

Kellogg Health Scholars Program: Annual Networking Meeting 2008: Panel and Workshop Abstracts

• **Special Session: The Role of CBPR in Advocating for Municipal Policies to Promote Health and Reduce Disparities**

Speaker: Nicholas Freudenberg

Abstract: In this session Nicholas Freudenberg will discuss the potential and limits of Community-Based Participatory Research for advocating for policy changes that promote health and reduce inequities in health. The focus will be on changes in municipal policy but the role of CBPR in informing advocacy campaigns to change state, federal and corporate policies will also be discussed. Participants will be encouraged to share lessons they have learned from their efforts to use CBPR to change policy.

• **Panel and Discussion: Health Disparities Policy Agenda and Applying KHSP Research to Policy Development**

Panelists: Joy Wilson, Victor Rubin, Aranthan Jones, Bonnie Lefkowitz and Jen Martin

Abstract:

Joy Wilson: Joy Wilson from NCLS will outline major themes in states activities in health disparities: establishing offices of minority health, broadening Medicaid eligibility, translation services, cultural competency in care, and workforce diversity and shortages. States are looking at data collection. For researchers, there is a need to define cultural diversity and what needs to be done at the state level. Also, data collection costs money, therefore if researchers collecting data, consider the needs of states. Looking ahead to 2009, people are talking about many initiatives, but haven't analyzed issues for groups. There is serious discussion about an individual mandate, but what does that mean? And what impact will this have on the uncovered who are disproportionately people of color, and the poor. Pay for performance is another concept that needs to be explored. Comparative effectiveness also needs to be explored for racial and ethnic minorities which may not be served well. Chronic disease management, how do we ensure this, what are the necessary components? Health IT doesn't work well for Medicare part D. How do you make Health IT work for low income and older people? Medicaid reform – Medicaid doesn't work like private insurance, so as it is reformed, how will people be helped to adjust? For example Medicaid provides transportation, and wraparound services which are not typically part of insurance coverage. These are baby steps in health care reform. Researchers should put out these issues so policymakers are aware of them. Role of researchers: Document impact, compare tradeoffs, compare solutions and give us an idea of the costs.

Victor Rubin: One of the most important developments in health policy in recent years has been taking place outside the traditional realms of access to care, finance and insurance, public health systems, or health promotion and education. In response to the growing recognition that "place matters," that community and regional factors of many kinds are critically important determinants of health and wellness, many practitioners, advocates, researchers, and policymakers are taking up policy issues beyond health care. In these remarks we will briefly examine several of the policy arenas in which health disparities are being addressed through a focus on communities. This year's federal farm reauthorization bill became, for the first time, a "food and farms" bill in a way which engaged health and nutrition advocates in groundbreaking collaborative efforts. The upcoming 2009 federal transportation reauthorization bill will face a similar sea change in its politics: the usual corporate and government highway and infrastructure-building interest groups will find themselves sharing the floor with advocates spurred by health-related concerns from walkability and transit-oriented development to air quality and climate change. But the greatest activity has been the cumulative research, organizing and advocacy to improve local and state policies and plans regarding the built environment, from creating more parks and providing incentives for grocery retailing in underserved areas to conducting health impact assessments of proposed developments.

Aranthan Jones: AJ will describe porch and kitchen conversations. It is positive that there are now health disparities policy conversations without minorities in the room. Business is also recognizing that health disparities is important and taking it seriously. How do they interact with their health insurance providers about health disparities? People are discussing, how should we organize our public health infrastructure and how does it relate to health care. Researchers in

academic settings researching health disparities are no longer ostracized in the academy. Finally, young people are excited not about the candidate, but about the policies of a candidate. The porch conversation has been expanded and well nourished. But in getting to the kitchen, there is a real reality about how to make the “right” things happen. Challenges: structural/financial aspects of the government; can’t talk about raising taxes so you have to decide who takes the hit. This affects us in terms of being able to discuss the health care system that we need. This conversation of need will involve frame, scale, and scope. Finally, what type of democrats are we electing? The health care conversation has to be organized around Democratic caucuses, i.e. around free trade, progressives, and southern democrats. How do we reach the most vulnerable in the southern states. Keep your eye on the south as you move forward in health care conversations.

