



## **2022 Baltimore Health Equity Impact Grants Awards – Funded Partnerships**

### **Graduate Student – Community Research Grants**

- OWEL Cancer Education and Awareness Program (OCEAP)
- A Systematic Review of Food Security Screening & Referral Practices to Promote Health Equity in the Hospital System

### **Faculty – Community Research Grants**

- Continuation of COVID-19 Vaccination and Infectious Disease Testing Co-located with the Baltimore City Health Department’s Syringe Services Program
- Health Impacts of Neighborhood Revitalization on East Baltimore Residents: A Mixed-Methods Analysis
- Mixed Methods Impact Evaluation of PIVOT, a Women’s Reentry Program

# **Graduate Student – Community Grants**

## **Research Grants**

### **OWEL Cancer Education and Awareness Program (OCEAP)**

Graduate Student: Joy Chepkorir BSN, RN, Johns Hopkins School of Nursing

Community Partner: Dorcas Baker, Older Women Embracing Life (OWEL)

Women living with HIV/AIDS (WLH) are at heightened risk for cervical cancer, and those 45+ years old also have elevated risk for breast cancer. Older Women Embracing Life (OWEL), a community advocacy organization, has formed the bedrock for social, emotional, spiritual, and mental support for WLH and their families in Baltimore city. Based on an initial stakeholder meeting involving the student PI and the board members of OWEL, cervical and breast cancer literacy among WLH has been identified as a top priority as there is no program in place to focus on the health issues most salient to WLH. Cervical and breast cancers are preventable and can be detected early yet WLH, particularly Black women, bear a disproportionately higher burden of deaths from these cancers due, in large part, to limited cancer health literacy. To address this need, the purpose of this project is to develop and implement a cancer education and awareness program—OWEL Cancer Education and Awareness Program (OCEAP). This collaborative team will co-develop a curriculum for cervical and breast cancer education workshops. The workshops will be integrated into the organization's annual calendar to ensure that every participant in OWEL network is knowledgeable about these cancers.

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### **A Systematic Review of Food Security Screening & Referral Practices to Promote Health Equity in the Hospital System**

Graduate Student: Samantha Sundermeir, Doctoral Student, School of Public Health, Department of International Health

Community Partner: Lindsay Adams, Baltimore City Department of Planning

Food insecurity creates stark health inequities in the U.S., such that food-insecure individuals experience higher rates of diet-related chronic diseases and poor mental health outcomes. The healthcare system provides a key opportunity for carrying out food security screening and referrals, yet these practices are uncommon in this setting. To improve these practices in the Baltimore healthcare system, the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Innovation granted funds to design and implement an Accountable Health Communities (AHC) model to address patient health-related social needs and better connect them to resources. Funding ends this year, leaving hospitals with the decision as to whether they will continue offering these social resources, and potentially widening the gap in health inequities if discontinued. Through our partnership with

the Baltimore City Department of Planning, we have identified the need to conduct a systematic review of existing literature on hospital-based food security screening and referral policies and practices nationwide. We will use the results to disseminate best practices, lessons learned, and gaps-to-be-filled to hospital systems, community members and stakeholders in Baltimore. Using a community-engaged approach, our findings will inform recommendations for continuing food security screening and referrals in the hospital setting and promoting health equity.

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## **Faculty – Community Research Grants**

### **Research Grants**

#### **Continuation of COVID-19 Vaccinations and Infectious Disease Testing Co-located with the Baltimore City Health Department’s Syringe Services Program**

Faculty Partner: Jason Farley, PhD, MPH, ANP-BC, FAAN, FAANP, Professor, School of Nursing, Center for Infectious Disease and Nursing Innovation

Community Partner: Victoria Cargill, MD, MCSE, Assistant Commissioner, Baltimore City Health Department

People who inject drugs (PWID) have a higher prevalence of risk-factors associated with COVID-19 infection, as well as associated morbidity and mortality, further compounded by challenges in healthcare access. Co-location of syringe services, COVID-19 vaccination services and other communicable disease testing has proved an effective model to provide necessary interventions without creating additional barriers. Here we propose continuation of a partnership between the Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD), the Center for Infectious Disease and Nursing Innovation at the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing, and the Johns Hopkins Mobile Vaccine Unit to provide COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters, HIV and STI testing, wound care, and linkage to care services co-located with long running syringe support program based at BCHD. To date, this partnership has completed 5 co-located clinics, serving PWID and individuals living in the surrounding community in two Baltimore City zip codes with low vaccination rates and high rates of COVID-19 infection. Through the targeting of 5 more co-located clinics to provide essential services to this high-risk and underserved community, we posit these will not only advance health equity but also decrease the disparity in vaccine and care access they experience.

## **Health Impacts of Neighborhood Revitalization on East Baltimore Residents: A Mixed-Methods Analysis**

Faculty Partner: Agnes Usoro, MD, Instructor, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Department of Emergency Medicine

Community Partner: Daniel Kravetz, ReBUILD Metro

Advancements in medicine have improved the management of chronic health conditions, yet health inequities remain, particularly within economically disadvantaged communities. The environment in which individuals live, work, and socialize impacts their health and can contribute to health inequity. Interventions that target individual and health system factors can be limited if they do not address the social determinants of health. ReBUILD Metro is an independent nonprofit organization that aims to revive and strengthen the neighborhood and built environments of impoverished and abandoned communities. ReBUILD Metro currently assesses how neighborhood revitalization improves the health of markets. What is not understood is how revitalization improves the health and wellness of residents. This collaborative project between Johns Hopkins University and ReBUILD Metro will provide insight on the impact of neighborhood restoration on the health of people, and inform future revitalization projects, partnerships and research aimed at addressing the social determinants of health to improve health outcomes.

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## **Mixed Methods Impact Evaluation of PIVOT, a Women's Reentry Program**

Faculty Partner: Carl Latkin, Vice Chair, Department of Health, Behavior, and Society

Community Partner: Veronica Jackson, PIVOT, Inc.

Women are the fastest growing segment of the carceral population and face unique challenges upon re-entry. PIVOT was founded in 2018 to create a pathway for women impacted by the criminal justice system to reclaim their lives, rejoin their families, and reinvigorate their communities. Located in Baltimore City, PIVOT is the only program focused on re-entry for women in Maryland. More than 80% of PIVOT's graduates have been placed into employment, and none have reoffended, despite an overall recidivism rate of 73% in Baltimore City (1). Due to organizational limitations, the program's model has never been fully documented, evaluated, and published. We propose a mixed methods evaluation of PIVOT with a focus on two primary components of their program: workforce development training and substance use/mental health services. This evaluation will help uncover the nuances of why the program is so successful which may inform future program delivery and data tracking. The report will be shared with PIVOT staff, funders, and participants and made publicly available via PIVOT's website. This will also increase the external recognition of PIVOT, allowing PIVOT to attract additional funding and expand the reach of their program, ultimately reducing the recidivism rate among women in Baltimore City.