



The Health Disparities Service-Learning Collaborative (HDSLCL)
*An Initiative of Community-Campus Partnerships for Health Funded by the
Learn and Serve America Program of the Corporation for National and Community Service*

Executive Summaries of Grantee Programs

Arkansas Health Disparities Service Learning Initiative: The overall goal of this proposed initiative is to reduce racial and ethnic health disparities by engaging public health and other health professions students and faculty in tailored service learning partnerships with community-based organizations, state and local agencies, policymakers, and others. This goal will be achieved through five objectives and associated activities: 1) integrate service learning into the core MPH curriculum; 2) develop new service learning opportunities with community partners for MPH students doing preceptorships; 3) develop and implement a service learning health disparities course; 4) develop a proposal for a campus-wide health disparities certificate; and 5) participate in Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) Day of Service activities with community-based partners.

The program proposed will advance the mission and goals of the Health Disparities Service-Learning Collaborative by institutionalizing requirements and opportunities for community-based service learning focused on the elimination of racial and ethnic health disparities. Because of the long-term commitment made by the COPH to our community partners, and because of our partners' longevity and solid roots within the communities they serve, longitudinal plans for service learning activities can be developed together. Our vision is for students to have an opportunity to engage in ongoing program and research activities being carried out through our existing partnerships. Our approach is innovative in bringing community partners into the classroom to help in educating students. Their voice provides critical content for students in learning about the determinants of racial and ethnic health disparities; in helping them better understand the expertise grassroots communities bring to the table; and in teaching how to engage communities effectively.

We project that there will be a minimum of 8 faculty participating in the service learning planning or activities in Year 1; 8 faculty and a minimum of 3 students in the disparities course, and a minimum of 2 students (20%) doing service learning preceptorships with our community partners in Year 2; and 8 faculty and a minimum of 5 students in the disparities course, a minimum of 3 students

Border Health Service-Learning Institute, University of Arizona: The overall goal of this project is to engage our public health students in a longitudinal service learning experience that can make a major contribution to reducing the health disparities and at the same time equip them with public health competencies. The project will provide the opportunity for our faculty members to participate in this service learning experience and strengthen our participatory research partnerships with our community partners that are working to eliminate health disparities at the U.S.-Mexico border. Finally, this project will strengthen the capacity of both

our College and our partners to collaboratively implement effective service learning programs that aim to reduce health disparities.

Specifically, this project will create and sustain a Border Health Service Learning Institute that will engage public health students, faculty, and our community partners in comprehensive community-based collaboration to eliminate health disparities at the U.S.-Mexico border. Our partners in this endeavor are the Arizona Department of Health Services Border Health Office, the Southeast Arizona Area Health Education Center and the *Colegio de Sonora*. A total of 20 master level students will participate in each course in the summer year 02 and 03. Four faculty members will develop and implement the curriculum. Additional faculty members will participate in individual lectures as well our colleagues from our partnering organizations. The MLK activities will correlate with specific activities designed with our partners and will include students, faculty, and community partners. Upon completion of the three year project, we will sustain our work through continued collaboration with our partner organizations.(30%) doing service learning preceptorships with community partners, and a minimum of 5 MPH students (25%)doing service learning projects in their core courses in Year 3.

University of Hawaii, Department of Public Health Sciences: The Department of Public Health Sciences (DPHS) at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM) is embracing the opportunity to make institutional change through service-learning activities to reduce racial and ethnic health disparities. The goal of UHM's Department of Public Health Sciences parallels the mission of the Health Disparities Service-Learning Collaborative. The goal for Department of Public Health Sciences (DPHS) is:

To increase the active engagement of public health students, public health faculty, and community partners in sustained, longitudinal service-learning programs that address health disparities and to integrate these programs into the department's core curriculum.