Bonnie Lefkowitz/Jen Martin: The Scholars’ presentations on Monday and Tuesday will shape the comments that will be provided; but in general, there will be discussion on the connections between local, state, and federal levels and the opportunities that the upcoming election will provide. Examples will be provided from the scholars’ presentations to highlight some suggestions for how their work could impact policy. Also to be discussed is writing position papers on the Scholars’ topics to share with the new Administration, building on the policy profiles they have written.

• **Workshop: PolicyLink**

Speakers: Victor Rubin, Rajni Banthia, Donele Wilkins

Organizer/Facilitator: Shawn Kimmel

Abstract: As PolicyLink Director of Policy Engagement Dwayne Marsh noted after the March 2008 Regional Equity Summit in New Orleans, the things PolicyLink already does well—capacity building, communications, research, issue framing, and advocacy—are helping to build the national movement for regional equity, but “a more strategic application of our mission” is now “crucial” for pushing the national movement for equity in policy and practice to a higher level. This workshop will engage panelists and audience in a discussion of the ways PolicyLink is currently working to build the capacity of communities to engage in policy change efforts that address the social determinants of health inequities in communities, and build the movement for regional and national health equity. Some of the questions we will discuss are: What are some of the key strategic challenges for PolicyLink in connecting the work of local communities to the work of building a regional and national movement for policy change—in accord with the goals of the PolicyLink Regional Equity Summit and its Center for Health and Place? What is the PolicyLink strategic vision/plan for connecting its community capacity-building work to the challenges of building a larger national movement for change? What are the key strategies PolicyLink is pursuing to develop these connections? How does PolicyLink build the capacity of communities to use research to facilitate policy change? And how might the work of the Kellogg Health Scholars Program and of individual Health Scholars (current and alumni) contribute to the achievement of these goals? This discussion will include a few examples of work to strengthen community capacity in linkage with the larger movement for health equity, which is a focus of the work of the PolicyLink Center for Health and Place. One of these examples will be the Detroit Community-Academic Urban Research Center’s “Neighborhoods Working in Partnership” project, with which Donele Wilkins has been involved as a planner and community trainer. “Advocating for equitable policies and practices to establish healthy communities, this movement draws from a broad framework.... Traditional single issue boundaries are being broken, forging new connections and alliances across diverse sectors . . . [as] practitioners, researchers, and policymakers are realizing that to make people healthier, they have to make neighborhoods and communities healthier” (PolicyLink, *Why Place Matters: Building a Movement for Healthy Communities*, 2007). Please join us for a discussion of the challenges and opportunities of this exciting work.

• **Workshop: Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies**

Speakers: Gina Wood, Linda Randolph, Pam Thornton

Organizers/Facilitators: Chandra Ford and Angela Thrasher

Abstract: The purpose of this session is to discuss current work in health disparities by the DC Developing Families Center and Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. The presenters will describe successes and challenges they have encountered in creating policy-relevant health disparities efforts, as well as personal reflections on doing this type of

work. Specifically, the presenters will discuss: (1) current health disparities efforts undertaken by their organizations; (2) successes and challenges encountered over the years when undertaking health disparities efforts; (3) how they got into the field of policy-relevant health disparities work and why they stay; and (4) how Kellogg Health Scholars can connect their research to policy/advocacy and political communities. The discussion will also address the ways that the contemporary political climate and national elections affect health disparities efforts and policymaking.

