

**Alliance for Research in Chicagoland Communities/
Northwestern University Clinical & Translational Sciences Institute**

**Announcing ARCC 2024 Seed Grants- Cycle 1
Community Research Collaboration to Improve Health Equity**

The Alliance for Research in Chicagoland Communities ([ARCC](#))/Northwestern University Clinical & Translational Sciences Institute (NUCATS), in partnership with Northwestern Memorial Hospital (NMH) announce the recipients of seed grants that support the development of community-driven partnerships to improve health equity. ARCC believes that using the tools of science to achieve health equity can best be done when research honors & centers the expertise of communities as local, cultural, practice, lived experience experts in collaboration with academic scientific expertise. This is the 1st cycle of Seed Grants in ARCC's seventeenth round of seed grant funding.

- **Community Research Capacity-Building Grants:** each \$3000 award supports a Chicagoland community organization for 6 months to build community research capacity. Activities may include assessment; training; and/or the development of research infrastructure, priorities, or future research collaborations.
- **Partnership Development Grants:** each \$8,000 award supports a partnership that includes a community lead from a Chicagoland community organization and an academic lead from Northwestern for a 12-month project. Grants support newly developing partnerships in relationship building, creation of partnership structure, exploration of shared areas of interest, and research capacity development. Priority was given to applications that focus on racial equity and addressing root causes of inequities.

Over our full 16 years of seed grant funding, ARCC has distributed over \$1.5 million to over 100 community-academic partnerships. The funded partnerships have led to increased community and academic capacity for engagement and research, new health improvements and policy changes, over \$39 million in subsequent grant funding, and 46 peer-reviewed publications. Grants are supported by funds from the Northwestern University Clinical & Translational Sciences ([NUCATS](#)) Institute and Northwestern Memorial Hospital ([NMH](#)).

[Request for applications](#) for a second cycle of 2024 ARCC Seed Grants to support additional Community Research Capacity-Building grants, Partnership Development grants, and Research Pilot Seed Grants are open now. Applications for this cycle are due in April 2024.

Community Research Capacity-Building Grant Summaries

Increasing Capacity for Vulnerable Patients to Access Culturally Humble Care, Improve Medical Relationships, & Address Expectations of Wellness

Mai Heath, [NDoula Community Alliance](#)

Historically, Black people have been mistreated within healthcare. This is true of many marginalized groups, such as women, queer-identifying people, and people with disabilities, among other medically vulnerable groups. This has contributed to a lack of trust and transparency within these patient-provider relationships and worsened health outcomes. Black maternal mortality in Chicago is six times higher than that of white birthing people outside of our city, and Black infants die more than any other group of infants (CDC). Additionally, only 1/3 of Black adults

needing mental health care treatment receive it (NAMI). We are also in the midst of a health crisis, as the number of conventional providers is dwindling and burnout often leads to medical abuse and coercion of patients. Yet, Illinois has not licensed naturopathic medicine, thereby impeding access to the general public of this evidence based, traditional system of primary healthcare. Statistically, people of color and perinatal people are among groups that specifically seek alternative and holistic healthcare options. We want to build capacity to improve relationships and expectations of care. By defining the patient-centered practices we want to be privy to, we increase our confidence in our healthcare teams, improve informed compliance, increase our safety, and improve health outcomes. We have begun to hold workshops and Townhall-style healing discussions within our community to elaborate on our experiences and visions for what a more health equitable future would look like. Within these forums, we will continue to collect data via surveys to help guide our understanding of the information and feedback we are receiving. By doing this, we will better identify existing behaviors and ideate new tactics to influence the culture and climate of medicine, in order to increase our safety within healthcare settings.

BUILD Youth Participatory Research and Capacity-Building Initiative

Khaliah Marsh, [BUILD, Inc.](#)

BUILD respectfully requests support in 2024, to grow its internal capacity to gather critical data on both the impact on youth associated with living in communities experiencing high levels of gun violence, and ability of its programs to mitigate those affects and help youth heal and thrive. BUILD's project will empower our BIPOC program alumni as researchers, honoring their lived experience and expertise in identifying effective ways to measure the impact of exposure to violence and effective methods to address those challenges and improve health equity in our West Side communities. BUILD intends this process to prepare for a more extensive research collaboration, bringing local knowledge, participation, and expertise to improve data/research quality, address racial inequity in research practices, and ultimately increase health and equity in our neighborhoods. In the process, BUILD hopes to reduce the stigma associated with mental health care and gather evidence in support of our programs/services.

Building Capacity to Open New Paths with Leadership and Autonomy

Rosa E. Martínez Colón, [Instituto ANCLA](#), and Omar N. López, [CALOR](#)

Our project will convene stakeholders in the delivery and receipt of healthcare for Latine, LGBTQ+, and Spanish-speaking communities to assess the interest in forming a coalition to improve the coordination of community health programs by removing service delivery barriers to facilitate access among these communities in Chicagoland, including engaging in research to identify opportunities to address this cause. Instituto A.N.C.L.A. (Abriendo Nuevos Caminos con Liderazgo y Autonomía) (Opening New Paths with Leadership and Autonomy) was created in response to the lack of community-based mental health services in Arecibo, Puerto Rico. Our mission is To help transform lives with a vision of communities without social barriers. Now established in Chicago, we aim to convene and mobilize our local community partners to address the health of our fellow Chicagoans.

