



Mobilizing Civic Engagement to Advance Community Health

ASPPH PRESENTS
WEBINAR 

ASPPH ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOLS & PROGRAMS
OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Moderator



Tim Leshan, MPA

Chief External Relations & Advocacy Officer
ASPPH

Panelists



**Elizabeth Ablah, PhD,
MPH, CPH**

Professor &
Vice Chair in Population Health
University of Kansas
School of Medicine - Wichita



**McClain Bryant
Macklin, MBA, JD**

Chief Policy & Impact Officer
Health Forward Foundation



**Christina M. Pacheco,
JD, MPH**

Assistant Professor
University of Kansas Medical Center



**McClain Bryant
Macklin, MBA, JD**

Chief Policy & Impact Officer
Health Forward Foundation



Health Forward
FOUNDATION

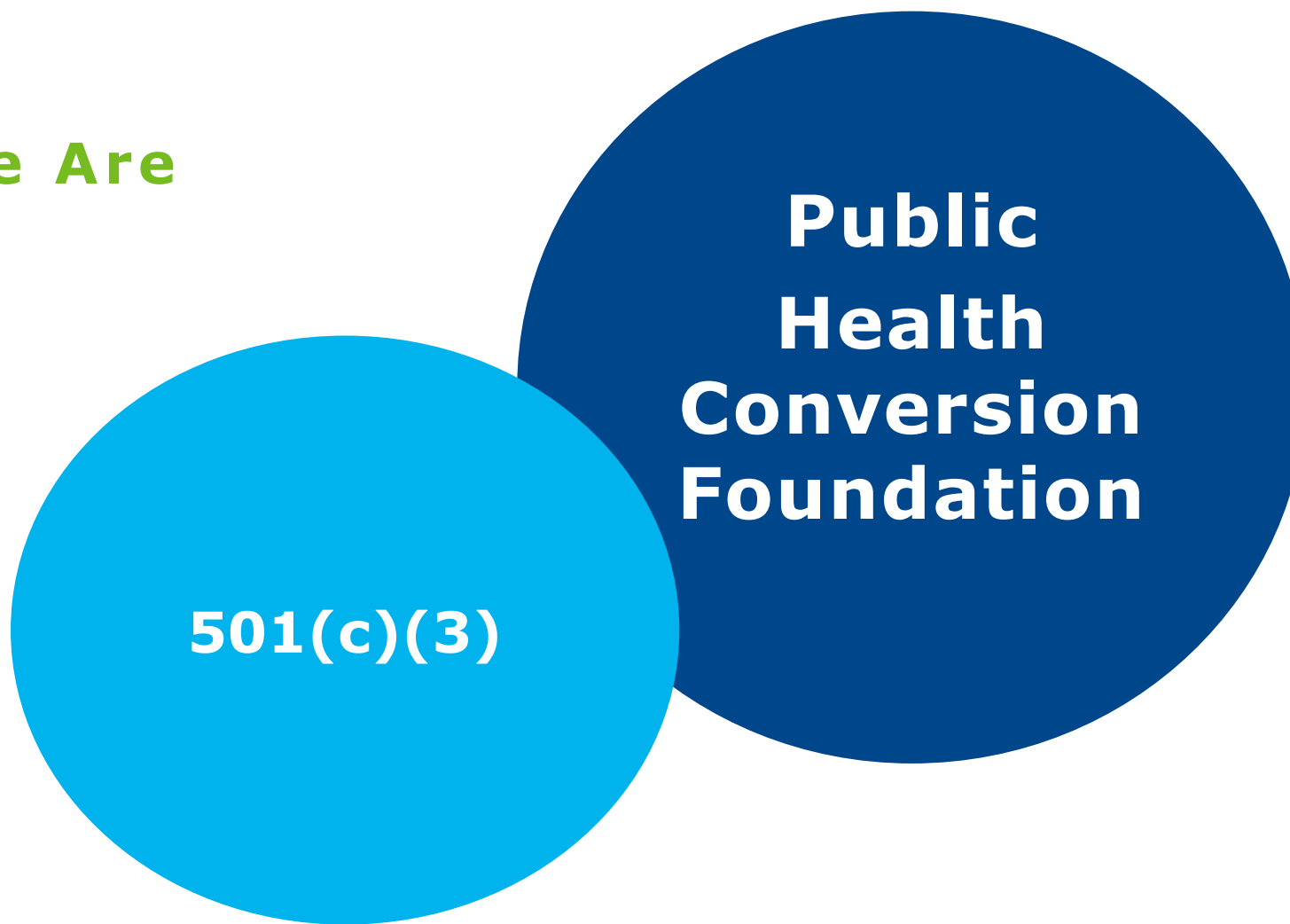
**ASPPH Webinar:
Mobilizing Civic Engagement
to Advance Community
Health**

