankees First Pitch Social Impact Campaign

by Abraham Jones | Bronx CPHE

Claremont Neighborhood Centers is excited that our youth has been selected to participate in First Pitch, which is the New York Yankees and NYC's Dept. of Youth & Community Development's Social Impact Art Competition. The initiative will offer project-based community engagement opportunities for Middle and High School aged participants from DYCD-funded Programs in the Bronx.

Claremont's youth team has been selected to present and pitch their social impact campaign at Yankee Stadium!

"The Pitch" will take place on April 19th, 2023 at Yankee Stadium in a private box overlooking the field. In addition, they will be able to watch the game (NY Yankees v. LA Angels).

- Young people will propose (pitch) innovative social impact campaigns to combat institutionalized and/or community-based violence.
- Throughout the course of the project, youth will receive expert guidance in developing and activating their campaigns.
- "Floating" mural reproductions will also be printed to tour across the City and tell the stories of the work done by young people.

The youth at Claremont, would like to create a solution around Mental Health and Youth Violence.

After the COVID 19 Health Crisis, we had found that many youth has suffered from different forms of mental health issues that resulted in violent decisions. Our young people have lost the ability to communicate their feelings without using violent methods to reach their desired outcome.

We will conduct interviews with youth in the community, partner with PS7 (NYPD), host a youth panel workshop to help young people develop conflict resolution skills, and communication skills. We will create subgroups for youth to participate such as Social Media TEAM, Research TEAM, AND our Advocacy Team. Each team will be responsible for researching, conducting interviews, speaking with experts and hosting our Community conversations from all three perspectives.

Our Partners

-NYPD: to discuss the data of youth arrested due to youth violence

-NIKE: we have a partnership with our Saturday Night Lights program to have community conversations, record and upload to our social media accounts

-Urban Youth Alliance: Will provide mental health counselors to support youth who are struggling with mental health issues, suspensions, arrest, court cases

-Harriet Tubman Charter School: Youth at HTCS will participate in the campaign. HTCS will also be a hosting site for our community conversation

-Bronx Care: Will meet with CNC Youth to discuss this mental health crisis and how we can partner to support the youth in the Bronx by providing mental health services at Claremont Neighborhood Center.



Claremont Neighborhood Center continued...

Youth will meet weekly to plan, discuss, and execute each stage. We will assign youth to different parts of our campaign to take the lead with supervising adults. Surveys will be sent out each week to seek improvement measurements.

We have a social media team that will document the planning process. Go live on our Social media for our community discussions which will be led by youth and Adults in the program. Participants will also put together public service announcements to present to community leaders, local politicians, and family. Our goal is to create a visual presentation of our social impact issue: Youth Violence and Mental Health. In the end we would like to publish everything and upload our project on all social media platforms and create digital murals and painted murals in our community center at Claremont Neighborhood Centers.

NY Botanical Garden recognizes 4 women difference-makers



Four Bronx women were honored: an environmentalist, an anti-gun violence advocate, a champion for those with special needs, and an industry trailblazer.

Maggie Greenfield was commemorated for her dedication to restoring the Bronx River, helping turn it from what she calls the butt of jokes to a natural location for people to enjoy. Tenant leaders Tanya Pedler was honored due to her work advocating for NYCHA

families with loved ones with special needs.

Lind Kemp, founder of Bringing The Peace, was celebrated for her work fighting to reduce gun violence on Bronx streets. Kemp was instrumental in helping pass legislation against ghost guns that was proposed by Rep. Ritchie Torres.

BronxWorks executive director Eileen Torres was honored for her work improving the economic and social well-being of her fellow community members. She says her mother was pivotal in paving the way for her to help out her neighbors. *By Adolfo Carrion and Carmen Grant*

The Birth of Sistahs | New Orleans CPHE

Sistahs Making A Change is an Ashé Cultural Arts Center program and multi-generational group of women wiggling their way to wellness and dance to their hearts' content. *Sistahs* is the brainchild of Mama Carol Bebel, co-founder of Ashé Cultural Arts Center, and Mama Jamilah Peters-Muhammad, registered nurse with experience in community health and New Orleans culture bearer. Mama Carol sought to host a community class for women to improve the overall wellness of the community. Together, they combined their collective hearts and passion and created [Sistahs](#). The program was developed to teach women how to live and pursue a better quality of life, increasing exposure to healthier wellness modalities, and empowering them to share these lessons with their families, friends, and communities.

