

PROJECT TITLE: “Strengthening linkages between faith-based community and campus partners: Enhancing mental health resources in poor communities”

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COMMUNITY NETWORK:

[Christian Community Health Fellowship \(CCHF\)](#)

CAMPUS NETWORK:

[Christian Coalition of Colleges & Universities \(CCCU\)](#)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

In this project we attempted to identify, understand and encourage mental health-related collaborations between faith-based community healthcare organizations serving poor communities, and faith-based institutions of higher education with mental health related graduate programs. The project was comprised of three parts: (1) the development and administration of a national survey, (2) the creation of community-campus collaboration opportunity maps, and (3) the dissemination of results and information designed to encourage community-campus collaborations supporting mental healthcare in poor communities.

1. National Survey: We surveyed two national networks of these organizations via e-mail, fax and telephone. The first, [Christian Community Health Fellowship](#), is comprised of over 1200 Christian health professionals and students and more than 170 affiliated healthcare ministry organizations concerned about the healthcare needs of impoverished communities in the United States. CCHF encourages its members and others to live out the gospel through healthcare among the poor. CCHF fulfills its mission by providing support to individuals and organizations through conferences, publications and student programs. Through a Compassion Capital grant from the President’s Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives, CCHF is expanding their provision of technical assistance and sub-awards to new faith-based and community groups that are establishing comprehensive, community-oriented primary healthcare centers in needy communities.

The second national network, the [Council for Christian Colleges and Universities \(CCCU\)](#) is an association of academic institutions that intentionally work to promote biblical values and perspectives and to transform the lives of their students and those they come in contact with by relating scholarship and service to biblical truth. The CCCU currently consists of 105 members, representing 33 denominations

within the Christian tradition. 32 CCCU members were identified that offered at least one graduate program in a mental health related field.

Our survey of these networks was designed to: (1) identify existing mental health linkages between CCHF members/organizations and faith-based institutions of higher learning, (2) identify existing mental health collaborations between CCCU members/organizations in mental health related disciplines and faith-based community healthcare institutions serving poor communities, and (3) identify perceived advantages and disadvantages of community-campus collaborations for mental health. [Click here](#) to view the community healthcare version of the survey. [Click here](#) for the higher education version of the survey.

Results of the study show that while existing rates of overall community-campus collaborations are relatively high, little collaboration related to mental health is taking place within CCHF member institutions. Numerous benefits of community-campus collaborations were perceived by both groups of respondents. This finding is in contrast to considerably lower rates of perceived disadvantages reported by individuals in both settings. The top six advantages to collaboration were (1) strengthened professional and community relationships, (2) personal/professional stimulation and support, (3) enhanced mission, (4) increased scope of services or training, (5) increased quality of services or training and (6) cost effectiveness. [Click here](#) for complete results from the survey, or to see item-by-item results for [CCHF](#) or [CCCU](#) respondents only.

2. Collaboration Opportunity Mapping: Geographic locations of CCHF and CCCU institutions were input onto a United States national map using Microsoft MapPoint. Using this map as a reference, CCHF and CCCU members, and others, can locate their region on the map to find data on potential partners within their locality, increasing opportunities for community-campus collaborations. Click [here](#) to be connected to the CCHF website where this map may be found.

3. Disseminating Results & Encouraging Collaboration: Survey results were summarized and disseminated to participants who requested results. Targeted written pieces designed to encourage community-campus collaborations supporting mental healthcare in low-income communities were designed and disseminated to the two national networks. Click [here](#) for the community healthcare version and click [here](#) for the higher education version of this material.

Two presentations [Canning, S.S., Jenkins, E. & Bines, J.M. (April, 2003). *Faith-based community and campus partners as resources to enhance mental health care in poor communities*. Workshop conducted at the annual conference of CCPH in San Diego, CA; and Canning, S. S. & Serrano, N. (May, 2003). *Including mental health in your holistic healthcare ministry*. Workshop conducted at the annual conference of CCHF in Chicago, IL.], one poster [Canning, S.S., Jenkins, E., & Bines, J.M. (April, 2003). *Faith-based community-campus partnerships for mental health: Benefits, barriers & opportunities*. Poster presented at the annual conference of CCPH, San Diego, CA.] and two manuscripts have been produced with the support of this fellowship. The first manuscript, “Psychological resources in faith-based community settings: Applications, adaptations and innovations”(Canning, in press) will appear in the *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* in the special issue “Psychology Collaborating with the Church”. “Faith-based community and campus partners: Resources to enhance mental healthcare in poor communities “ is available in the CCPH magazine [Partnership Perspectives](#). The second article outlines a rationale for the role of faith-based community and campus organizations in providing mental healthcare in poor neighborhoods, and provides practical suggestions for successfully promoting health-related collaborations with a faith-based partner.