



Quarterly Newsletter

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A Message from the CHW Section Chair




AMPLIFY THE VOICE OF CHWS

UPLOAD YOUR VIDEO CLIPS OF CHWS, ALLIES, AND SUPPORTERS!

These videos will showcase why CHWs are essential and how they're impactful. We will share across APHA social media channels during NPHW and possibly even APHA annual meeting later this year.

SUBMIT BY 3/2/22

[Submission Form](#) [Video Project Guide](#)



APHA COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS SECTION

This year for National Public Health Week, observed April 4-10th the APHA CHW Section wants to help amplify the voice of CHWs by asking CHWs, allies, and supporters to create sort videos on what CHWs do and how they're impactful. Not only will we feature the videos we receive throughout April, but we'll also compile them and share them at our Section social (*see Save-the-Date on page 5*) We hope you'll participate & promote this effort.

There are so many recognition efforts happening across the country for CHWs right now—page 3 is just one example of this. If you have any upcoming CHW events, have articles featuring your work, or simply want to highlight a CHW initiative you or your organization are working on—be sure to send it our way to be featured in these quarterly newsletters. We also have several section leadership openings (*read more on page 7*). The APHA CHW Section Individual and Group Awards nominations will open up in the coming months, be sure to be on the lookout and share with your networks. In addition to this, be sure to view the details about the open abstracts for 2022 on page 3—this year's Annual Meeting will be mostly held in-person with some options for virtual sessions.

We look forward to continuing to engage with you in 2022 & seeing you at the Annual Meeting in Boston in November!

Ashley Rodriguez

2020-2022 CHW Section Chair
American Public Health Association
chw.chair@apha.org

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CHW Learning Collaborative Expansion in Illinois

West Suburban Cook County CHW Initiative Partners & Angela Eastlund, MS, APHA CHW Section Member



The Community Health Worker Initiative in West Suburban Cook County, Illinois is expanding beyond its three-year pilot stage at a pivotal moment for the development of CHW legislation and workforce in the State of Illinois.

Designed as a learning collaborative, the West Suburban Cook County CHW Initiative is the first of its kind in the country and now serves as a model for other communities seeking to provide CHWs with ongoing education and support from experts in public health and social services. The collaborative unites 12 CHWs from five community organizations serving diverse populations, and is facilitated by Health & Medicine Policy Research Group (Health & Medicine) and Sinai Urban Health Institute (SUHI) with funding from Community Memorial Foundation and Healthy Communities Foundation.



In year 3 of the initiative, the State of Illinois passed the Illinois Health Care and Human Services Reform Act (Public Acts 102-0004 and 102-0674), recognizing the impact of CHWs in addressing health inequities, and opening pathways to support the sustainability of the workforce through training, voluntary CHW certification, and reimbursement. While this Act's passage puts the process of full CHW integration into motion, implementation will require continued stakeholder engagement, including the knowledge and learnings of key stakeholders involved in the West Suburban Cook County CHW Initiative.

Toward that end, Health & Medicine and its partners hosted a webinar in January focusing on the developing policy in the State of Illinois, and its implications for CHWs and their employers. Nearly 400 individuals attended the webinar, eager to collaborate and fully realize all that can be accomplished through this important legislation. Based on the successes of the West Suburban initiative model, Cook County Department of Public Health also announced the ongoing development of a new CHW learning collaborative coordinated by Health & Medicine and SUHI that will expand across Cook County. We look forward to growing opportunities for CHWs to learn, network, and collaborate across the region.



Bilingual recordings of the webinar, along with fact sheets and resources on the legislation can be found [here](#).



Questions? Please contact Angela Eastlund at aeastlund@hmprg.org.

Join [Health & Medicine's newsletter list](#) to be notified of future events and CHW legislation updates.

APHA 2022 Abstracts are OPEN!

APHA's abstracts for the 2022 Annual Meeting (Nov 6-9) have opened up and are due April 30th. We are particularly interested in both domestic and international abstracts and session proposals that address the following:

- CHW Workforce Development, Including Supervision Skills, Professional Support and Workforce Advocacy & Policy
- CHWs Addressing the COVID-19 Pandemic, CHWs Promoting Social and Racial Justice
- CHWs Addressing Health Disparities and Determinants of Health
- CHW Core Competency Education and Training
- Innovative Models of CHW Team Integration (clinical and/or community)
- Special Session: CHWs in Public Health Education and Health Promotion

Read more here: <https://www.apha.org/Events-and-Meetings/Annual/Call-for-Abstracts/CHW>

Nebraska Recognizes CHWs



The following are photos and brief bios of the CHWs recognized by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services for service to their communities in October 2021.