Sistahs is not only a dance class, but is also health and wellness-centered; promoting self-care and self-love as a basic tenant to wellness. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, *Sistahs* adjusted by resuming classes virtually and carefully working back into in-person classes by

The Birth of Sistahs continued...

first meeting socially-distanced outdoors until finally being able to meet in-house again. Presently, Sistahs hosts wellness classes every Tuesday (6pm-8pm) and movement classes on Thursdays (6pm-8pm) at Ashé Cultural Arts Center. *Sistahs* is entering its 25th year of continually hosting community classes.

“We looked at what might be some of the barriers to attending class—such as time, meals, and childcare. In identifying what you need, we will do our best to provide it. At every class, we serve a heart-healthy, hot meal. Class starts at 6pm to catch those who are just getting off work, removing the time barrier. We welcome children and provide a secure environment for them so parents can immerse themselves in self-care,” says Mama Jamilah Peters-Muhammad. “Our youngest Sistah, Kymmee, has attended classes since pre-conception. This year, she turns nine and is now officially a co-host of our classes. She has been equipped to lead *Sistahs Making A Change* into the future, a role she loves and performs to perfection. She is also our [Sistah of the Month for April 2023!](#)”

Weekly wellness and movement

Sistahs welcomes both seasoned and emerging artists/ healers to teach a series and have the opportunity to fully incubate the principles of the program. New and developing instructors are able to develop their skills with the support of a loving and challenging audience of community members that want to help them succeed. *Sistahs* have found their passions while taking classes and are now circling back into classes as instructors. “We have a new team member at Ashé who on her first day said to me, “You may not remember me, but I remember you. I came to *Sistahs* for yoga classes here a long time ago and I loved it so much that I went on to become a certified Yoga instructor,” shares Mama Jamilah. “Another Sistah now teaches line dance at she started taking while at *Sistahs*. We have a bonafide, self-proclaimed foodie who went on to become certified in cooking techniques called “Ole Style,” based on old African and African-American techniques of healthy eating.”

Sistahs has hosted every wellness topic from acne to spiritual coaching, and every dance from African to Zumba, while continuing to broaden its wellness lens. It maintains a diverse offering of classes to keep attendees engaged and challenged. As recent recipients of a mini grant from MEDICC, *Sistahs* has been able to increase the stipend paid to instructors. The program has an impressive future ahead, planning a “Biggest Winner” challenge and offering cash incentives to the women to make and meet wellness goals.



Sistahs 25 years and beyond

“A few of us just returned from a Sistahs cruise to the western Caribbean and next, we are planning a three-day spa trip to Hot Springs. Our CPHE mini-grant allowed us to join the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation in hosting an international guest artist for a community lecture and dance class on Puerto Rican culture. Over 250 people were in attendance.”

Sistahs is more than just a group of women who come together twice a week; it is a strong support system for one another through health, sickness, life, and death. Mama Jamilah states, “Sistahs has an unshakable bond that is built upon relationships and wellness. We hope to continue to evolve into the next 25 years. We want to invite you when you come to New Orleans, join us and YES, Sistahs Making a Change s open and inclusive to EVERYONE.”

CRECE: A Truly Grassroots Organization | Oakland CPHE

CPHE would like to give recognition and a shout out to an organization which has been part of the Oakland CPHE since 2009. **CRECE**, the **Central American Refugee Committee of the East Bay**, is a non-profit organization in Oakland, founded by a refugee and survivor of the El Salvador civil war in the 1990s. From the CRECE website: “Our mission is to organize and educate the Latino immigrant community to improve its social, economic and cultural conditions. Responding to the 21st century needs of the larger Bay Area communities, CRECE serves the immigrants and refugees from any part of the world now living in the SF Bay Area.” <http://centralamericanrefugeecommittee.org/about-us>

CRECE’s programs include a weekly food distribution to families in the community; social service referrals around immigration and other issues; a youth soccer league, Christmas toy drive, and annual trips to El Salvador to distribute food, medicines, and other materials.

