

**Call for Applications Due Monday October 3**  
**Achieving the Promise of Community-Engaged Health Disparities Research:**  
**A National Community Partner Forum ~ December 6-7 in Boston, MA**

As members of the planning committee for the National Community Partner Forum, we invite community partners involved in community-engaged research to apply to participate in the forum.

Community engagement in research is central to understanding and addressing racial, ethnic and socioeconomic disparities in health. Research funding agencies are supporting faculty members and institutions to engage communities as partners in conducting research. As more community organizations enter into research partnerships with institutions as well as initiate and conduct research, it is clear that we need our own networks for professional development, mentoring and advocacy in order to advance the social change through knowledge and power sharing that must happen if we are to achieve health equity in this country.

These critical questions will guide the forum:

- How do we ensure that communities most affected by health disparities have a voice at the tables that decide what research gets conducted, how and by whom?
- How do we support communities most affected by health disparities to conduct and manage their own research?
- How do we ensure that communities work as equal partners with universities and other institutions to make sure that community research interests are met?
- How do we ensure that social justice is central to community-engaged research?
- How do we form effective networks for furthering dialogue and action around community knowledge development and equitable community-academic partnerships?

The forum has three main goals:

- To share knowledge, provide mentorship and make recommendations around community review of proposed research, governance structures for research, community engagement in the research process, and funding the community infrastructure needed to conduct research.
- To disseminate knowledge shared and generated at the forum through accessible products that participants jointly co-author. These products might include, for example, a set of key questions that community groups should ask at the start of a research partnership, and a template memorandum of understanding for community-institutional research partnerships.
- To establish national and regional networks to facilitate shared learning, professional development and advocacy.

The forum will be held Dec 6-7 in Boston. Applications are due Oct 3 and applicants will be notified by Nov 1. In order to maximize opportunities for dialogue, active learning and subsequent action, the forum will be limited to about 100 participants. We are seeking experienced and novice community partners involved in research who are committed to social justice, willing to share their challenges and successes, and eager to both enhance their impact at a local level and contribute to a broader research and advocacy agenda. Individuals from community-based organizations are especially encouraged to apply. In making final selections, we will strive for diversity among participants in terms of their geographic location, race/ethnicity and research experience.

Registration for all invitees is free of charge, supported by a grant from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities. Northeastern University is providing meeting space for the forum. A block of rooms is being held at the Marriott Copley Place at the discounted rate of \$149 plus tax for a single or double room. Assistance will be provided to connect participants who would like to share a room.

We also invite our allies in academic institutions, government and philanthropy to join with us in supporting the forum by encouraging their community partners to apply and subsidizing their travel expenses to the extent possible. Individuals and organizations that provide travel support for forum participants will be recognized on the forum website and in the forum program.

Applications must be completed online at <http://bit.ly/p7818e>

See page 3 for the questions asked in the application. We encourage applicants to type out their responses to the open-ended questions and cut and paste them into the online form.

For additional information about the forum, please see the initial announcement that went out about it in July at <http://ccph.info> If you have any questions or would like to be added to the forum email list, please write us at [programs@ccph.info](mailto:programs@ccph.info)

Sincerely,

Willie Mae Bennett-Fripp, Executive Director, Committee for Boston Public Housing, Boston, MA

Grace Damio, Deputy Director, (NIH Export) Center for Eliminating Health Disparities Among Latinos, Hispanic Health Council, Hartford, CT

Elmer Freeman, Executive Director, Center for Community Health Education Research and Service, Boston, MA

Susan Gust, Community Activist, Minneapolis, MN

Loretta Jones, Founder & CEO, Healthy African American Families, Los Angeles, CA

Alma Knows His Gun McCormick, Executive Director, Messengers for Health, Hardin, MT

Ann-Gel Palermo, Chair, Harlem Community & Academic Partnership, New York, NY

Fernando Pineda-Reyes, Executive Director, Community, Research, Education & Awareness (CREA) Results, Denver, CO

Alex Pirie, Coordinator, Immigrant Service Providers Group/Health, c/o Somerville Community Corporation, Somerville, MA

Jean Schensul, Senior Scientist & Founding Director, Institute for Community Research, Hartford, CT

Peggy Shepard, Executive Director, WE-ACT for Environmental Justice, New York, NY

Eric Wat, Director, Research and Evaluation Unit, Special Service for Groups, Los Angeles, CA

*Funding for this conference is being made possible in part by 1R13MD006705-01 from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, awarded to Community-Campus Partnerships for Health and the Center for Community Health Education Research and Service. The views expressed in written conference materials or publications and by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services; nor does mention by trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.*

## **APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

Please note:

- Applications must be submitted online no later than Monday Oct 3 using this form: <http://bit.ly/p7818e>
- We encourage applicants to type out their responses to the open-ended questions and cut and paste them into the online form
- The form is not available on Wednesdays from 8-10 am eastern time when the website is undergoing routine maintenance
- For each open-ended question below, the maximum number of characters allowed in the answer is included in parentheses
- Please don't hesitate to contact us at [programs@ccph.info](mailto:programs@ccph.info) if you have any questions!

