

Accelerating the Future

CENTER FOR HEALTH EQUITY

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

by Dr. Jasjit S. Ahluwalia, Executive Director



I am thrilled to announce the 2012 Health Equity Conference: *Eliminating Health Disparities* that will take place at Earle Brown Heritage Center on Monday, April 23 and Tuesday, April 24. CHE, PHDR, and MC3 are hosting the two-day conference for researchers, practitioners, policy makers, community members, business leaders, and students to come together around meaningful health equity issues. We have secured several speakers and will continue to update our website as the planning progresses. Jane Delgado, PhD, President and CEO of the Hispanic Alliance for Health, has been confirmed and we have invited John Ruffin, PhD (pictured right), director of the National Institute on Minority health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) and Reed Tuckson, M.D., Executive Vice President and Chief of Medical Affairs, UnitedHealth Group. www.med.umn.edu/che.

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The past few months have been incredibly eventful and exciting for the Center. We have been fortunate to have three dynamic and thought-provoking national speakers visit us this winter. In November, Robert Wright from Harvard School of Public Health presented “A framework for measuring genetic and environmental interactions in child development” at our CHERR series. And in December, Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola from UC Davis spoke about disparities in mental health status and care in the United States as part of the Distinguished Visiting Scholars Series and Ken Resnicow discussed “Tailoring of health communications: Does Ethnic Identity Matter?” During their visits, the speakers engaged in critical discussions with faculty, students, and staff to help shape current research ideas and design.



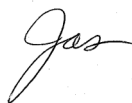
Photo of Jas Ahluwalia, MD, MPH, MS, John Ruffin, PhD, and Megan Hoffman at the Fifth Annual National Conference on Health Disparities in Charleston, SC.

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The Center for Health Equity and CTSI are engaging in new and vital collaborations that I am very excited about. Both groups have leveraged resources to cultivate an Advanced Research Program (ARP) and Undergraduate Research Program (URP) that builds upon previous research training programs offered by the Center for Health Equity. Additionally, CHE and CTSI, along with Minnesota Center for Cancer Collaborations (MC3), recently partnered to sponsor *Write Winning Grant Proposals*, a widely acclaimed seminar. The seminar was attended by faculty, post-doctoral students, staff, and community members who work on clinical and translational or health equity research. These coordinated efforts to leverage resources are just the beginning a paradigm shift towards collaboration, and this issue of our *Accelerate the Future* Newsletter will include a snapshot into some of our current partnership and collaboration efforts.

At the national level, I have been asked to serve as program co-chair for the 2012 Health Disparities Summit. This will be held October 31 - November 3, 2012 in Washington, DC. Please save the date and consider join me and the expected 7,000 other attendees.

Kind regards,



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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CENTER FOR HEALTH EQUITY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY PARTNER UPDATES

STAIRSTEP FOUNDATION

CHE has partnered with the Stairstep Foundation since the Center was established. In partnership, Stairstep and CHE are participating in a national health initiative called Body & Soul. The goal of this project is to promote fruit and vegetable consumption within a large network of African American churches in the metro area. The program begins with a kick-off event at each church that includes health screenings and a survey on fruit and vegetable consumption.



Pictured Above: CHE AD, Megan Hoffman with Deaconess Ora Hokes from Greater Friendship Missionary Baptist Church

Those who volunteer to participate in the program have the opportunity to work with a peer counselor who uses motivational counseling to encourage fruit and vegetable intake. The pilot phase of the Body and Soul intervention has concluded, which included the following churches: He is Risen,

Wayman and Greater Friendship. The first Phase of the "Body and Soul" intervention is under way and includes Camphor Memorial Church,

Progressive Baptist Church and Mount

Olivet Church. In October, CEO of Stairstep Foundation, Alfred Babington-Johnson and Center for Health Equity Leadership, Dr. Kola Okuyemi presented on the history of the collaboration and the Body & Soul project at the 3rd Annual Community-Engaged Research (CENR) Workshop at the University of Houston.

WELLSHARE INTERNATIONAL

WellShare International is the Center's other official community partner. Last year, WellShare International and CHE completed a program known as Young Achievers in which young high school students met on Friday afternoons to hear presentations on health and education-related topics from community leaders and members and then close up with discussion among the students. This year, the project that WellShare and CHE are working on a project called *Smoking Cessation among Somali Men*. In this project key informant interviews are being conducted to shape focus groups to identify attitudes related to smoking cessation in the Somali community with a focus on the use of nicotine and non-nicotine replacement therapies.