In 2010 Tulio Serrano, two CRECE members, Tulio Serrano and Elena Huevo, traveled to Cuba as part of the Oakland CPHE. Following that trip, other members of Oakland CPHE rallied to provide support to CRECE in various ways. CPHE members from the Alameda Public Health Dept, La Clinica de la Raza and Highland hospital worked together to provide workshops to youth on prevention, including a class in CPR. Oakland CPHE members purchased water bottles and soccer equipment for the young soccer players; Oakland CPHE members provided educational materials and blood pressure testing at soccer games.

Even in bad financial times, CRECE has held together and remained active over the years. Recently, Tulio Serrano said “Thank you, thank you to all the people that have helped as volunteers. Together we have given food to 807 people in one month. Thank you all for this opportunity to help people. God bless you all.”





County Health Rankings Roadmaps by Sheri Johnson | Milwaukee CPHE

The annual County Health Rankings were released on **Wednesday, March 29, 2023.**



The annual release engages communities in conversation about the many factors that impact health, points to solutions, and shines a spotlight on the important work happening in local communities to improve health—work that all of you are leading.

Here are some things you can do on the website:

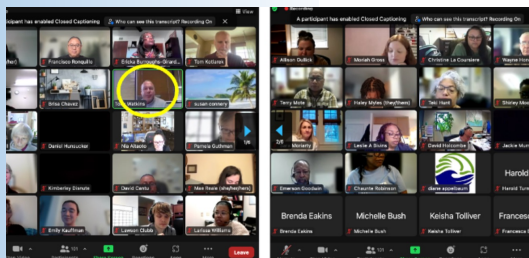
- Explore the newly designed county snapshot to learn more about your community’s health. www.countyhealthrankings.org
- Learn more about how your community’s health compares to similar counties in the U.S using the “Compare Counties” feature on your county’s snapshot.

New this year:

- Evidence-informed strategies offer great promise to expand civic power. We explore solutions to promote inclusion and invest in spaces where everyone can connect. Go to [What Works for Health](#) to learn more about evidence-informed strategies to cultivate civic health like voter registration initiatives and youth civics education.

You will recognize some familiar faces and places featured in the 2023 National Findings Report. This year’s report looks at cultivating civic infrastructure and participation for healthier communities, with a focus on the physical spaces like schools, parks and libraries that help us stay connected and the policies and practices that make civic participation possible.

County Health Rankings & Roadmaps Held A Webinar on Jan 17 - Racial Healing Webinar where Tony Watkins | CPHE Albuquerque



CHRR is sharing some exciting news! The Kellogg Foundation has featured County Health Rankings & Roadmaps 2023 National Day of Racial Healing webinar in a [story](#) in their Every Child Thrives newsletter.

Congratulations to our CPHE Mini-Grant Recipients:

- Los Pioneros – Albuquerque
- Fathers Making Progress – Milwaukee
- Innovative Leaders for Water Solutions – Milwaukee
- Sistahs Making a Difference – New Orleans



THE LEGACY OF KAREN BASS: From community organizer to Mayor of Los Angeles | by Diane Appelbaum | Oakland CPHE

On December 11, 2022, Karen Bass was sworn in as the first Black woman mayor of the city of Los Angeles. Previously, she served six terms as representative of Los Angeles district in Congress. In 2007, as a member of the California State Assembly, she campaigned for President Obama in 2009, and Obama endorsed Mayor Bass for L.A. mayor. From a recent article in *The New Yorker* magazine: *“When she was floated as a possible running mate for Joe Biden in 2020, her past resurfaced as a liability, including several trips she made to Cuba, starting at the age of nineteen, in the nineteen-seventies.”*

<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/the-new-yorker-interview/the-new-mayor-of-los-angeles>



MEDICC/CPHE considers Mayor Bass’s past not as a liability, but as hope for the future. We are honored to know her as a person with a deep commitment to social and racial justice, and as the founder of one of most impactful community organizations in the country - The Community Coalition (known as Coco) in South Los Angeles.

