

**Northwestern's Alliance for Research in Chicagoland Communities  
Awards 2017 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 announces 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 tenth round of seed grant funding. Each award (ranging from \$5000-\$20,000) 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 2017 Seed Grant Project Summaries**  
**Partnership Development Grants**

*Partnership to Enhance Resilience in Communities through School-based Capoeira*

Huu Nguyen, Intl. Capoeira Angola Foundation– Chicago and Judith Moskowitz, Medical Social Sciences, Feinberg School of Medicine

In Chicago, children in predominantly African-American communities are exposed to increased levels of violence and trauma. Children who are exposed to such adverse events are at increased risk for poor physical and psychological health, and poor school performance. To avoid these negative outcomes, children must rely on their resilience, an “ability to adapt well to adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress.” Although extensive numbers of programs have been developed to increase resilience in children, to our knowledge, no program is responsive to both cultural and environmental needs. To address this gap, we aim to engage in a school-community-academic partnership to develop a resilience-enhancing program that is responsive to community needs while also addressing culturally-relevant issues. We propose to increase resilience via a school-based capoeira program. Capoeira, an African-Brazilian art form that integrates dance and fight elements in the form of a game, emerged from the struggle for liberation by marginalized communities during Portuguese colonization. Today, capoeira continues to be a tool for empowerment. Through this award, we expect to develop a Community Advisory Board, comprised of community members and academic partners, to optimize this capoeira program to enhance resilience. The resulting program enables students to cope with persistent violence and trauma, and overcome these adverse experiences to become resilient adults.

*Community Engagement to Improve Services for People Affected by the Death of a Child*

Kristin James, Greater Illinois Pediatric Palliative Care Coalition and Kelly Michelson, Pediatrics, Feinberg School of Medicine

In 2017, roughly 1250 children and young adults will die in Chicago. Childhood death imposes special challenges for bereaved survivors. In Chicago, access to and delivery of bereavement support services are inadequate, leaving many affected by childhood death to suffer without help. Additionally, little data exists to guide best practices for delivering bereavement support. Research is needed to develop and study interventions for bereaved parents and siblings. Our long term goal is to ensure that anyone affected by childhood

death has access to quality bereavement support services. This research partnership development grant proposal will support preliminary steps needed to develop a coalition of stakeholders dedicated to improving access to and quality of bereavement services and establish an infrastructure for conducting future bereavement support research. We will: 1) establish a coalition of community and academic stakeholders interested in improving bereavement services in Chicago for those impacted by the death of a child; 2) obtain preliminary information about current bereavement support services in Chicago; and 3) explore stakeholders' interest in and capacity needs for conducting bereavement research. When finished, we will have established a coalition of interested stakeholders poised to obtain funding for future research and identify potential program development projects.

*Building Capacity for a Community Based Research Partnership to Optimize Physical Activity in Lung Cancer Survivors*

Kathleen Boss, Gilda's Club Chicago and Prakash Jayabalan, Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, Shirley Ryan AbilityLab and Feinberg School of Medicine

Lung cancer is the most common cause of cancer related death in Chicago as well as the United States. Higher levels of physical activity have consistently been shown to be related to reduced symptom burden, improved quality of life, treatment eligibility for surgical resection and/or chemotherapy, outcomes, and overall survival in cancer survivors. Unfortunately only 30% of those with lung cancer meet national physical activity guidelines at the time of their diagnosis, which likely worsens as they continue treatment. This has treatment eligibility, outcome and quality of life implications. Since the majority of lung cancer care is in the outpatient setting, community based strategies to improve physical activity in this population could have tremendous benefit as found in other cancer diagnoses. Our overarching long-term goal is to create a research consortium between community and academic partners to develop a physical activity intervention in the community for lung cancer survivors to improve symptom burden, quality of life and outcome (which is beyond the scope of this grant application). Therefore as a first step we propose the following Research Partnership Development Award between community and academic organizations focused in this domain to investigate the barriers and enablers for physical activity in the community in lung cancer survivors.