Hawaii is situated in a very stirring locality when it comes to dealing with various racial and ethnicity groups. Hawaii is one of the most ethnic-diverse states in the nation especially where whites are not a majority. These ethnic groups live rather harmoniously here but certainly not without health disparities. Ethnic groups are actively seeking more social justice by trying to claim their rights to get better access to health care services. The ethnic groups that this health disparities program will address involve a wide-range of Asian and Pacific Islanders including: Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Filipinos, Laotians, Hawaiians, Samoans, Tongans, and most recent immigrant groups with over 200,000 in the state of Hawaii, the Micronesians particularly the Chuukese and Pohnpeians. The Micronesians present the most pressing and urgent health disparities in Hawaii because of their exposure to U.S. radioactive bombs causing a myriad of health problems and ongoing displacement and homelessness.

Hawaii is a small state with 1.2 million population and therefore, Hawaii's health disparities are known to most everyone who is working in health services and health education including DPHS. It is with this understanding and the main focus to reduce and try to eliminate these health disparities, that the program's objectives were developed. The objectives of this project include activities that combine students, faculty and community members together, working as a team in the community on important health disparities issues and ensuring that this type of

approach gets into the curriculum and has a permanent place there. The objectives are as follows:

1. To increase the number of student-community service learning activities/placements that address reducing health disparities.
2. To increase the number of DPHS faculty who are trained in Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) approaches and engage in community service learning activities and research especially including both the students and community members on the team.
3. To permanently change the DPHS's curricula by integrating CBPR courses and practice placements that address health disparities.
4. To provide regular opportunities to gain input and service-learning collaboration with community agencies and their members through community partnership gatherings and the utilization of a community advisory board.

By offering a CBPR training for faculty and developing/offering a CBPR course for students to take, the service learning component will become the main agenda that is promoted for both groups and that is specially crafted to focus on pressing health disparities needs in Hawaii. By increasing the number of service learning sites that are used for students practice placements as well as offering an annual Day of Service, the collaboration between DPHS and community will be strengthened and expanded as a nature outcome of these activities. Community Partnership Gatherings and Community Advisory Board becomes the guiding and monitoring sources to best ensure the students, faculty, the public health program, and community members have joined forces to fight and reduce the most pressing health disparities problems in Hawaii.

By the end of three years (2007-2010), the following outputs are expected:

1. Fifty percent (50%) of DPHS faculty are trained in CBPR approaches, which would be 7 faculty out 14 total
2. One (1) CBPR syllabus is developed and with a strong service learning component
3. Thirty percent (30%) of MPH students have taken the CBPR course, which would be 14 students out of 42 total
4. One (1) annual Martin Luther King (MLK) Day of Service materialized for each year
5. Two (2) new service-learning sites that deal with health disparities are established each year including written memoranda of agreement.

Strengthening Service Learning Capacity and Infrastructure for Effective Community Partnerships, Morgan State University: The School of Public Health and Policy (SPHP) at Morgan State University has identified a critical need to strengthen its service learning infrastructure and the capacity of its faculty to effectively engage in community partnerships for service learning. To address this need, the SPHP seeks to create a dedicated staff position – the Practice Coordinator -- in the office of the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs. The Practice Coordinator will be responsible for coordinating with each department in the SPHP the availability of service learning opportunities for students, maintaining databases on the actual internship placements and community- campus partnerships of all public health students and identifying opportunities for longitudinal service learning. The Practice Coordinator will also plan the annual Martin Luther King Day community service activities for the SPHP and assist

the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs in faculty development efforts leading to effective and authentic community partnerships for service learning.

The creation of the position of Practice Coordinator operating out of the office of the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs will improve significantly the administrative support for service learning at the SPHP by centralizing the administrative aspects of our students' practice experiences. Planned enhancements in the curricula and extending the academic oversight of students' practice experiences from a selected few to all faculty will improve the quality of the experience, while the presence of administrative support in this area should provide a more efficient and supportive infrastructure for service learning activities.

Beyond the three year grant award period, a portion of funds from each funded grant involving community partnerships and external linkages will be used to support the position of the Practice Coordinator and to add additional staff to support service learning as an essential element of education

San Jose State University: The Master of Public Health (MPH) program at San José State University (SJSU) requests a 3-year sub-grant of \$69, 000 as part of the Health Disparities Service-Learning Collaborative. We plan to strengthen our long-standing commitment to community partnerships that aim to eliminate health disparities through building our capacity for sustained, high-quality service-learning and community-based participatory research (CBPR).