For 30 years, Coco has been training community leaders and galvanizing the power of communities to improve their daily lives and shape policy. From their website: *“Community Coalition centers the voices and leadership of people of color as we collectively work to upend systemic racism. Founded intentionally as a Black/Brown organization, Community Coalition understands the power that lies in bringing people together and serving as part of a larger movement. We know firsthand that it is the people closest to the issues who know what is best for their communities.”* <https://cocosouthla.org/>

The integrity, guiding principles and legacy of Karen Bass and the Community Coalition have inspired MEDICC throughout the years, and created two generations of leadership at CoCo. A number of Community Coalition staff participated in the first CPHE exchanges in Cuba in 2005-2007, and have gone on to leadership roles, both locally and nationally. **Alberto Retana**, son of Mexican and Costa Rican immigrants, joined Coco in 1998 as a youth organizer, and is now the President and CEO of Community Coalition. He traveled to Cuba with CPHE in 2005, and over the years has participated with CPHE in several national conference presentations. From 2009-2011 he worked for the Obama administration in the US Department of Education as Director of Community Outreach. Under his leadership as President, Coco grown into a mass-based community organization that involves thousands of South Los Angeles residents in the practice of creating change.

Joanne Kim, also part of CPHE, was the Chief Operating Officer of Community Coalition. She is currently the Senior Advisor to Los Angeles City Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson (District 8), managing all major capital projects in the District and setting strategic priorities for housing, transportation and business development.



Photo: City of Los Angeles

The Legacy of Karen Bass continued...

Mayor Bass’s strong roots in community organizing and social justice are already being felt in her new role. She recently announced leadership appointments of three deputy mayors, including **Karren Lane**, who had been the vice president of policy at Community Coalition, and also a part of CPHE. In 2016, Karren honored CPHE attendees at the 2016 CPHE National Network meeting with an insightful workshop, *Community Organizing Towards Policy Change*. In 2021, she became a program director at The California Wellness Foundation. In that role, she has managed the *Leading Power and Change* portfolio to advance racial justice and amplify the voices and power of communities of color.

Javier Martínez is the new Speaker of the House for New Mexico | Albuquerque CPHE



The New Mexico House of Representatives called to order its 56th Legislature and elected Rep. Javier Martínez (D-Albuquerque) as Speaker of the New Mexico House to preside over the chamber. -- excerpt from the Los Alamos Daily Post



Fathers Making Progress – Birth Summit and Father Legal Rights

by Terron Edwards | Milwaukee CPHE



Fathers Making Progress partnered with the Milwaukee Film Festival to host a fatherhood track during it's annual Black Birth Summit Saturday March 23rd

During the event... Real life discussion around how fathers can be supported to support their partners and lower disparities led the way. Planning for a cross sectorial action plan that will take place over the next year was discussed and implemented.

This past March Fathers Making Progress held it's second father's legal rights night. A community event focused on offering drivers license recovery, employment resources and child support assistance services to men in the community, a discussion with attorneys (both criminal and family) and family court judges that gave clarity on the legal system.





CPHE YOUTH LEADERS



CPHE COHORTS '14, '16, '17

Jones Island Tour with Innovative Leaders by Leena Le | Milwaukee CPHE



This past month was our official launch of the Innovative Leaders for Water Solutions high school youth program! We've been engaging Bradley Tech after school Green Team club on Mondays to increase knowledge on our local water system and raise awareness on opportunities in the water sector, connecting young leaders to this growing industry to protect our health. Week 3 of the program, we got to tour Jones Island Water Reclamation Facility to learn about wastewater and stormwater management, and students were very engaged and asked thoughtful questions. Thank you to Andi from Veolia Water MKE for an engaging tour! Though Community Water Services' focus is safe drinking water, our goal through this program is promote cross-collaboration with organizations focused on water

equity and public health (MMSD, Milwaukee Water Works, COLE) to help students understand the interconnectedness and public health importance of our water system. Can't wait to explore more with these naturally creative and innovative leaders!

Buu Nygren is the New Navajo Nation President

On January 10, the new Navajo Nation President Dr. Buu Nygren and Vice Present-elect Richelle Montoya swore their oaths of office. At 35 years old, he is the youngest Navajo Nation president. Montoya is also the first woman to be elected to the nation's executive office.

The Navajo Nation's population of 400,000 is second only to the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. It also has the largest land base by far of any tribe at 27,000 square miles (70,000 square kilometers) stretching into parts of New Mexico, Arizona and Utah, the Navajo Nation also owns property in D.C.

We thank and wish the best to our former Navajo Nation President and CPHE member Jonathan Nez who served Diné people under the Nez-Lizer Administration. "Our service was always grounded in faith and prayer, and respect for all faiths," Nez.



