The Center’s integration into the University’s Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute (CTSI) deepened this past month, as it was announced that Director, Jas Ahluwalia, will direct Health Equity for the CTSI’s Office of Community Engagement for Health. This will increase the CTSI’s and CHE’s capacity to do more health equity work, connect researchers and communities across Minnesota, and have a greater impact. One opportunity is the 2013 Community Health Collaborative Grants Program, which is designed to support pilot research and evaluation projects that address important human health issues identified by communities in Minnesota. To learn more about this funding opportunity, please visit:

One partner we have begun a dialogue with is the Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ), established in 2010 as a Promise Neighborhood to end multigenerational poverty in North Minneapolis. NAZ is funded by the Federal Achievement Zone Program modeled after the successful Harlem Achievement Zone in New York. The CEO, Sondra Samuels, is a North Minneapolis resident and leader and has built a staff that now numbers more than 50 people. The Zone covers an area of thirteen by eighteen blocks in North Minneapolis. The bordering streets are Penn Ave N, W Broadway, 35th Ave N, and Interstate 94. As the program ramps up, it will increase from its current 200 families up to 1,200 families and 3,000 children. Dr. Ahluwalia has joined the program, Friends of NAZ, and has been attending events put on by NAZ. Early discussions have begun about how the Center for Health Equity can work with NAZ on issues related to health. In late February, University of Minnesota President, Eric Kaler, spoke at a NAZ event articulating his commitment on behalf of the University to North Minneapolis and to the Northside Achievement Zone. Both President Kaler and Sondra Samuels highlighted the role that the Center of Health Equity might play as NAZ broadens its efforts into the health arena with their constituency.
D I R E C T O R ’ S U P D A T E , C O N T I N U E D

I am pleased to congratulate the 12 pre-doctoral and medical students that were accepted into the Advanced Research Programs (ARP). ARP is a joint effort of CHE and CTSI and will provide the scholars with a full-time paid summer research experience. Like last year, the program offers a high caliber weekly seminars series, peer-to-peer mentoring, online learning modules, networking opportunities, and structured readings from the book Clinical Research Design. Throughout the summer, the scholars will work closely with a senior level faculty member who will serve as their mentor.

We hope that you will join in our work to reach health equity. If you would like to become more involved, get more information, or join our listserv, e-mail us at umn-che@umn.edu. Enjoy the spring and the beginning of summer.

Kind regards,

The Center for Health Equity collaborated with the MN Health Equity Working Committee for the second year in a row to plan and execute the third annual Health Equity Day at the Capitol on April 3rd 2013. The day consisted of a morning training session meant to encourage participants to think critically about how social determinants like neighborhood, economic status, race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation impact health and how to identify root causes of health disparities. The training concluded with an education session on how to be an effective advocate for policy change. The passion and energy from the training continued with a rally at the capitol, during which attendees heard from elected officials and health equity champions, Senator Scott Dibble and Senator Jeff Hayden along with letters of support from State Senator Bobby Joe Champion and U.S. Senator Al Franken. Rally attendees also heard from community leaders, Jaime Martinez from Clearway MN, Ani Koch from Rainbow Health Initiative and Mitchell Davis from the Minneapolis Urban League.

L G B T H E A L T H A W A R E N E S S W E E K

The Center provides cultural competency training for future and current health providers to help create an environment were we can achieve health equity. For the second year, we partnered with the Rainbow Health Initiative to bring awareness of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) health needs to medical students and other health professional students at the University of Minnesota. The two sessions focused on LGBT health disparities and transgender health.
DISSEMINATING RESULTS
WORK OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CORE

The Center for Health Equity Community Engagement Core manager, Amy Shanafelt, MA, traveled to the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco to present results from tobacco research conducted with our community partner organization, WellShare International. The study, conducted in 2011, aimed to investigate Somali men’s smoking attitudes and beliefs about smoking cessation through key informant interviews and focus groups. Twelve Somali community outreach workers, health professionals and religious leaders were interviewed to provide insight on their work with Somali men around smoking. Twenty Four Somali male self-identified smokers participated in three separate focus groups to lend their observations of smoking influences and cessation barriers and facilitators. Results indicated that there is a limited awareness in the Somali community about health risks associated with smoking, as well as a strong social influence on smoking. Health, finances and family were most common reasons to quit smoking. Religion was referenced as a protective factor against smoking; however, willpower and desire to quit were associated with success of cessation, followed by advice from a doctor and family support. This research built on earlier research conducted by WellShare International, and was published in 2012 in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine.

2013 COMMUNITY RESEARCH INSTITUTE EVALUATION

During the fall 2012 Community Research Institute, participants completed a pre- and post-assessment of their confidence in applying a variety of research related skills and were also asked to rate their overall experience during the six week institute. After analyzing the evaluation data with Eileen Harwood, the CHE Evaluation Director, a full report was developed and will be published on our website. At post-assessment, participant confidence in performing research related skills increased across all measures and showed the largest increases in, developing an NIH biosketch, applying principles of community engagement, proposing an appropriate research design and creating a dissemination plan. Participants reported their experience in the institute as a good use of their time and found the weekly seminars to be high quality. The Center for Health Equity plans to partner with the Clinical Translational Science Institute and the Program in Health Disparities Research for a second Community Research Institute in Fall of 2013; watch the website for more information and to apply.
We are welcoming a new cohort of pre-doctoral, and medical students for the Advanced Research Program (ARP), a joint program with Clinical and Translational Science Institute. This summer the scholars will participate in weekly seminars, networking events, and complete a research project working with a senior faculty mentor. We look forward to working with this talented new group of students.

Applications for the Undergraduate Research Program (URP), another joint program with the Clinical and Translational Science Institute, were accepted until March 29, 2013. Scholars will be selected in April and will begin their mentored-research training experience in June.

2013 CHE-CTSI ARPs

- Rachael Harlos, School of Medicine
  **Mentor:** Susan Everson-Rose, PhD

- Ashley Hasti, School of Medicine
  **Mentor:** Mindy Kurzer, PhD

- Sarah Hoffman, School of Nursing
  **Mentor:** Cheryl Robertson, PhD, MPH, RN

- Angela Jeong, School of Pharmacy
  **Mentor:** Ling Li, PhD

- G. Mauricio Mejia Ramirez, School of Design
  **Mentor:** Simone French, PhD

- Malek Okour, School of Pharmacy
  **Mentor:** Richard Brundage, PharmD, PhD

- Rebecca Pulk, School of Pharmacy
  **Mentor:** Pamala Jacobson, PharmD

- Youssef Roman, School of Pharmacy
  **Mentor:** Robert Straka, PharmD

- David Satzer, School of Medicine
  **Mentor:** Aviva Abosch, MD, PhD

- Dane Schaleben-Boateng, School of Medicine
  **Mentor:** Michele Allen, MD, MS

- Joyce Trost, School of Medicine - Physical Therapy
  **Mentor:** Teresa Kimberley, PT, PhD

- Anthony Wiseman, School of Medicine
  **Mentor:** Pamala Jacobson, PharmD

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