• **Workshop: Working With the Hill**

Speakers: Portia Cole, Emily Ihara, Natasha Williams, Roberta Downing, Jen Martin

Organizers/Facilitators: Caryn Rodgers

Abstract:

Portia Cole

The presenter will discuss the role of health disparities research in the bi-partisan analysis of S. 1576 Minority Health Improvement and Health Disparity Elimination Act. Participants will learn about the ways in which a congressional health policy fellowship might create new opportunities for health disparities research in academia. The presenter will also outline potential strategies to facilitate the use of post-doctoral scholar research by policymakers.

Emily Ihara -- Expanding your "Took Kit": How Research Can Affect Policy

Policymaking in Washington DC is perceived to have limited connection to research on health disparities and other social problems. In fact, such research can make significant contributions to policymaking if researchers are able to understand the policy process and what policymakers need from researchers. In order to expand your research "tool kit," this session will discuss the policymaking process, tips on how to translate your research into policy, and how to communicate your research findings to policymakers.

Natasha H. Williams

The presenter will discuss the importance of translating research into policy recommendations for policy-makers, advocates, and the public. Specifically she will discuss issues such as drug treatment courts and prisoner reentry. Also, the speaker will share how her experience on the Hill as a Geiger Fellow shaped her subsequent career path and research.

Jen Martin

Given the upcoming changes in the federal government as a result of the presidential elections in November 2008 it is important for researchers and advocates to continue to plan and consider how their work can influence policy. The presenter's talk entitled "Seizing the Moment", will involve discussing how as researchers, Kellogg fellows can effectively prepare and share their findings with the new administration.

• **Workshop: How Does your City or County Rate on Measures of Health and Well-being? A Workshop with The Praxis**

Project on the Health Justice Report Card and other tools to promote Policy Development and Social Change

Speaker: Josue Guillen

Organizers/Facilitators: Anita Wells and GiShawn Mance

Abstract: The Praxis Project is a national, nonprofit organization that builds partnerships with local groups to influence policymaking to address the underlying, systemic causes of community problems. Committed to closing the health gap facing communities of color, Praxis forges alliances for building healthy communities. One of their aims is to build power at the local level to increase the capacity of communities to become effective advocates and leaders on the legislative and policy decisions that affect their lives. Praxis trains partner organizations and provides research, technical assistance and financial support to tackle issues related to health disparities.

Workshop: Presenter Josué Guillén of The Praxis Project will engage workshop participants in an interactive exploration of the Health Justice Report Card, a community assessment tool designed to help community based organizations, public health advocates and practitioners determine their city or county ratings on a range of issues related to health and well

being. In addition, Dr. Guillén will facilitate a discussion of how communities can utilize the Report Card and other tools to advocate for social change and policy development to close the health gap facing many communities of color.

Workshop Objectives: Attendees will: Participate in a lively demonstration of the Health Justice Report Card; Discuss strategies for developing community-advocacy-academic partnerships; Learn about specific initiatives of The Praxis Project and how Kellogg Scholars and Scholar alumni can use their skills and research to work with Praxis and similar organizations.

Annual Meeting attendees interested in learning how to engage organizations such as the Praxis Project as well as those interested in identifying tools and mechanisms to assist communities in advocating for health equity are strongly encouraged to attend.

• **Workshop: Community Health Center and Researcher Opportunities to Reduce Health Disparities**

Discussants: Jack Geiger, Bonnie Lefkowitz, Michelle Poser, Lisa Cacari-Stone

Organizers/Facilitators: Shedra Amy Snipes

Abstract: This workshop will provide an overview of the mission and values of the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC).

The NACHC represents a network of roughly 1,150 organizations serving nearly 17 million people throughout the U.S., most of them low income and/or minority. NACHC has a strong advocacy program that has achieved bipartisan support in the Congress and realized major expansion. The centers' record of improving health outcomes for the people they serve makes them an excellent vehicle for reducing/eliminating racial/ethnic and income disparities. In addition, as the nation considers proposals for universal coverage and other system-wide changes, the centers offer a model for organizing care efficiently and fostering innovation.

