

## Northwestern's Alliance for Research in Chicagoland Communities Awards 2016 Seed Grants to Community-Academic Collaborations to Improve Community Health



The [Alliance for Research in Chicagoland Communities \(ARCC\)](#) at Northwestern University's [Center for Community Health](#) and the [Northwestern University Clinical & Translational Sciences Institute](#) announce the recipients of seed grant funds that support Chicagoland community-engaged partnerships and research projects. The goals of these awards is to support the development and increase the number of community-academic partnerships that are prepared to collaborate together to design and conduct community-engaged research projects. This is the ninth round of seed grant funding. Each award (ranging from \$7800-\$10,000) supports a partnership that includes a community co-principal investigator from a local community organization and an academic co-principal investigator from Northwestern University for a project lasting 12-24 months.

### ARCC 2016 Partnership Development Seed Grant Project Summaries

*Partnerships In Ongoing, New Exploratory Engagement Research (PIONEER) Project.*

Melissa Maguire, [The Night Ministry](#), and [Stephen Schueller](#), Preventive Medicine, Feinberg School of Medicine

The PIONEER Project will create a client-centered Research Advisory Committee with representation from the homeless youth target population, [Northwestern's Center for Behavioral Intervention Technologies](#), and other stakeholders; a youth-focused mobile technology intervention; and conduct 10 participatory research design workshops. The PIONEER Project will ensure youth stakeholder engagement by using the Active Participatory Approach from the Center for Youth Program Quality, a best-practice standard utilized in all of The Night Ministry's (TNM's) programs. The PIONEER Project's approach will empower youth to assess, plan, and to gain instructional coaching and training in a team-based, data-driven environment. The PIONEER Project's objectives are designed to engage all stakeholders in an exploratory process, to increase knowledge about the role of community-engaged research, and to augment each individual's contributions to the PIONEER Project. This seed grant will support activities to explore mutual interests between the investigators and assess various technological interests and capacities present at TNM and among those the Night Ministry serves. Aim 1: To develop a robust and sustainable community-academic partnership in order to create a framework that will support and guide future research and action addressing the mental health, well-being, and inclusion of homeless youth. Aim 2. To identify and prioritize community needs and to translate the findings into systemic plans for future research focused on homeless youth. By pursuing these specific aims, we will establish resources and generate knowledge essential for applying for a larger research grant.

*Building & Enhancing Capacity for Conducting HIV Research w Latino Men Who Have Sex w Men in Chicago through a Community-Academic Partnership*

Alredo Flores, [CALOR](#), and [Gregory Phillips](#), Medical Social Sciences, Feinberg School of Medicine

Academic-community partnerships are needed to improve the health of communities disproportionately affected by HIV, particularly Latino men who have sex with men (MSM). Therefore, we propose to build and strengthen the partnership between a

community-based Latino HIV-focused organization– CALOR– and the [Institute for Sexual and Gender Minority Health and Wellbeing \(ISGMH\)](#) at Northwestern University. This partnership will be developed through monthly meetings between CALOR and ISGMH and attendance at each other's events. Extensive audits will be conducted at each organization to assess and improve CALOR's evaluation capacity and to assess and improve ISGMH's ability to conduct community-engaged research. These audits will be used to generate strategic plans to build internal capacity at CALOR and ISGMH and enhance research activities. Once the partnership has been formalized and areas for improvement have been identified, we will pursue collaborative research opportunities. Community forums and focus groups will gain buy-in from local Latino MSM for research, identify barriers to study participation, and highlight significant health concerns and gaps in public health messaging faced by this population. Data collected from this formative work will be used to inform the development of a grant proposal for external funding.

#### *Cooking Up Health: Docs and Kids in the Kitchen*

Neilé Edens, [Common Threads](#), and [Melinda Ring](#), General Internal Medicine, Osher Center for Integrative Medicine

There is growing recognition that solving the obesity epidemic and its downstream health consequences depends on preventative efforts at the individual, community and public health level. A 2013 analysis of childhood obesity in Chicago revealed an overall overweight/obesity prevalence of 43.3% among public school students. Physicians are at the frontline of assessing and advising patients on nutrition and weight; however only 27% of medical schools teach the recommended 25 hours of nutrition, and fewer than 14% of practicing physicians believe they were adequately trained in nutritional counseling. We propose a partnership between the [Osher Center for Integrative Medicine \(OCIM\)](#) at Northwestern University, an academic program with expertise in nutrition education, clinical care and research, with the community organization, Common Threads (CT), which is experienced in delivering cooking and nutrition education programs in schools and other youth program sites in Chicago. The goals of this project are to 1) develop the partnership between OCIM, CT, Feinberg School of Medicine students, and community partners including schools and out-of-school time program providers and 2) develop an engaged research strategy to test the impact of a novel medical student nutrition curriculum on health professional and community health behaviors, nutrition knowledge and health outcomes in Chicago, and eventually across the country. We expect that this partnership will yield a responsive, sustainable program for delivery of cooking and nutrition education in the community by future physicians that has a meaningful impact on community health and medical education, supported by a robust community-engaged research network.