Awardee Maria Reyes (*pictured left*) was nominated for her commitment and service to the community of Lexington, including those with limited English proficiency. She is a trusted resource for individuals facing barriers to care. She uses her voice to help people understand the lived experience of those who are the hardest to reach, to advocate for equity, and to help others understand the role of the CHW. During the pandemic, Maria's compassion for others showed in helping severely ill COVID patients communicate with their family members and caregivers.



Awardee Maria Lein (*pictured right*), was nominated since she has worked for nearly a decade to help develop minority health services in her health department, through health coaching, education, and referrals. During the pandemic, Maria has been a very active and valued team member, helping clients with information about testing and helping them access testing sites, as well as assisting in vaccination clinics. Co-workers praise Maria's work to educate clients about COVID precautions, helping locate mask supplies, and explaining physical distancing, isolation, and quarantine.



The 2021 "CHW Outstanding Service" Award was presented to Nancie Velasquez (*pictured left*) Nominated by Tribal leadership and co-workers for her exceptional service to the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, Nancie (left) is described as a valuable team member in clinical functions such as COVID contact tracing, testing, and vaccination – and much more. Her team members also describe Nancie's work to distribute food to isolated Tribal members, assist with rental assistance applications, organize transportation to medical appointments, and refer clients for legal assistance. Nancie has worked to bring accurate health education about COVID to Tribal members using social media and virtual presentations. Nancie also is an educator for other CHW, and a champion for health equity.

Nebraska CHW Collaborative on the Rise

Kathy Karsting, Nebraska DHHS



Nebraska is host to a dynamic and growing Community Health Worker (CHW) workforce, with CHWs employed by local public health departments, home visiting organizations, medical providers, managed care organizations, in behavioral health roles as peer support specialists, and more. Recent estimates are between 300 and 400 CHWs are working in Nebraska.



As in many states, financing and sustaining CHW employment in Nebraska is a challenge. One area of strong support that has emerged in support of the CHW workforce in Nebraska is through the federal Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant. The Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant has been in existence since 1935, the only continuous and dedicated source of federal funding for every state lifting up the lives and well-being of women, children, and families since being signed into law by Franklin Roosevelt as part of the Social Security Act. Today, each state determines uses of block grant funds by selecting priorities every five years through a stakeholder-driven process. Each priority has accompanying objectives and strategies. In Nebraska, CHWs are embedded as strategies in the following population health priorities: cardiovascular disease and diabetes among women of childbearing age; disparities in premature birth and access to prenatal care; educational disparities; promoting access to mental and behavioral health services for all MCH populations. With this alignment of role and priorities, opportunities have opened to fund a variety of projects in support of CHWs.

Several original papers have been published on our DHHS website. One is an assessment of the CHW workforce in Nebraska, another an assessment of current CHW training programs in the state, and a third report describes promising financing and sustainability strategies for the CHW workforce in Nebraska. Access and read them here: <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/MCASH-CHW.aspx>

While CHWs have been involved in all these projects, it is essential to create a space for CHWs to be in leadership roles, guiding and influencing policy and practice decisions about certification, training, financing, and sustainability of the CHW role. In 2021 Nebraska began contracting with a diverse group of ten CHW leaders to serve the Department of Health and Human Services as a cadre of CHW Consultants and Trainers. This cadre of CHW leaders develops and delivers continuing education sessions for CHWs; carries out communication, networking, and recognition activities; and informs decisions about future collaborative efforts and investments. The vision of these CHWs are giving life to the Nebraska CHW Collaborative, a body organized to guide certification and training standards for CHWs in Nebraska. The group in turn is emerging as a magnet for CHWs, CHW allies, stakeholders, and policy advocates, all of which envision an increasingly recognized role for CHWs as members of diverse, effective interprofessional teams equipped to address disparities and improve outcomes.

In April 2022, there will be a CHW track in the Nebraska Conference on Health Equity, which will feature state, regional, and national developments for the CHW workforce. Registration is open and the conference is free. Learn more about the Nebraska Conference on Health Equity here: www.nehealthequityconference.com

If you have questions or suggestions about CHW workforce developments in Nebraska, you can reach the NE CHW Collaborative and the DHHS CHW Consultant Trainers by contacting Kathy Karsting at Kathy.karsting@nebraska.gov.

Strengthening the CHW Profession through Apprenticeships

Dina Ferranti, APHA CHW Section Secretary Elect



For over three decades, MHP Salud has established and developed Community Health Worker (CHW) programs across the U.S. to improve the health status of Hispanic and Latino communities. We've seen first-hand how these programs increase access to health and social services and bring community members closer. This is why we've been dedicated to advancing the CHW profession nationally as a culturally appropriate strategy to improve health and empower underserved Latino communities across the nation.



