

## Center for CHW Research, Outcomes, and Workforce Development

### Newsletter

Issue VIII: December 2020

#### **CROWD Supports Chicago's Covid-19 Contact Tracing Corps**

“SUHI trainings have really helped my team feel more comfortable in their contact tracing role. I am grateful for the space SUHI provides to ask questions and clarify what is discussed in some of the training videos.” – Alberto Cuevas, *Contact Tracing Supervisor at South West Organizing Project*

The CROWD team has been working hand-in-hand with the Chicago Department of Public Health, Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, Malcolm X College, UIC School of Public Health, and NORC at the University of Chicago in the rapid development of the city's Contact Tracing Corps. CROWD is providing contact tracers (CTs) and contact tracing supervisors with virtual training throughout the project, starting with a two-hour booster session for CTs. Booster sessions enable CTs from the 31 community-based organizations to ask questions, observe or participate in role-plays and build community among their peers. When completed, nearly 600 CTs and supervisors will have participated.

CROWD provides weekly office hours for CTs and CT supervisors as well as monthly communities of practice for each group. Office hours give the opportunity to ask questions regarding the continuously changing and evolving processes. CTs' two-hour communities of practice enable sharing and support amongst peers, learning from each other, and troubleshooting challenges. In addition, soft skills training is included on topics such as cultural humility, goal setting, and motivational interviewing, skills that will be useful for future employment opportunities. In their communities of practice, CT supervisors also have the opportunity to connect and learn from peers while receiving beneficial training for their supervisory role.

The training team's ability to share expertise, offer support, give guidance, and work with diverse groups is essential to the work and truly shines through. CTs have expressed the ease and comfort they experience with the team when asking questions and seeking clarity. CROWD is grateful to train and support this crucial workforce as the city and world continue to grapple with the Covid-19 pandemic.



#### **CROWD Participates in APHA's Annual Meeting**

Melinda Banks, Madeline Woodberry, and Yesenia Galvan participate in APHA's Virtual Annual Meeting.

Healthiest Nation: Preventing Violence” took place virtually for the first time in its history, from October 24 - 28. Including both on-demand and live presentations, the conference addressed issues relating to this year’s violence prevention focus along with the Covid-19 pandemic and other public health topics.

SUHI presented two abstracts at the conference. “Using Social Determinants of Health to Assess Trauma Patients on Chicago’s West Side,” presented by Yesenia Galvan, Supervisor of Program Initiatives, and Madeline Woodberry, Community Health Worker III, demonstrated how community health workers (CHWs) use an integrated approach to engage those affected by violence. CHWs screen trauma patients using a social determinants of health tool to identify areas of need including housing, insurance coverage, food insecurity, and access to healthcare. The CHW provides emotional support, connection to appropriate resources for the patient and family, and follow-up.

“CHWs Addressing the COVID-19 Pandemic,” presented by Ms. Galvan and Melinda Banks, Community Health Worker III, discussed CROWD’s CHW Support Program whereby CHWs provide resources and emotional support for patients post-discharge from the hospital or emergency department. Partnering with social work departments at Sinai Chicago’s two acute care hospitals, CHWs address the intensifying needs of patients from helping them to understand discharge instructions or screening for social needs to connecting them to suitable resources. More than 60 people joined the session with many asking questions.

Kim Jay, Senior CHW Consultant and Trainer, facilitated a lively breakout session for the roundtable “CHWs’ Stories of Utilizing Roles to Promote the Health of Their Communities.” She stressed the transformational impact CHWs make on clients’ lives by utilizing their community connections, knowledge, empathy, and ability to relate as their driving forces. The session, in advance of the book *Promoting the Health of the Community - Community Health Workers Describing Their Roles, Competencies, and Practices*, being published soon, affirmed the extraordinary influence CHWs have on individuals and communities. SUHI is honored to have contributed a chapter in the book entitled *CHWs: A Bridge to Wellness*. If you would like to pre-order the book, please [click here](#).

SUHI is extremely proud of the staff’s contributions to public health’s seminal conference. Congratulations to all who participated!

### **Madeline Woodberry Awarded the Sewell Scholarship to APHA’s Annual Meeting**

In addition to presenting at APHA, Ms. Woodberry received the Sewell Scholarship which honors the important work of CHWs who promote health in their communities. Madeline is an advocate and a blessing for all the communities she works with.

### **CROWD and JourneyCare, Inc. Collaborate**

JourneyCare, Inc. and CROWD have joined forces. When hiring their first CHWs, JourneyCare (JC), the largest nonprofit for palliative, supportive and hospice care in Illinois, turned to CROWD for insight into the CHW role and for training of their new hires.