#### *Implementing a CBPR Partnership Approach to Stress Remediation*

Megan Hinchy, [West Humboldt Park Community Development Council](#), and [Maryann Mason](#), Pediatrics, Feinberg School of Medicine

Located on Chicago's west side, the West Humboldt Park (WHP) neighborhood is young-- 35% of residents are under 20 years old; minority-- 80% Black; 19% Hispanic; poor-- 33% of WHP residents and 45% of children live below the poverty line, and violent-- WHP's homicide rate is almost five times the national average. While WHP has some strong assets including a coordinated approach to improving the health and wellbeing of community

members, WHP has relatively few resources for addressing the community level stressors facing residents. One reason for this may be that there is limited evidence for successful mental health interventions among populations similar to that of WHP. Our Partnership aims to continue to build upon the developing relationship among academic representatives of Northwestern University (NU), the West Humboldt Park Development Council (WHPDC) and community stakeholders. The goal is to form a community based participatory research (CBPR) steering committee that is prepared for long term success and collaboration. Through a strong steering committee, we aim to design and conduct research projects that will positively impact the health of the WHP community by identifying shared areas of interest (such as community level stressors) and developing research collaborations that build upon partner strengths and assets. Ultimately leading to the creation of a unified model for quantifying and addressing the relationship between the socio-ecological environments and the health and wellbeing.

#### *Partnership for PCOR in Aging and Disability Research*

Amy Eisenstein, [CJE Senior Life](#), and [Elliot Roth](#), Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, Feinberg School of Medicine and Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago

CJE SeniorLife, [Access Living of Metropolitan Chicago](#), Northwestern University, and the [Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago](#) propose to create a multi-institutional partnership to begin a necessary collaboration and discussion on patient-centered outcome research (PCOR) related to aging and disability. As the population ages and people are living healthier and longer, those with long-term physical disabilities are aging and living longer as well. Little research has been done on the implications of an extended life expectancy with long-term disability. Project aims: 1) Promote organizational and general scientific knowledge and understanding between the four partnering agencies. 2) Explore opportunities for collaboration related to current research interests and priorities of each partner. 3) Enhance knowledge of community-engaged research methodologies, collaborative research, and ethics in community research among each partner. 4) Collaboratively seek out and apply for PCOR funding. Outcomes: 1) Each of the four partner agencies gains organizational and general scientific knowledge and understanding. 2) Partner agencies are comfortable collaborating to explore opportunities related to current research interests and priorities of the others. Not only are they comfortable collaborating with one another, but have gained knowledge and insights to further expand community-academic partnerships. 3) At least 1 proposal will have been submitted for collaborative funding by the end of the 12 month period. Bringing together these three disciplines - academia, medical/healthcare field, and community organizations - will enhance the knowledge base, mutually, to serve this newly emergent population better.

#### *Partnership Building with Barbers to Improve Mental Health Barriers to Health Promotion: Development of the REHAB Consortium*

Nataka Moore, [Chicago Global Health Alliance](#), and [Adam Murphy](#), Urology, Feinberg School of Medicine

African American men are difficult to recruit into health research for numerous reasons. We have made some headway into this by forming collaborations with community-based organizations who have connections to Chicago's African American community. Two agencies, Chicago Global Health Alliance and [Project Brotherhood](#) have worked in partnership with Dr. Adam Murphy on community engaged research and dissemination

projects. We have recently conducted and published a socio-demographic survey study of African American men being served in barbershops throughout Chicagoland. We seek to form a consortium (Research for Equity in Health in Alliance with Barbers- REHAB) of health professionals and barbers to address health disparities in African American men using community-based participatory research principles to conduct impactful research and to provide readily accessible recruitment sites for culturally relevant research in barbershops and in partnership with Chicago area barbers. Our project will involve 1) disseminating the results from our study to barbers, 2) collaboratively developing potential research topics that are feasible for the barbershop setting, 3) collaboratively developing baseline knowledge for barbers to conduct future research together as a partnership, and 4) collaboratively consider and pursue potential grant opportunities.

ARCC is a program of the Center for Community Health, serving the [Northwestern University Institute for Public Health and Medicine \(IPHAM\)](#) and [the Northwestern University Clinical and Translational Sciences \(NUCATS\) Institute](#). ARCC supports and promotes equitable and collaborative partnerships between Chicago area communities and Northwestern University for research that leads to measurable improvement in community health. ARCC's goals and objectives are jointly defined by a steering committee comprised of community and faith-based organizations, public agencies, and Northwestern University faculty.

Community-engaged research is an approach to conducting research in a collaborative way involving partnerships between communities and academics in an exchange of expertise between academics, as scientific experts, and communities, as local and cultural experts.

For more information, [www.ARCCOnline.net](http://www.ARCCOnline.net) or [jenbrown@northwestern.edu](mailto:jenbrown@northwestern.edu), (312) 503-2942.

ARCC Steering Committee members: Access Living, Apostolic Faith Church, CALOR, Cambodian Association of Illinois, Chicago Youth Programs, CJE SeniorLife, Coalition of Limited English Speaking Elderly, Demoiselle 2 Femme, Endeleo Institute, Korean American Community Services, New Beginnings, Puerto Rican Cultural Center, Renz Addiction Counseling Center, Chicago Department of Public Health, Chicago Public Schools, Rebecca Carl MD, Julia Dudek MPH, Rebecca Ford-Paz PhD, Ruchi Gupta MD MPH, Gail Huber PT/PhD, Rebecca Johnson PhD, Darby Morhardt PhD LCSW, Matthew O'Brien MD, Siobhan Phillips PhD MPH, Betina Yanez PhD.