



## National Community Partner Forum Seeks to Realize the Promise of Community-Engaged Research

**July 14, 2011** – Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (CCPH) and the Center for Community Health Education Research and Service (CCHERS) are pleased to announce they have been awarded funding from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) for the National Community Partner Forum, “Realizing the Promise of Community-Engaged Health Disparities Research.” Designed “by and for” community partners involved in health disparities research, the forum will examine and address the challenges and issues they face, enhance their knowledge and skills, and build a network for ongoing shared learning, mentoring and professional development. Three critical questions will guide the forum:

- How do we ensure that communities most affected by health disparities are at the tables that decide what research gets conducted, how and by whom?
- How do we support communities most affected by health disparities to conduct and manage research?
- How do we ensure that social justice is central to community-engaged research?

In describing the need for the forum, CCHERS Executive Director Elmer Freeman explains, “The National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other research funding agencies identify community engagement in research as central to understanding and addressing health disparities. Substantial investments are being made to support faculty members and academic institutions to engage communities and to conduct research in and with communities. As more community organizations like ours initiate and conduct research – whether in partnership with institutions or not – it is clear that we need parallel supports.”

Ann-Gel Palermo, Chair of the Harlem Community & Academic Partnership and member of the forum planning committee adds, “Communities need to be prepared for the avalanche of health research that’s coming down the pike. We need to arm ourselves with the knowledge and skills to not only engage as partners in research, but to inform what research gets funded, how it is carried out and how it is used. CCPH is ideally positioned for a national leadership role in this arena. The health of our communities is at stake.”

Indeed, as CCPH Board Chair and community activist Susan Gust observes, “The forum builds on CCPH’s long-standing commitment to working to ensure that the reality of community-engaged research exceeds the rhetoric. In 2006, we held a summit of community partners involved in community-university partnerships. We found that we needed and valued a safe space for sharing our legitimate concerns about our relationships with universities while at the same time expressing a deep desire to mobilize university assets and research findings for social justice aims. The recommendations and relationships formed at the summit have shaped CCPH’s activities since and are an essential foundation for the important work ahead.”

The forum will be held in Boston; the date and other details will be announced shortly. As planning committee member Fernando Pineda-Reyes, Executive Director of Community, Research, Education and Awareness (CREA) Results notes, “Forum participants will include community partners like myself who are involved in NIH Clinical and Translational Science Awards, as well as those from CDC Prevention Research Centers, NIMHD Centers of Excellence, Native American Research Centers for Health and other initiatives. This is an unprecedented opportunity for us to come together to share our best practices as community researchers, collaborate to address our concerns, and move forward in our efforts to eliminate health disparities.”

To receive announcements about the forum date and other details, email CCPH at [programs@ccph.info](mailto:programs@ccph.info)  
Learn more about CCPH at <http://ccph.info> and the previously held summit at <http://bit.ly/q3mmxM>  
Learn more about CCHERS at <http://cchers.org>  
Learn more about NIMHD at <http://www.nimhd.nih.gov/>

*Funding for this conference is being made possible in part by 1R13MD006705-01 from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities. The views expressed in written conference materials or publications and by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services; nor does mention by trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.*

### **Forum Planning Committee (as of July 14, 2011)**

Willie Mae Bennett-Fripp, Executive Director, Committee for Boston Public Housing, Boston, MA

Grace Damio, Deputy Director, (NIH Export) Center for Eliminating Health Disparities Among Latinos, Hispanic Health Council, Hartford, CT

Elmer Freeman, Executive Director, Center for Community Health Education Research and Service, Boston, MA

Susan Gust, Community Activist, Minneapolis, MN

Loretta Jones, Founder & CEO, Healthy African American Families, Los Angeles, CA

Ann-Gel Palermo, Chair, Harlem Community & Academic Partnership, New York, NY

Fernando Pineda-Reyes, Executive Director, Community, Research, Education & Awareness (CREA) Results, Denver, CO

Alex Pirie, Coordinator, Immigrant Service Providers Group/Health, c/o Somerville Community Corporation, Somerville, MA

Jean Schensul, Senior Scientist and Founding Director, Institute for Community Research, Hartford, CT

Peggy Shepard, Executive Director, WE-ACT for Environmental Justice, New York, NY

Eric Wat, Director, Research and Evaluation Unit, Special Service for Groups, Los Angeles, CA