Kim Jay, Senior CHW Consultant and Trainer and Venoncia Bate-Ambrus, JC’s Founding Director of Workforce Development, developed and facilitated an overview of CHWs for JC’s clinical staff. The session included the varied roles of CHWs, their unique expertise and skills, and their addition to JC’s teams. Said Megan Andriano LPC, ATR, Manager of Grief Support Services & Integrative Care Services, “Venoncia and Kim gave an amazing presentation that really shared their passion for the CHW Apprenticeship and JourneyCare! My colleague also attended and we are both so excited about this opportunity for partnership to help better serve our communities!”

JC’s CHWs will participate in CROWD’s virtual CHW core skills training which includes modules on the social determinants of health, motivational interviewing and problem solving, among others. Additionally, a jointly developed training module on end-of-life-care will prepare the new CHWs as they embark on supporting hospice patients and their

families.

## CHWs Supporting Patients

Mr. Walker, a 63-year-old Caucasian, lives with multiple health conditions including congestive heart failure, hypertensive heart disease, and diabetes. He visited Mount Sinai Hospital's emergency department several times and was admitted to the hospital twice within six months, making him a strong candidate for SUHI's CHW Support Program, whereby CHWs provide support and guidance to patients at high risk for being readmitted to the hospital.

After initial reluctance, Mr. Walker agreed to participate in the program when Alyce Roberson, CHW, told him how she could provide support, from assisting him with finding a primary care physician (PCP) to obtaining transportation to medical appointments, and helping him understand and adhere to his medication regimen. Alyce educated him on how to take his medicine, arranged a follow-up appointment with his PCP, and listened to his concerns about in-person appointments given the pandemic, arranging a telehealth visit instead. Mr. Walker was grateful to remain in his home while receiving the health care he needed.

Alyce's guidance combined with ongoing emotional support has enabled Mr. Walker to be proactive in taking care of his health. He has expressed a desire to eat more healthfully and exercise, and has not returned to the hospital. Alyce continues to check-in with Mr. Walker, giving him her warmth, empathy, and listening ear.

## CROWD Welcomes New Staff!

We are thrilled that three new staff have joined CROWD's team:



### **Priscilla Bolander, Program Manager - Population Health**

Priscilla is a dedicated public health professional with over six years of experience working across fast-paced and challenging contexts. Prior to joining SUHI, Priscilla worked as the Manager of Health Promotion and Education with Medecins Sans Frontieres in Malawi, Kenya, and Honduras. Her passion to address health inequities ranges from facilitating support groups for low-income expectant mothers in Chicago to leading quality improvement efforts for adolescent HIV programs in Malawi. Priscilla's career exhibits her commitment to improving health outcomes for underserved communities both globally and locally. Her education includes an MSc in Reproductive and Sexual Health Research, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and a BA in Global Studies, University of Illinois,

Urbana-Champaign.



### **Chandrea Chaiyarat, Training and Intervention**

**Manager** Throughout her career, Chandrea has had a passion for helping individuals prepare and accelerate their current and future careers. Prior to joining SUHI, Chandrea served as a Training and Development Coordinator for a security company and a Professional Development Specialist for an educational state agency. In addition to having a passion for helping individuals with their careers, Chandrea has a passion for giving back to the community. She believes that each person faces life obstacles, and it is essential for them to know about the available resources within their communities. Her education includes an MA in

Human Resource Development, Northeastern Illinois University, and a BA in Anthropology/Sociology, Knox College.

**May Dartz, Learning Development Specialist** Prior to arriving at SUHI, May worked at Instituto del Progreso Latino as a Grants Specialist, interned at Live Forward (Athens, GA) in HIV Testing,



Counseling, and Community Outreach, and gained fifteen years of progressive experience as an ESL educator and program manager. An immigrant herself, May feels a deep commitment to health equity and to immigrant and refugee health. May's vision is that the diverse experiences of every participant will be valued and that her work at SUHI will help to ensure every member of the Chicagoland community has equal access to superior healthcare. Her education includes an MPH in Epidemiology, University of Georgia, a M.ED, English Education, University of Georgia, and a B.S. ED, English Education/ESL, University of

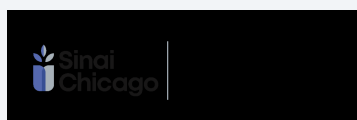
Georgia.

We are excited and grateful to have added such committed and talented individuals to CROWD's team. Hats off to Priscilla, Chandrea, and May!

## What is CROWD?

CROWD is here to assist you and your organization with "all-things CHW" - hiring and integration needs, training, program development, evaluation, and even CHW direct service. Please contact us to learn more; we are eager to talk with you!

To learn more about CHWs, CROWD, and how CROWD can help your work, visit [www.suhicrowd.org](http://www.suhicrowd.org)



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