### **Applicant Contact Information**

Name, Title, Organization, Street Address, City, State, Zip, Phone, Email, Website (if applicable)

### **Brief Bio**

Please provide a 1-2 paragraph bio about yourself. The bio should include some information about your involvement in community-engaged research. Several examples are included on page 4. Please note that if you attend the forum, your bio will be shared with other participants. (2000)

### **Short Answer Questions**

1. Why do you want to participate in the forum? (1500)
2. Please describe your personal interest and involvement in research. (1500)
3. If you are representing an organization at the forum, please tell us about it and describe why and how it is involved in research. (1500)
4. Reflecting on your experiences with research, what have been your most significant successes and challenges? We are particularly interested in your successes and challenges with:
  - \*Community review of proposed research
  - \*Governance structures for research that balance power and resources among partners
  - \*Community engagement in the research process
  - \*Funding the community infrastructure needed to conduct research(2000)
5. What ideas or plans do you have for sharing what you learn at the forum with others? (1500)
6. Please use the space below for any questions, comments or concerns you may have about the forum. (1500)

### **Checklists with multiple options for applicants to choose from**

How long have you been involved in community-engaged research?

What roles have you had in community-engaged research?

In what settings does your research currently take place?

What groups of people are the current focus of your research?

Have you been involved in any of these research programs, now or in the past?

Are you currently a member of any of these groups?

How would you describe your primary organizational affiliation?

What is your organization's annual budget?

What demographic information applies to you?

**Below are examples of brief bios of several members of the forum planning committee.**

**Susan Ann Gust** is a community activist and small business owner of a thirty-four year old construction management, consulting and community development company. Her work in construction and economic/environmental justice led her to founding the ReUse Center in Minneapolis. She was a University of Minnesota Public Policy Fellow in 2003-2004. Susan was the co-founder of the Phillips Neighborhood Healthy Housing Collaborative and is a consultant to the Family Sustainability Collaborative, a Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation funded project that grew out of the original collaboration. She is teaching community-based participatory research training to junior faculty, graduate students and community partners as part of a University of Minnesota grant received from the National Cancer Institute to address the cancer burden in racial/ethnic minorities and other underserved communities. She recently completed 9 years of service on the Board of Community University Health Care Center and 6 years as an appointee on the City of Minneapolis Public Health Advisory Committee. She serves as Board Chair for Community-Campus Partnerships for Health and as a member of the Cultural Wellness Center's Law and Policy Committee. Additional civic responsibilities include participating in these local efforts: Healthy Homes, Healthy Kids; Phillips Environmental Steering Committee Initiative and Allina's Backyard Initiative. Susan also eagerly spends time in activities involving her school-aged daughter and her grandchildren.

**Ann-Gel S. Palermo** has worked in the area of community-based public health over ten years, with a principal focus on issues related to social determinants of health using a community-based participatory research approach. Since 1999, Ms. Palermo has served as the chair of the Harlem Community & Academic Partnership (HCAP), a diverse partnership of representatives from community and academic organizations committed to identifying social determinants of health and implementing community-based interventions in Harlem. HCAP evolved out of the CDC-funded Harlem Urban Research Center, a partnership developed to establish credibility in the Harlem community, demonstrate a true commitment to improving the health of its residents, and create a platform from which to address local health issues. When core funding ceased, Ms. Palermo led a major transition to reinvent the collaboration so that it could continue its important work as HCAP. Formerly housed in the Center for Urban Epidemiologic Studies at the New York Academy of Medicine, HCAP is currently in transition towards becoming an independent community-based research organization. Ms. Palermo also serves as a board member of the East Harlem Community Health Committee and is chair of the board of directors for the Manhattan-Staten Island Area Health Education Center. She is a fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine. In addition to her public health activities, Ms. Palermo is the Associate Director of Operations at the Center for Multicultural and Community Affairs at New York City's Mount Sinai School of Medicine. In this role, she is responsible for overseeing and managing programs in the areas of community engagement, medical education and training, and research to improve the health of all populations by diversifying the health care workforce and influencing health policy and research. Ms. Palermo earned a Master of Public Health degree (majoring in health policy) from the University of Michigan in 1999. She is currently a doctoral student in public health at the City University of New York Graduate Center.

**Eric Wat** is the director of the Research and Evaluation Unit at Special Service for Groups, or SSG, which directly operates about 20 different programs primarily in Los Angeles County. At SSG, he and his team seek to increase the capacity among SSG programs and community partners to conduct community-based action research and program evaluation. He also administers the community-based IRB at SSG, which was established in 2004 to give community partners more parity in the human subject and community protection review process. He has co-authored several peer-reviewed journal articles based on his involvement in community-based action research projects, most recently on Pacific Islanders and higher education as well as health needs assessment of the lesbian and gay South Asian community in Southern California. Eric received his M.A. from California State University, Fullerton in 1999 and has taught classes, including research methods, at UCLA, CSU Fullerton, CSU Northridge, and CSU Long Beach.