**Research Development Grants**

*The Courage to Love: Social Support and Social Cohesion to Help Infants Thrive*

Dominca McBride, Courage to Love Collaborative, Become: Center for Community Engagement & Social Change and Matt Davis, Pediatrics, Feinberg School of Medicine and Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital

Infant mortality is a tragedy that both affects and reflects health in communities. Infant mortality in Chicago and across the United States is characterized by profound racial disparities that place African American infants at high risk. Identifying and amplifying protective social factors may help reduce infant mortality for African American infants. The overarching objective of this community-academic collaborative proposal is to identify key social factors that may reduce the risk of infant mortality in a neighborhood in Chicago with disproportionately high infant mortality (Auburn Gresham), and to pilot an approach through which expectant and new parents can share how social factors are influencing their parenting during infancy—the most vulnerable year in a child's life. Our proposal strengthens an existing partnership between the multi-stakeholder Courage to Love

Collaborative and NUFSM community-engaged researchers, dedicated to positively affect Chicagoland communities experiencing health inequities. We will use a participatory model that values the voices and fosters the creativity of community members, recognizing that—even in the midst of hardship and difficult social conditions—people have relational assets that can be mobilized in their families, congregations, schools, and neighborhoods.

*Understanding Health Literacy and Self-reported Health Outcomes in a Spanish-speaking Community of Southwest Chicago*

Elio DeArrudah, Universidad Popular and Elizabeth Hahn, Medical Social Sciences, Feinberg School of Medicine

The overall objective of this proposal for the Engaged Research Project Development award is to strengthen the existing community-academic research partnership between investigators at Universidad Popular (DeArrudah) and Northwestern University (Hahn) through an innovative project focused on health literacy and self-reported health outcomes. Community-based participatory research principles have informed the development of this partnership and this proposal. This funding opportunity provides an invaluable opportunity for our groups to strengthen our partnership in a strategic and collaborative way that is beneficial to all parties. The specific aims are: (1) to evaluate the feasibility and acceptability of multimedia computer-based administration of health literacy and self-reported outcome questionnaires in a community setting; (2) to evaluate the relationships between participant characteristics, resources, needs, and health outcomes; (3) to design an intervention to improve health literacy and/or health outcomes, which will be submitted as an NIH grant proposal; and (4) to disseminate study findings to scientific, clinical and community audiences. We anticipate bi-directional long-term impact: (1) the academic partners will learn important strategies to implement community-based participatory research, and (2) the community partners will acquire additional skills needed to collect and analyze data, and to disseminate findings to stakeholders.

*REACH to Faith 2.0: Building faith based community capacity to disseminate and implement culturally appropriate dementia friendly resources, research evidence and program interventions in Woodson Library*

Melvin Thompson, Endeoleo Institute and Darby Morhardt, Cognitive Neurology and Alzheimer's Disease Center, Feinberg School of Medicine

African Americans represent 39% of the local population aged 65 and older. African Americans are two to three times more likely to be diagnosed with dementia than whites and disproportionately receive less dementia care and education. Using a patient-centered approach, this community engagement project seeks to build the capacity of an existing collaborative partnership, REACH to Faith, to deliver increased awareness and understanding of health research evidence about dementia; identify informative and culturally appropriate health research findings useful to community members living with dementia and their caregivers; enhance the accessibility and usability of the evidence for a faith based community audience; collate data about community priorities for those living with dementia and use findings to implement a dementia friendly library pilot. Evaluation and data analysis include a stakeholder mapping technique, iterative process evaluations, and polling methods. Building the capacity of faith based community members to disseminate and implement culturally appropriate dementia friendly resources, research evidence and program interventions will deliver community champions with knowledge and understanding

of the ways in which families, researchers, health care professionals talk about dementia. Documenting the process publicly validates the experience of living with dementia and the research which resonates with that experience.

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, Hana Center, New Beginnings, Puerto Rican Cultural Center, Renz Addiction Counseling Center, Chicago Department of Public Health, Chicago Public Schools, Rebecca Carl MD, Tara Gill PhD, Gail Huber PT/PhD, Prakash Jayabalan MD, Rebecca Johnson PhD, Matthew O'Brien MD, Siobhan Phillips PhD MPH, Theresa Sukal-Moulton DPT PhD, Betina Yanez PhD.