Specifically, our project is designed to meet 5 primary goals: 1) Reframe MPH fieldwork (400 hours) to include more explicit service learning for students, mentors, and community partners; 2) Add service learning component to the academic curriculum of the MPH program; 3) Incorporate community-based participatory research (CBPR) and eliminating health disparities throughout the MPH curriculum; 4) Incorporate CBPR training and opportunities into new Graduate Project requirements of the MPH program, and 5) Develop and implement strategies for dissemination of process and results of the project. Through proposed changes in courses, field experiences, Graduate Projects, and department events, we anticipate that 100% of each entering MPH cohort (approximately 25 students per year) will engage in service-learning for at least two semesters and that at least 70% will participate in one or more CBPR projects before graduation. All MPH courses will have updated required reading related to health disparities and each will have at least one assignment related to effective strategies for eliminating inequity and health disparities. In addition, the 4 MPH core faculty members, a core group of 6 community partners, and over 15 community mentors and collaborators will increase their knowledge of service-learning, further develop their CBPR skills, and more extensively disseminate their collaborative, community-based work to reduce inequities, build community capacity, and eliminate health disparities.

University of Nebraska: The Health Disparities Service-Learning Collaborative project will expand service-learning capacity in the MPH program to increase the awareness of health disparities by faculty, community-based health organizations, staff and students. Through training and increased efforts toward developing community partners, we can achieve service-learning, defined as being experiential and structured and addressing human and community needs (Jacoby, 1996). A training seminar for approximately 20 MPH faculty (50%), MPH staff,

and community organizations will feature an expert consultant on service-learning and community engagement and a panel of community partners who have served as preceptors for MPH service-learning/ capstone student experiences. The panel will focus on their experiences in engaging with the University and community and addressing health disparities through engagement. From this training, four or five faculty will take part in further training and activities, including minigrants for curriculum development and a two-day bus tour of community-based health organizations in the Omaha area.

This project will also raise the level of importance of MPH student Service-learning/capstone projects. A semi-annual “service-learning/capstone day” will highlight presentations of service-learning/ capstone projects by about 12 students, a luncheon inviting all 54 community preceptors, and poster presentations by MPH students.

Martin Luther King Day activities will begin in year one with public health educational displays and expand in years two and three to providing direct service. We expect approximately 18 students to be engaged by year three. MPH program staff and a community partner will attend the CCPH 2007 conference where they will increase their knowledge of service learning and health disparities.

Virginia Commonwealth University: VCU plans to incorporate service-learning (SL) into the MPH curriculum by implementing a SL component in the MPH Program’s core health behaviors course. Working with the VCU Center on Health Disparities and VCU’s AmeriCorps program, based in VCU’s Division of Community Engagement, the MPH Program will train MPH students to work with AmeriCorps volunteers to provide health literacy services to children in selected elementary schools in the city of Richmond, Virginia. These services will be designed to help reduce health disparities in the student populations by raising student awareness about particular health issues. More than two-thirds of Richmond’s students are eligible for a free- or reduced-price lunch, compared with about one-third statewide. In addition, 91% of RPS’ enrollment is African American, compared with 27.1% statewide. With Richmond’s poverty rate rising to over 20%, a disproportionate number of RPS students reside in communities experiencing poorer health status; i.e., above-average incidence of low-birth weight, obesity, diabetes, lead poisoning, violence, and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). MPH students will collaborate with AmeriCorps team leaders and Richmond Public School faculty/administrators to develop services designed to increase students’ knowledge about health. These services will be tailored to the needs of the school; examples include generating ideas for ways to increase physical activity, learning about healthy eating habits, or introducing students to minority population members who are health professionals or health professions students.

This SL program will enable MPH students to work within community schools and provide services complementary to the AmeriCorps program’s focus on overall literacy for grade school students. The program will empower elementary students with new knowledge about selected health issues, enrich the MPH Program curriculum, enhance MPH student understanding of health disparities populations and the challenges they face, and support VCU’s strategic plan to become the leading institution in the state working to solve health disparities through community outreach.