Community health centers have a history of early involvement with research and communities, actually giving rise to participatory research concepts currently incorporated in CBPR. With a renewed focus on research by the NACHC there are excellent opportunities for scholars to base their work in individual centers, groups of centers in specific states/regions of the country, and national policy. Current research on the Community Health Center Movement and the Consumer Governing Board will be described as a case example. The workshop will also discuss other potential research topics involving health centers given today's political landscape as well as issues that arise in partnerships among researchers, advocates and service providers. Finally, participants will have the opportunity to ask questions, exchange ideas and suggest topics for this type of community-based research.

• **Workshop: HIV/AIDS**

Discussants: Kevin Robinson, Cheryl Dudley Brewster, Lester Spence

Organizers/Facilitators: Chandra Ford

Abstract: The purpose of this workshop is to support and promote collaborative research on human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) prevention among Scholars, Alumni and Advisors of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation's Kellogg Health Scholars Program. This will be an interactive session in which participants will:

- Describe their interests in HIV prevention research;
- Explain the strategies and approaches they use to conduct this research;
- Become acquainted with the research and research interests of other participants;
- Share selected key findings; and,
- Explore possibilities to collaborate with other workshop participants on future research.

The workshop will be facilitated by Community Health Scholars Program Alumni, Cheryl Dudley Brewster and Kevin Robinson and by Health Disparities Scholars Program Alum Lester Spence. Each has considerable expertise in conducting

cutting edge HIV prevention research. They will describe their programs of research, highlight important gaps in the knowledge that future research might address and reflect upon key issues and collaborative opportunities that emerge during the workshop. Participants are encouraged to come ready to network and to bring copies of any work they may want to share with other workshop participants.

- **Workshop: Neighborhood Studies**

Discussants: Ichiro Kawachi

Organizers/Facilitators: Phoenix Do

Abstract: A growing body of literature has documented a positive association between living in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods and adverse health outcomes. Most of the existing literature has focused on variables such as neighborhood racial segregation, or neighborhood demographic or socioeconomic characteristics. Other research has examined the social aspects of neighborhood environments (e.g., social capital, trust, and crime) and the built environment (e.g., housing conditions, ambient air quality, and urban form) in relation to health. The various health outcomes that have been linked to neighborhood context include, among others, mortality, infectious disease, low birthweight, cigarette smoking, and diet. Moreover, given the link between neighborhood disadvantage and deleterious health outcomes and the fact that blacks disproportionately reside in poor neighborhoods, neighborhood context may be a key contributor to the persistent black health disadvantage. However, causal inferences from these extant neighborhood-health studies are tenuous, severely limiting inferences and policy implications.

The workshop will review the current status of the neighborhood-health literature, including gaps and potential future directions, and discuss policy relevance and possible practical implementations of such policies.

- **Workshop: Community Interventions**

Speakers: Kim Sydnor, Eric Clay

Organizers/Facilitators: Anita Wells, Larkin Strong and GiShawn Mance

Abstract: This workshop will focus on community interventions, with examples provided by current Scholars that highlight research to increase participation in physical activity, cancer risk reduction and cancer screening, and awareness of mental health issues and services. We will discuss different approaches to community interventions including community-based participatory research as well as potential relationships between community based research, advocacy and health policy. Workshop discussants Mr. Eric Clay, a current Community Mentor and partner, and Dr. Kim D. Sydnor, a Kellogg Site Director and Assistant Professor, will share their perspectives on the benefits and challenges of community-academic partnerships including the importance of planning ahead for program sustainability and building on existing community resources. Attendees will have an opportunity to share their research interests, and attendees, discussants, and current Scholars will explore and strategize ideas for future collaboration (e.g. on publications, grant applications, program planning, etc.)