Navajo Nation President: Buu Nygren

Photo: Fox10 Phoenix

state line at the same time



All people have an inherent value and are worthy of dignity, respect, and love. Narrative Project 2021



Revitalizing MEDICC

C. William Keck MD MPH

Executive Director

The past six years, or so, have not been kind to MEDICC. Our major funding source, the Atlantic Philanthropies (AP), decided to sunset - spend down its resources and go out of business. Other funders continued their support, but the loss of AP's funds for general operating resulted in a much leaner organization. This loss was followed by the Trump administration's dramatically increased sanctions on Cuba that compromised some of our program activities and made potential funders hesitant to support us. Next, of course, came the COVID-19 pandemic forcing Cuba to suspend travel to the island, in turn obligating MEDICC to suspend its Gateways travel program. Fortunately, funding continued to support CPHE and our program to assist US citizens studying medicine in Cuba to reenter the US and pass medical board examinations.

The consequences of these events for MEDICC were substantial. As noted above, our inability to provide professional group travel to Cuba resulted in further loss of operating income, and our inability to secure financial support for our journal, *MEDICC Review*, forced us to discontinue the journal at the end of 2022. The size of our staff declined, and those remaining are all working part-time.

In the face of these challenges, during 2022 the MEDICC Board of Directors, looking ahead to the end of pandemic-related travel restrictions, identified some opportunities to revitalize the organization. The Board focused on two areas; a strategic redesign of the Gateways (professional travel) Program, and rebuilding the Board itself.

GATEWAYS STRATEGIC REDESIGN

The Board focused on MEDICC's mission to promote US-Cuba health collaboration and highlight Cuba's public health approaches to inform the quest for health equity and universal health worldwide, while taking into account our current operating environment. Informed by the outstanding success of the MEDICC vaccine expert delegation to Cuba in June 2022, the Board realized the potential to **use Gateways trips to promote targeted collaboration in research and health service delivery to improve health status in both the US and Cuba, as well as other countries.**

The decision was made to prioritize institution-organized Gateways trips with potential to yield specific collaborative projects in areas important to both our Cuban colleagues and the US institutions involved--such as cancer therapies, treatment of diabetes, maternal and child health, infectious disease prevention, role of primary care, pediatric vaccination, etc. MEDICC's role would be to seek out such institutions, organize their Gateways experience, and then provide the follow-up necessary to convert interest into actual joint projects and programs.

To the degree possible, we plan to continue travel for those groups of professionals, students and others interested in Cuba's approach to health service delivery, education and equity. **To that end, we encourage our CPHE partners to recommend organizations that might be interested in, and benefit from, exposure to Cuba...or to organize such travel for such a group yourselves.**



(Revitalizing MEDICC continued)

MEDICC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

By the end of 2022, six new members were added to the Board bringing total membership to 14. We are very excited to have these new members join us. We have a diverse and talented group that will be developing policy and providing guidance to the organization. **They include two individuals who have direct ties to some of our CPHE communities – Dr. Marsha Broussard from New Orleans and Arnold Perkins from Oakland.**

In short, I believe we are positioning MEDICC to stabilize itself and to grow in terms of size and relevance. CPHE is an essential program for us as it illustrates how principles applied in Cuba can inform needed change in the US, and I hope a strengthened and renewed Gateways Program will be an asset to CPHE as we move into 2023. For a complete list of the MEDICC Board of Directors, please click [here](#).



- The CHRR holds monthly national webinars and it would be great to have other CPHE community leaders as speakers and presenters. We will be highlighting environmental health, mental health, arts and health and violence prevention this year. Please let me know if you have interest in being a presenter. Sheri Johnson (Milwaukee CPHE) Spjohnson8@wisc.edu
- CHRR is excited to provide new data and resources to improve health! Our [2023 National Findings Report](#) highlights the connection between civic health and thriving people and places. Civic health reflects the opportunities people have to participate in their communities and is the cornerstone of our democracy, representing promise, opportunity, belonging and shared responsibility. We have also redesigned our website so data are now easier to find, use and understand. Search for your state or county to find your 2023 County Health Rankings data.” - excerpt from CHRR Newsletter
- CPHE is partnering with the Friends of Arches and Canyonlands to offer a great outdoor experience for youth this summer.
- Please mark your calendar for our next CPHE Zoom Gathering to be held on Saturday, July 1

Thanks to the generous support of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Christopher Reynolds Foundation for sustaining and keeping our network moving forward together!