In line with our mission, MHP Salud has conducted research on CHW apprenticeships and their ability to expand the CHW profession. Apprenticeships are an effective career pathway, enabling employers to develop and prepare their future workforce through classroom instruction and paid work experience. Many apprenticeships lead to a portable, nationally-recognized credential.

This resource introduces apprenticeships and is geared towards individuals and organizations that are interested in learning about avenues to advance or expand the CHW profession. It provides information on key components, best practices, and insights on the benefits for both CHWs and employers.

**Strengthening the CHW Profession
through Apprenticeships**

Download Now



[Strengthening the CHW Profession through Apprenticeships](#) and all of MHP Salud's resources are available for download when you register as a member for our [FREE CHW Resource Portfolio](#). Our resource portfolio contains publications that are suitable for a wide range of purposes and are categorized by health topic or area of focus. Although MHP Salud's own CHW programs focus on providing support for Latino communities, our resources can be applied to CHW programs or interventions targeting any population.

Save the Date: APHA CHW Section Social

If you plan to attend in Boston, in person – we're putting on an impactful networking social event to be held during the [APHA Annual Meeting](#), taking place November 6-9, 2022, in Boston.

This year's annual meeting theme is 150 Years of Creating the Healthiest Nation: Leading the Path Toward Equity and accordingly we plan to use this event to celebrate the history of the CHW field and recognize its lifelong champions, through our Social: "A Reflection & Celebration of Community Health Workers: Looking Back to Prepare for the Road Ahead" set for Monday, November 7th. Mark your calendars now & stay tuned for more details!



APHA CHW Section Spotlight

Dr. Julie St. John



Dr. Julie St. John is an Associate Professor and Associate Dean, for the [Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences](#), Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC), as well as an associate professor at the [Julia Jones Matthews Department of Public Health](#) Abilene campus. She has her doctorate in public health from the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Public Health. She has been a Texas certified Community Health Worker Instructor since 2009, served on the Texas CHW Advisory Committee from 2011-2020, serves on the Board of Directors for the Texas Association of Promotores and Community Health Workers (TAPCHW), a member of the APHA CHW Section, and has worked with CHWs for more than twenty years.

She has served in a number of roles within the APHA CHW section, including: secretary, Chair and Co-chair of the Awards Committee, section councilor (two separate terms), treasurer, and co-chair of the nominating committee. Her research interests include engaging CHWs in community based participatory research and community health development approaches, and she has served as the principal and co-investigator on numerous projects. She founded the National CHW Training Center at Texas A&M School of Public Health in 2013. She was a co-investigator on the CHW Core Consensus Project (C3) phase II, 2016-2018. She has also developed over 500 hours of CHW and CHW instructor continuing education trainings. Along with co-editors Wendy Hernandez-Gordon Susan Mayfield Johnson, she recently published a CHW textbook with 20 teams comprised of 140 authors titled, "Promoting the Health of the Community – Community Health Workers Describing their Roles, Competencies, and Practice," with Springer in April 2021. Additionally, she teaches several undergraduate and graduate level public health courses and completed two fellowships related to rural health and policy.

She served as a fellow with the National Rural Health Association (NRHA) "Rural Health Fellows Program" where she co-authored a CHW policy paper entitled, "Community Health Workers: Recommendations for bridging healthcare gaps in rural communities" in 2017 and was a Rural Scholar with The F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health, TTUHSC, in 2020, where she worked on a community collective action and community health development initiative called ThriveABI. She is a long-time CHW ally and advocate and believes in the difference CHW make and their critical role in improving population health status and quality of life.

Dr. St. John is also the lead editor of a book published this last July titled *Promoting the Health of the Community: Community Health Workers Describing Their Roles, Competencies, and Practice*. (shown in upper left hand photo) with Julie). Read more about the book and lessons from the pandemic in the press release found here: <https://ktxs.com/sponsored/spotlight/new-book-emphasizes-the-impact-of-community-health-workers>

CHW Workforce Development: Supervisor Preparation

Mychelle Harris, CHWI Training Assistant



Due to the rise of COVID, the field of community health work has grown exponentially. While the CHW profession has existed

for a long time and has been proven to have significant positive impact in a variety of ways, the pandemic has brought attention to the CHW workforce. The increased attention focused on trusted community leaders has rapidly driven up the demand for CHWs, standardized and effective approaches to train them, and inevitably increased the number of individuals that would supervise CHWs.