Objectives: Attendees will hear recent examples of community based research in which Scholars participated; Attendees will participate in a discussion about CBPR, community interventions, and building bridges between community, academia, and policy toward the elimination of health disparities; Attendees will have an opportunity to lay the groundwork for future collaborations.

Incoming Scholars who are interested in research that includes community interventions, who will be engaging in community interventions during their postdoctoral fellowship, and/or who are interested in physical activity, cancer, or mental health issues are especially encouraged to attend.

- **Workshop: Health Disparities and Community Engagement**

Speakers: Stephen Thomas, Lovell Jones, Geni Eng

Organizers/Facilitators: Shawn Kimmel

Abstract: This workshop is intended to establish a KHSP working group of current Kellogg scholars, alumni, mentors, and senior researchers who are interested in collaborating on future conference panels, papers, and published articles that examine innovative strategies for engaging institutions and communities in reducing or eliminating health disparities.

To initiate discussion of potential scholarly collaborations, this panel will begin with several presentations that provide a framework for thinking about the challenges and opportunities of engaged work to eliminate health disparities. Geni Eng will discuss the Kellogg-funded Engaged Institutions initiative at the University of North Carolina. Then Stephen Thomas and Lovell Jones will discuss the work of two NIH funded Research Centers of Excellence on Minority Health Disparities at the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

Engaged Institutions Initiative: The Kellogg Foundation chose twelve Schools of Public Health in January 2006 to participate in the Engaged Institutions Initiative. At UNC this initiative includes a commitment to achieving health equity for and with communities of North Carolina and beyond, with the understanding that community engagement must incorporate the full range of civic, tribal, religious, and secular communities, as well as businesses, professional associations, academic institutions, and government agencies. Through these partnerships, the UNC initiative is dedicated to: expanding partnerships with communities and organizations that combat social injustice and collaborate with populations that experience health disparities; institutionalizing the engagement of community partners in public health research, training, and advocacy so that partners have a voice in decisions that will impact their lives; providing human and financial resources to communities and organizations that represent the interests of populations suffering from racial and ethnic disparities in health status.

NIH NCMHD Comprehensive Research Centers of Excellence in Minority Health Disparities: Since 2002, the NIH National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NCMHD) has established 88 Centers of Excellence in 31 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S Virgin Islands. The program now consists of Exploratory Centers and Comprehensive Research Centers of Excellence in Minority Health Disparities (RCEMHD). The Centers of Excellence were established at research institutions, medical schools, historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), Hispanic serving institutions, tribal colleges, and liberal arts colleges to develop novel programs that would make significant advances and contributions to easing the health burden in underserved populations and reducing health disparities in several priority diseases and conditions.

The University of Pittsburgh and the University of Texas Research Centers were established in 2002 and 2003 respectively as NCMHD EXPORT Centers. Both were subsequently refunded by NIH in 2007 as Comprehensive Research Centers of Excellence in Minority Health Disparities.

• **Workshop: Place, Migration and Health**

Speakers: Lisa Cacari Stone, Emma Sanchez

Discussants: Mercedes Rubio, Denice Cora-Bramble

Organizers/Facilitators: Shedra Amy Snipes

Abstract: Research on migration and place is complicated by many issues, including racial and ethnic affiliations, as well as group identities that are spatial, public, private, and socio-politically motivated. Moreover, groups with migration and place identities are often burdened by disparities in healthcare access and quality, and well-being. In this collaborative session, we will explore meanings and contexts of “migration” and “place”, as well as establish networks based on your unique perspectives and expertise. Discussants Denise Cora-Bramble, MD and Mercedes Rubio, PhD will briefly present “Keys to Successful Collaboration”, followed by a group discussion and individual networking (led by Lisa Cacari-Stone, PhD and Emma Sanchez, PhD). At the conclusion of this workshop, participants will establish potential collaborations with one another. Examples may include conference presentations, joint articles, panels, grants, and mutual citation for similar work, fostering ongoing relationships between scholars and senior researchers with common interests.