

**Northwestern's Alliance for Research in Chicagoland Communities
(ARCC) Awards 2015 Seed Grants to Community-Academic
Collaborations to Improve Community Health**



The Alliance for Research in Chicagoland Communities (ARCC) at Northwestern University announces the recipients of seed grant funds that support Chicagoland community-engaged partnerships and research projects. The goals of these awards are to support community-engaged research partnership development, foster the development of community-engaged research projects/proposals for external funding, and to support the dissemination and implementation of research findings contributing to community health. This is the eighth round of seed grant funding. Each award (ranging from \$1500-\$5,000) 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 months.

ARCC 2015 Seed Grant Project Summaries

Partnership Development Grants

Developing a promotora model to address community-defined mental health and metabolic health needs in Little Village.

Helius DeArrudah, Universidad Popular, and Matt O'Brien, General Internal Medicine, Feinberg School of Medicine

There is a large research literature describing the complex relationship between mental health (e.g. depression) and metabolic health (e.g. diabetes). Given the high burden of depressive symptoms and diabetes risk factors in Little Village, this neighborhood is a unique setting to study the intersection between these common threats to community health. The proposed partnership will lay the foundation for an intervention led by community health workers, or promotoras, to simultaneously improve residents' mental and metabolic health. In addition to Universidad Popular, this partnership includes Enlace Chicago and the St. Anthony Community Wellness Program. This project will develop the partnership, build the capacity of all partners, expand on current community interest and engage new stakeholders, and build toward a National Institutes of Health proposal submission.

Community-Academic Partnership to improve outcomes for HIV+ /at risk Female Torture Survivors.

Mary Lynn Everson, Heartland Alliance Marjorie Kovler Center, and Sarah Sutton, Infectious Diseases, Feinberg School of Medicine

Fifty percent of HIV-infected (HIV+) pregnant women currently receiving care in the Northwestern Medicine Women's HIV program (NMWHP) are foreign-born, primarily from African countries. Recently, NMWHP staff noted that though many clinic patients come from countries where torture and sexual violence are prevalent, torture is seldom documented. NMWHP and Kovler Center have mutual interests and identified several needs/gaps in relation to HIV/AIDS and torture survivors. The purpose of this project is to form a community-academic partnership to begin to address HIV related health outcomes in female refugees and asylum seekers with a history of torture/trauma. The partnership plans to improve care for this growing population by sharing respective expertise, building capacity for community-based participatory research, and identifying research questions that will

translate into externally funded collaborative research initiatives and ultimately impact health policy.

Developing a Community-Based Approach to Stress Remediation: Interrupting Chronic Disease Processes in Chicago Children and Families

Chet Jackson, West Humboldt Park Development Council (WHPDC), and Maryann, Mason, Pediatrics, Feinberg School of Medicine

Chronic stress is a major contributor to health and wellbeing but there are few tested stress-reduction interventions that build on the growing science in this area. This project will establish an interdisciplinary, community-engaged research process to elucidate and address the impact of chronic stress on the health and wellbeing of Chicago children and their caregivers, with a particular focus on obesity, asthma, depression, and violence in West Humboldt Park. The project will form a collaborative between a group of Northwestern faculty and WHPDC and its community stakeholders. The collaborative will develop a unified model for quantifying and addressing stress processes at multiple levels. Evidence from multiple disciplines will be synthesized with the knowledge and experience of community organizations. The partnership will build towards designing and funding a pilot test of the putative model.

Proposal Development Grant

Urban Youth Cafe: Building an Understanding of Programs and Services that Connect In-Risk Youth to the Mainstream.

Lori Crowder, Alliance of Local Service Organizations (ALSO), and Karen Sheehan, Pediatrics, Feinberg School of Medicine

Research on young men of color who are victims and/or perpetrators of violence is limited, especially as it relates to understanding the mechanisms that improve their optimal health and well-being. Over the past three years, ALSO has implemented the “In-Risk Life Course Change Model” with in-risk young men. This partnership seeks to rigorously test the efficacy and effectiveness of the intervention to prevent violence and its precursors and evaluate the health outcomes for its participants. The partnership intends to co-apply for a National Institutes of Health R21 solicitation (Research on the Health Determinants and Consequences of Violence and its Prevention, Particularly Firearm Violence). The partnership will analyze pilot data previously collected by ALSO on the intervention, conduct a literature review, review existing data, and prepare and submit the proposal. The partnership will use a community-based participatory research approach in the proposal development process. Youth will be involved in developing the study design.

Research Dissemination Grant

Implementing and Disseminating Youth-led Community-Based Participatory Research.

Nikki Zaleski, Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health (ICAH), and Michael Fagen, Preventive Medicine, Feinberg School of Medicine

Since October of 2014, ICAH's Youth Leadership Council (20 member group of Chicago youth representing marginalized communities) have been engaged in four participatory action research projects to assess youth and adult attitudes around four issues: youth friendliness in healthcare, birth justice, pregnant and parenting youth rights in schools, and parental notification for abortion. Northwestern University will act as a primary partner in the reporting and dissemination phase of the youth-led research, increasing youth knowledge of

research methodologies by collaboratively analyzing and interpreting the data. Northwestern will also assist in supporting the Youth Leadership Council in building research-informed action. The project will disseminate the research findings for community, healthcare, and academic audiences through co-sponsored events for community members and healthcare providers; integration of findings into curriculum modules for healthcare providers; promotion of findings in photo, video, and social media campaigns; development of reports for community members and healthcare providers; and submission of at least one manuscript for peer-reviewed journal submission.

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's 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 measureable 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 or jenbrown@northwestern.edu, (312) 503-2942.

ARCC Steering Committee members: Access Living, Apostolic Faith Church, Cambodian Association of Illinois, Casa Central, Chicago Youth Programs, Chinese Mutual Aid Association, Coalition of Limited English Speaking Elderly, Demoiselle 2 Femme, Healthcare Consortium of Illinois, Korean American Community Services, Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Vida/SIDA, Westside Health Authority, Chicago Department of Public Health, Chicago Public Schools, Amy Eisenstein, PhD, Rebecca Ford-Paz, PhD, George Greene, PhD, Ruchi Gupta, MD MPH, Bill Healey, PT, Ed D, GCS, Gail Huber, PT/PhD, Darby Morhardt PhD LCSW, Melissa Simon MD MPH, Karen Sheehan, MD, MPH, David Victorson, PhD.