The Community Health Worker Institute is one of the cornerstone initiatives within the Center for Community Health Alignment. In addition to providing training that makes participants eligible to receive their CHW Certification, CHWI provides training for the supervisors of CHWs. In ideal situations, those who supervise CHWs would have experience as or with CHWs, but utilization of the CHW model doesn't always occur in that fashion. In some instances CHW supervisors are doctors, nurses, or social workers. CHW supervisor training is designed for individuals who want to gain a better understanding of the CHW Model in order to more effectively support CHW employees and the work that they do. This training provides supervisors with the opportunity to develop a better understanding of the critical role of CHWs in the communities they serve, how to address common challenges when supervising CHWs, and maximize the positive impact CHWs and their respective teams can have on their communities. This 9 hour training is currently being offered virtually.

You can find the latest training dates for Center for Community Health Alignment at the University of South Carolina's Arnold School of Public Health Training: Community Health Worker Supervisor Training on our website at <https://communityhealthalignment.org/events/>

Register for the next cohort: March 7th - March 18th, 2022, MWF 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM by completing this [form](#). Please contact Mychelle Harris at mychelle@sc.edu for more information.



APHA CHW Section Leadership Wanted

The APHA CHW Section has leadership openings! If you have a passion for supporting the CHW workforce and a desire to get involved at the national level— we want you to come lead with us! We have openings in the Communications Committee including the Chair and Social Media Coordinator. We're also seeking two Membership Co-Chairs. All of these are appointed positions that you *could* fill immediately!

Reach out to the current section chair at chw.chair@apha.org to learn more about these open opportunities.

Speak for Health 2022!

Katie Sutkowi, MSW — CHW Section Action Board Representative

It's a new year! And that means new opportunities for advocacy. This month I want to highlight resources for meeting with your elected officials. Everyone has access to elected officials that represent them, regardless of citizenship status. Your elected officials need to hear from you about what's going on in your district, and especially what you want to see change. As a CHW or CHW supporter, you are perfectly positioned to talk with your officials!



APHA has an entire webpage dedicated to meeting with your elected officials. While it's oriented around visiting Washington, DC, you can use the exact same tools to request a meeting over the phone, via video call, or in-person in your district.

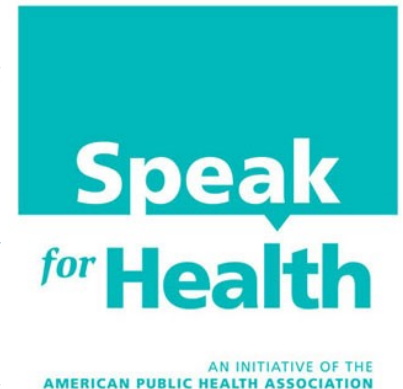
Webpage: <https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/advocacy-for-public-health/coming-to-dc>

Tools from APHA

- [How to contact a congressional staffer](#) (PDF)
- [Sample email to request a meeting if you are setting up your own meeting](#) (PDF)
- [Tips for meeting with your members of Congress](#) (PDF)
- [Get the Facts on Advocacy at APHA](#) provides answers to frequently asked questions
- [Follow these Do's and Don'ts when you visit Capitol Hill](#)
- [Top 10 Rules of Advocacy](#)

Things to Think About

- Are there rules about talking with elected officials during your work day? If you are speaking as an individual and not on behalf of your workplace, you may need to use your personal email and phone number and schedule during lunch or outside of work hours.
- Is your elected official hosting a town hall or public meeting? Call their local office to check the schedule. Instead of a separate meeting, you could always join a public meeting and ask a question during the Q&A instead.
- Are there other people who should join? For example, if you are a CHW ally and want to talk to your elected officials about CHWs, CHWs should be there! If you are hoping to elevate local public health issues that impact your neighborhood, is there a neighbor or friend that would be able to join, too? You're welcome to go at it alone, but sometimes it can feel less intimidating with colleagues.



Need help?

Feel free to reach out and I'm happy to help. You can email katherinesutkowi@gmail.com at any time to learn more about the Action Board and how to #SpeakForHealth in your state.

Remind me, what's the Action Board?

The Action Board helps coordinate the association's grassroots and grassroots advocacy activities and encourages participation in advocacy initiatives among the association's Sections, SPIGs, Caucuses, state and regional Affiliates and other member units. The Action Board works year round to support members in taking

What about work happening in my state? Your state affiliate is the best place to learn about public health advocacy in your state. APHA also features state-specific updates in its monthly legislative update email.

Get out there and **#SpeakForHealth**



COMMUNITY
HEALTH WORKERS SECTION

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