

SARENA DIANE SEIFER, M.D.

Sarena is Founding Executive Director for Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (CCPH) and an Adjunct Professor at the University of Guelph. Founded in 1996, CCPH promotes health in its broadest sense through partnerships between communities and higher educational institutions. Its growing network of over 2,000 communities and campuses in the US, Canada and about a dozen other countries are collaborating to promote health through service-learning, community-based participatory research (CBPR) and other partnership approaches. CCPH seeks to transform practice and policy through knowledge mobilization, training and technical assistance, research and evaluation, policy development and advocacy, and coalition-building.

Sarena's work focuses on the principles and best practices of partnerships between communities and higher educational institutions around education, research, and community/economic development. She has led a series of CCPH-sponsored initiatives that have incorporated service-learning into health professions education, developed community-based participatory research partnerships, convened community partners for peer support and advocacy, prepared faculty for community-engaged careers in the academy, aligned faculty promotion and tenure policies with community engagement, and created mechanisms for peer-reviewed publication of diverse products of community-engaged scholarship. Her current areas of focus include advancing community-engaged scholarship and community-academic partnerships in Canada, applying the knowledge generated through community-engaged scholarship, building community capacity for research, and strengthening ethics review of community-engaged research. In recognition of her leadership and impact, Sarena received the Tom Bruce Award for Leadership in Community-Based Public Health from the Community-Based Public Health Caucus of the American Public Health Association in 2007 and the University of California Irvine Chancellor's National Community-Based Research Award in 2010.

Sarena is a graduate of Washington University in St. Louis, and received her master's degree in physiology and her medical degree from Georgetown University School of Medicine. After completing her medical education, she served as the American Medical Student Association's legislative affairs director in Washington DC and subsequently as founding director of its Center for Health Policy Studies. In 1995, she completed a postdoctoral fellowship program in health policy at the University of California-San Francisco's Center for the Health Professions. Prior to her fellowship, she was a health policy analyst for the Washington State Senate and director of recruitment and retention for Northwest Regional Primary Care Association, a membership organization of community and migrant health centers.

Throughout her career, she has sought to leverage the knowledge, wisdom and experience in communities and in academic institutions to solve health, social and economic challenges. She deeply believes that we will only solve these challenges through partnerships that bring communities and institutions together and build upon the assets, strengths, and capacities of each.

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