



REACHING TOGETHER

REACH (RACIAL AND ETHNIC APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY HEALTH)
GRANT QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2020 · VOL 1

MESSAGE FROM THE REACH PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Creetings from the REACH team at RAO Community Health! I hope that everyone is doing well and staying healthy and well during this unprecedented time. With so much going on, this year is flying by! Currently, we are in the middle of year two of the grant cycle. We have made some wonderful connections and partnerships with other community based organizations that are aiding us in our work towards reducing racial and ethnic health disparities within the greater Charlotte region. While we are making great strides, there is much more work to do! Please enjoy some of the updates around the work we are doing that we are excited to share with you.

Best Regards,
Ashley Carmenia



ACTIVE LIVING

Our partner, **Sustain Charlotte**, has been doing some great work! They are working with the West Boulevard Corridor and Lakeview Neighborhood on some great activities to connect safe and accessible places for physical activity. Examples of some of the activities that will be completed by the end of the year are the conducting of walkability audits, completion of Active Communities Tool modules for both neighborhoods, creation and installation of temporary wayfinding signage, and several transit coalition meetings to engage residents and teach them how to use the results of the audits to advocate for infrastructure to improve connectivity. We are very excited to have Sustain Charlotte as a partner to help carry out this strategy successfully.



PROVIDING LINKAGE TO CARE THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Cabarrus Health Alliance (CHA) hosts multiple lifestyle change interventions that aid in reducing and/or preventing chronic diseases, specifically programs that are tailored at preventing diabetes. CHA has partnered with health departments, community businesses and organizations in the counties of Cabarrus, Lincoln, Cleveland, Stanly, Union, Rowan, Gaston, Catawba, Mecklenburg and Iredell to provide Journey to a Healthier Me, using Prevent T2, an evidence-based diabetes prevention program. This curriculum emphasizes self-monitoring, self-efficacy, and problem-solving; provides for coach feedback; includes participant materials to support program goals; and calls for participant weigh-ins to track progress. Prevent T2 is part of the National Diabetes Prevention Program, led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Classes are set to begin Summer of 2020.

In partnership, **Amity Medical Group, Inc. (AMG)** and RX Clinic Pharmacy host diabetes self-management education and training (DSME/T) classes accredited by the American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE). This evidence-based program aims to promote positive changes in health behaviors and improved diabetes-related outcomes. Classes are held monthly at 6010 East W.T. Harris Blvd, Charlotte, NC; where topics range from healthy eating, physical activity, blood sugar monitoring, medication adherence, and problem-solving skills. A diabetic friendly breakfast, medical provider consultation, and open discussion with Q&A are included.

WELCOME JASMINE

We would like to formally introduce our new REACH Program Assistant, Jasmine Dingle. She has been a wonderful addition and we're happy to have her as part of our team!



APP CHAT

Coming soon! RAO will be launching an innovative and interactive community resource app that will be a wonderful one-stop shop for pertinent resource information. Areas of focus for resources within the app align with the REACH grant strategies -- nutrition, active living, and community clinical linkages. Once the app is completed, we will be looking for volunteers to test the app and provide feedback. Please contact Ashley Carmenia (acarmenia@raoassist.org) if you are interested in being a beta tester for the app.



BUILDING A HEALTHY COMMUNITY, THROUGH EDUCATION & RESOURCES

Loaves and Fishes

Food pantries play a major role in providing groceries for food-insecure households. Refrigeration can be a challenge for food banks and pantries since refrigerators can be costly to purchase, run, and maintain. In an effort to address this huge barrier, we partnered with Loaves and Fishes to introduce two brand new refrigeration units to St. Giles Presbyterian and Galilee, two of their busiest pantries. They are now able to offer additional nutritious, perishable foods to those in need.

In addition to the refrigerators, we designed billboards to bring attention for the need of fresh foods to be accessible to all; creating a call to action for the community to donate to Loaves and Fishes. Two billboards were placed in Mecklenburg County, while two others were located in Cabarrus and Rowan County advertising food pantry services from Cooperative Christian Ministries.

Central Piedmont Community College

College students are always in need of cost-effective meal options. With nearly two million students experiencing food insecurity across the country, the utilization of food pantries has increased. CPCC has a network of six campuses across Charlotte-Mecklenburg that all have Loaves & Fishes mini-sites. Supplying food is just as important as providing education on how to prepare it. In collaboration with the culinary department at CPCC-Main campus, we hosted a food pantry and nutrition education class with a cooking demo by Chef John, who cooked using items found in food pantries. Along with information on food insecurity and campus mini-sites, students left equipped with tips to cook quick, nutritious, yet flavorful meals on their own.