OTHER COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

HEALTH EQUITY WORKING COMMITTEE



Above: from left to right, HEWC members: Li Li You, Nancy Pomplum, Peiju Picard, Dan Murphy, Chanida Phaengdara, and Amy Shanafelt

Members of the Center for Health Equity have been meeting with the Health Equity Working Committee, a community group focused on promoting health equity through community outreach and policy change. The group is currently planning a Health Equity Day at the MN State Capitol that will be held March 28, 2012. Health Equity Day will include outreach and development of health equity advocates, a rally in the rotunda and meetings with legislators regarding important health equity policies. In addition, the group is developing a Leadership Institute to identify and advance health equity leaders and advocates across all MN communities.

YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION



Above: from left to right, Senator John Harrington, Deanna Wilkinson, PhD, Ohio State University, Carl Taylor, PhD, Michigan State University, Bill English, Captain Mike Martin, Spike Moss, Rev. Dr. Jerry McAfee

The Center for Health Equity co-sponsored a recent conference, *Ending Youth Violence: A New Generation of Ideas*. The group planning this conference consisted of members from the University of Minnesota, Chicago State University, the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC) and the community. The development of this group was brought on by a research project conducted by Dr. Oliver Williams, PhD, Director of the Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community at the University of Minnesota and Dr. Esther Jenkins, PhD, Professor of Psychology at Chicago State University and a Senior Research Associate at the Community Mental Health Council in

Chicago. The research included focus groups with youth and youth care providers in North Minneapolis and investigated factors leading to youth violence and possible solutions for reducing rates. The Center for Health Equity recognizes youth violence as one of the social determinants of health leading to health inequities and supports the work of this group to reduce the prevalence of youth violence in North Minneapolis. The group is now working on developing action steps using the research results and results from breakout sessions and follow up from the conference discussions.

HEALTH EQUITY CONFERENCE



The Center is currently planning the 2012 *Annual Health Equity Conference: Eliminating Health Disparities*. The conference is sponsored by the Center for Health Equity (CHE), the Program in Health Disparities Research (PHDR) and the Minnesota Center for Cancer Collaborations (MC3).

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Dates: Monday, April 23 1:45pm - 7:30pm
Tuesday, April 24 8am - 4pm

Location: Earle Brown Heritage Center
6155 Earle Brown Drive
Minneapolis, MN

For more information and to register visit the CHE website:
www.med.umn.edu/che

RESEARCH TRAINING AND EDUCATION UPDATE

RESEARCH UPDATE

The Center continues to hold monthly **Works in Progress (WIP)** seminars devoted to discussing minority health and health disparities research topics. These seminars give researchers a forum to freely discuss their research while still in the developing or formative phases in order to exchange ideas, obtain constructive feedback, and discuss issues that may be common to various projects (e.g., study design issues, recruitment strategies).

Recent

Presenter: Navneet Majhail, M.D., M.S.
Medical Director, National Marrow Donor Program, Be the Match

Title: "Health care disparities in blood and marrow transplantation"

Upcoming

Presenter: Professor Sam Myers

Date: February 28, 2012, 1pm - 2pm

For more information visit the website at:
www.med.umn.edu/che



Pictured above: students in the 2010 and 2011 cohorts of CHE URP

The Center in collaboration with the University of Minnesota, Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) is gearing up for the 2012 URP and ARP cohorts. The cornerstone of both research training programs is the scholar's participation in a research project under the supervision of a University of Minnesota faculty mentor. The program also includes weekly program seminars and a final written and oral report that

will be shared at a local symposium at the conclusion of the summer program. For information about the programs please visit our website at www.med.umn.edu/che.

SPOTLIGHT CHE SCHOLAR ACHIEVEMENTS



Center for Health Equity Scholars (CHE-URPs), Mercy Konchellah (*pictured right*) and Mohamed Hassan (*pictured left*) were recipients of a 2011 SEED award.



SEED Awards recognize students who are leaders in the classroom and in their communities, demonstrating outstanding academic achievement and a deep commitment to issues of equity, diversity, and social justice.

CHE-URP Joohee Han, (*pictured right*) undergraduate researcher in Masato Yamamoto's lab, was the recipient of the Young Investigator Award at the annual meeting of the American Pancreatic Association.