Project Brotherhood - The Common Ground Foundation Community Research Capacity-Building

Marcus Murray, [Project Brotherhood](#), and Karl Kemp, [The Common Ground Foundation](#)

Project Brotherhood and The Common Ground Foundation are embarking on a distinctive and culturally specific approach to address the mental health needs of African American youth in Chicago and surrounding areas. This pioneering strategy is rooted in a Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) framework, ensuring active involvement and empowerment of the target population. Through a shared decision-making approach, community members will contribute to the development of culturally specific, unique, and creative tools aimed at addressing mental health concerns among African American youth. Recognizing the academic intricacies of research, The Council on Black Health ([CBH](#)) will serve as a mentor, guiding both agencies through the academic dimensions of the research process. CBH's expertise will be instrumental in enhancing the research capabilities. Furthermore, CBH will play a key role in assisting with the next round of submissions for the ARCC grant process, ensuring that the proposals align with the program's objectives and expectations.

Partnership Development Grant Summaries

Using community-engagement for building research partnership to improve the health and wellbeing of Black immigrants in the Chicagoland Area

Fasika Alem, [United African Organization](#), and [Tiwaloluwa Ajibewa](#), Preventive Medicine, Feinberg School of Medicine

The partnership is between the United African Organization (UAO)—a dynamic, African led community-based organization that promotes social and economic justice, civic participation, and empowerment of African immigrants and refugees in Illinois, and Tiwaloluwa Ajibewa, a researcher who focuses on understanding the socio-environmental sources of health and health inequities among racial/ethnic minoritized populations. The shared health interest of UAO and Dr. Ajibewa are to find ways in which we can use research to document, understand, and find solutions addressing the impact of immigration related stressors on the health of Black immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. This Partnership Development grant will assist in holding in-person meetings that will allow us to accomplish four main goals of: 1) identifying shared research interests and community led-priorities, 2) developing a research partnership infrastructure, 3) exploring the involvement of other potential community partners, and 4) preparing a funding proposal addressing community-led research related priorities. UAO had previously received an ARCC Partnership Development grant, and this present grant will seek to build on lessons learned from the past grant.

BQAC Got Yo Back: Bisexual Inclusive Therapy and Education (BITE) Partnership Development Grant

Augusto Rodriguez, [Bisexual Queer Alliance Chicago](#), and [Lauren Beach](#), Medical Social Sciences, Feinberg School of Medicine

Bisexual Queer Alliance Chicago (BQAC) and the Research on Aging, Chronic Conditions, and Health Equity in Sexual and Gender Minority and People with HIV ([ReACH SGM](#)) laboratory

collectively propose the “BQAC Got Yo Back: Bisexual Inclusive Therapy and Education (BITE) Partnership Development Grant.” BITE’s aim is to advance the research-readiness of BQAC’s organizational and programmatic infrastructure to support a future ARCC Seed Grant application that proposes to develop an educational intervention for Chicagoland area mental healthcare providers focused on providing affirming mental healthcare for diverse bisexual+ patients. In this proposal, BITE will support biweekly meetings to foster collaboration between ReACH, the BQAC board of directors, and BQAC members at large to develop and refine materials to support recruitment and training of bi+ identified panelists from diverse backgrounds to speak about their lived experience attempting to access affirming and culturally responsive mental healthcare.

Healthy Hood and ARISE Health Lab Community-Academic Partnership for Adolescent Mental Health Innovation

Joline Lozano, [Healthy Hood Chicago](#), and [Nia Heard-Garris](#), Pediatrics, Feinberg School of Medicine/Lurie Children’s Hospital

The primary aim of this grant is to foster a deep collaboration between Healthy Hood Chicago and the [ARISE Health Lab](#) at Northwestern University (PI: Heard-Garris). Healthy Hood Chicago is a non-profit community-based organization committed to addressing the neighborhood-based life expectancy gap in Chicago through initiatives that address the mind, body, and spiritual aspects of health. The ARISE Health Lab at Lurie Children’s Hospital investigates structural adversity to uncover the influence of adversity and structural barriers, such as racism, on adolescent health, and develop strategies that empower and eliminate obstacles in the way of optimal health and well-being of adolescents and young adults. Both of these entities are committed to the health and well-being of marginalized, historically and contemporarily oppressed populations, which include Black and Hispanic/Latinx peoples. Given our shared missions, we put forth this application to work synergistically to accomplish our shared goals. This community research partnership development seed grant will allow us to work together, building trustworthiness, research capacity, and collaboration to improve the quality and impact of research. We will co-create the foundation and infrastructure for Healthy Hood to have the tools to rigorously evaluate their impact through both qualitative and quantitative research and data collection, which will allow them to compete for grants successfully, expand their reach, and build additional partnerships, ensuring that the power and resources go back to the communities most marginalized (that Healthy Hood serves). Thus, this funding is critical to support the work between Healthy Hood and the ARISE Health lab.

ARCC Background

Established in 2008, the [Alliance for Research in Chicagoland Communities](#) (ARCC) supports authentic community-academic research partnerships between Chicagoland communities and Northwestern University that benefit the people being researched and improve health and equity. ARCC advocates for a collaborative approach to research that honors, is driven by, and shares power with communities, as local, cultural, and lived experience experts. ARCC is guided by our [Community-Academic Steering Committee](#) comprised of thirteen community-and faith-based organizations, two



public agencies, and eleven Northwestern faculty and staff. ARCC is a program of the [Center for Community Health](#) serving Northwestern's Institute for Public Health and Medicine ([IPHAM](#)) and the Northwestern University Clinical and Translational Science ([NUCATS](#)) Institute.

For more information, www.ARCCOnline.net or ARCC@northwestern.edu