



# REACHING TOGETHER

RACIAL ETHNIC APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY HEALTH (REACH)  
GRANT NEWSLETTER

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## A Message from the REACH Program Director

Hello and Happy Fall from the REACH Team! Where has the time gone? We have wrapped up Year 4 of the REACH grant, and have begun transitioning into the final plans for the last year of the grant. Year 4 was a successful year with the implementation of new pilot programs, continuation of projects, and partnership building. We continued our efforts with distributing COVID-19 and seasonal influenza vaccinations, educational materials, and disseminating media campaigns across multiple channels throughout our priority zip codes.

Year 5 will focus on sustainability planning with our partners to develop plans of continuation for all the impactful work we have implemented over the last four years. We are excited to get started on this year's objectives and look forward to working with our partners as we continue expanding the reach of programs and resources.

In Health,

Ashley Carmenia



## 2nd Annual C.A.R.E. Village Recap

Last month, we hosted our second annual CARE Village in Cabarrus County in partnership with Cabarrus Health Alliance (CHA) and the Boys and Girls Club of Cabarrus County. Our team, community partners, and volunteers worked hard to provide a safe and collective space for the community to access various resources dedicated to health and wellness. Resources included seasonal flu vaccines, free at-home COVID-19 tests, health education, health and wellness screenings (height, weight, blood pressure, and A1C testing), rapid testing (HIV, syphilis, and Hepatitis C), a yoga class, and a healthy cooking demonstration with Chef Cordell.

We cannot thank our community partners and local organizations enough for volunteering their space, time, and participation. We had a great turn out with 18 vendors and over 100 community members in attendance!

In our continuation to bring local resources directly into the community, we'll be partnering with Lakeview Neighborhood Alliance for their annual Fall Festival on October 7<sup>th</sup>. Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) to stay tuned!





## Charlotte Passes Major New Land Use Policy

On August 22nd, Charlotte City Council voted to pass the [Unified Development Ordinance \(UDO\)](#). The UDO is a vital tool in enacting the Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Notably, the UDO allows for the creation of more housing — which is needed now more than ever amid a housing crisis.

The UDO also reorganizes Charlotte's zoning definitions, requires more green space in developments, bolsters tree canopy-preservation efforts, changes parking standards, and other updates. These are all essential measures in creating a city that is less dependent on cars and is more welcoming to pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders.

Sustain Charlotte shares concerns about displacement in the city and encourages City Council to adopt anti-displacement strategies when they are proposed by the Neighborhood Equity and Stabilization (NEST) Commission. Displacement is already happening in many neighborhoods traditionally zoned only for single-family homes. More housing options across the city will help to provide additional homes within existing neighborhoods as Charlotte's population grows.

A healthy city is one in which all people can afford to live within walking distance of parks, public transportation, jobs, and daily destinations. The UDO will not only allow more housing to be built across the city, but will also support active transportation investments to be prioritized in areas that need it most.

# Continuing to Provide Access and Education to Fresh & Healthier Foods

We are happy to announce that our manuscript, "Specialty Box Program: Implementing Tailored Food Boxes to Serve the Community During the COVID-19 Pandemic", based on our work in partnership with Loaves and Fishes/Friendship Trays, will be published in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) DNPAO's upcoming issue of Health Promotion Practice (HPP) journal.

We are also delighted to share that we were awarded another year of funding for the Association of State Public Health Nutritionist (ASPHN) CABBAGE grant! For this upcoming year, we will be partnering with Demetria Cox-Thomas to lead our initiative of bringing gardens and garden education to another local early childhood education (ECE) center in our priority population. This year we plan to add garden training and education for ECE staff members, along with education for families.

In addition, we will be continuing our work to (1) increase food access and adherence to nutrition policies and guidelines, (2) bring innovative new food venues, and (3) spread awareness of nutritional needs of the student population in local higher education settings.



## Welcome Michelle Boyd: Data Analyst

Michelle Boyd is a public health data analyst with a passion for using data to tell a story and inform best practices for communities of color. While she originally pursued a career as a physician, the COVID-19 pandemic encouraged her to take a step back and think about how to positively impact health communities on a larger scale through public health and epidemiology. Michelle obtained her Master's in Public Health from Indiana University this past August, and is excited to continue making a difference in the Charlotte area and beyond.





## App Chat

Have you downloaded the C.A.R.E. App? If you haven't, you're missing out! We are continuously working to ensure the app is updated with new features and resources. The latest version includes a new section of resources for Mental/Behavioral Health and SNAP/EBT retailers, updated breastfeeding/lactation resources, and information on how to access free at-Home COVID-19 tests! Be sure to update/download the app to check out the new features, as well as community resource events happening near you!



## Expanding our Reach into the Community

As we enter into the fifth and final year of the REACH grant, we look forward to (1) continuing our work in diabetes prevention in our priority populations and (2) developing a referral system for our patient database at RAO. We are currently working with the Lakeview neighborhood to provide diabetes prevention education to their residents. This will include promoting Diabetes Prevention Programs (DPP) hosted by Centralina Regional Council and Amity

Medical Group, in addition to training local residents to become diabetes educators.

We are underway in the development and implementation of our referral system. Many of our patients at RAO encounter daily challenges with transportation, substance abuse, mental health, and other health disparities and socioeconomic issues. With the referral system, our patients will have the option to be entered into the statewide coordinated care network known as NCCARE360. This network will connect our patients to other community partners to provide them with the comprehensive care they need and deserve.

To find out more information about the REACH Grant, click [here](#).



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