October 22, 2025

McClain Bryant Macklin,
Chief Policy and Impact Officer



Who We Are





PURPOSE AND MISSION

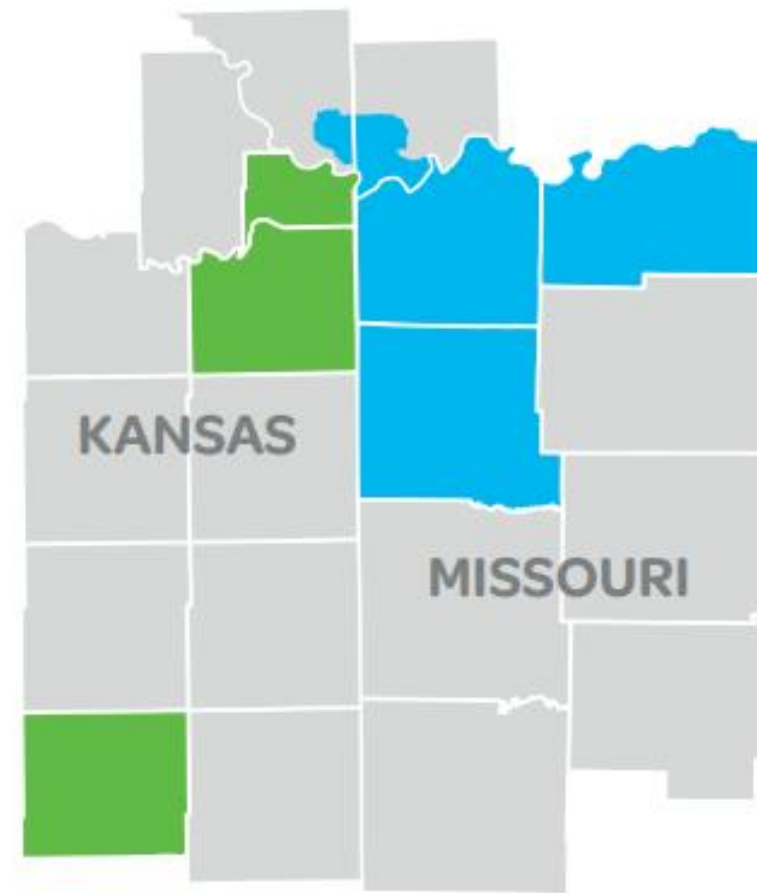
Mission

Achieve health equity and secure a fair and just region through **leadership, advocacy,** and **resources.**

Purpose

Every day we work to support and build inclusive, powerful, and healthy communities characterized by racial equity and economically just systems.

SERVICE AREA: 6 Counties





OUR PURPOSE

Every day we work to support and build inclusive, powerful, and healthy communities characterized by racial equity and economically just systems

INTENDED IMPACT

High-quality, equitable community health ecosystem
Strong community organizations and voices
Equitable and just places that foster health and economic advancement

PLACE

STRATEGIES

Advance safe, healthy, and affordable housing and homeownership
Advance digital access, literacy, and equity

OUTCOMES

Increased affordable housing and homeownership opportunities as a pathway to health and wealth creation
Reduced disparities in digital access and literacy

POWER

STRATEGIES

Advance capacity building, leadership development, and connectedness
Advance participation in democracy
Support community-driven efforts to redistribute and share power

OUTCOMES

Stronger, more effective community-based organizations and leaders
Increased effectiveness of community organizing and civic participation
Increased community voice and shared power in philanthropy decisions

PLATFORM

STRATEGIES

Support cross-sector efforts to advance racial equity and economic justice throughout public, nonprofit, philanthropic, and private sectors
Shape community understanding around racial equity and economic inclusion as a pathway to health equity
Leverage Health Forward's capital resources to further advance racial equity and economically just systems

OUTCOMES

Increased action on issues of racial equity and economic justice across key sectors in our community	Increased community knowledge of the connection between race equity, economic inclusion, and health equity	Increased financial and social capital targeted at racial equity and economic advancement
--	--	---

PEOPLE

STRATEGIES

Strengthen capacity and effectiveness of partners to provide whole-person, equity-centered care
Advance equity-centered innovation and infrastructure across the community health ecosystem
Champion an inclusive and culturally responsive health sciences workforce
Advocate for policies that improve health

OUTCOMES

Advance equity-centered, whole-person care	Increased competency and capability of organizations and workforce	Increased coordination, alignment, and commitment among systems and actors in the health sciences ecosystem	Equitable access to high-quality, whole-person care
--	--	---	---

Why We Do Advocacy

- **Resources + Leadership + Advocacy = Systems Change**



How We Do Advocacy

- We Lobby
- We Fund Litigation
- Support C3 Advocacy
- Support C4 Advocacy
- We Do Not Engage In Partisan Politics





Health Forward
FOUNDATION

Examples of Our Advocacy

Medicaid Expansion Missouri

- **2020 Ballot Initiative**
- **Previous failed legislative attempts**
- **Lawsuits to enforce**
- **A multi-sector effort**





Examples of Our Advocacy

Redistricting Missouri

- **Congressional Maps Gerrymandered by the Legislature**
- **Opposition ballot initiative**



Why Is Advocacy Critical

- Declining number of non-profits engaged in Advocacy
- Advocacy leads to Empowerment
- Advocacy leads to Resources
- Advocacy is Key to Democracy





**Elizabeth Ablah,
PhD, MPH, CPH**

Professor &
Vice Chair in Population Health
University of Kansas
School of Medicine - Wichita



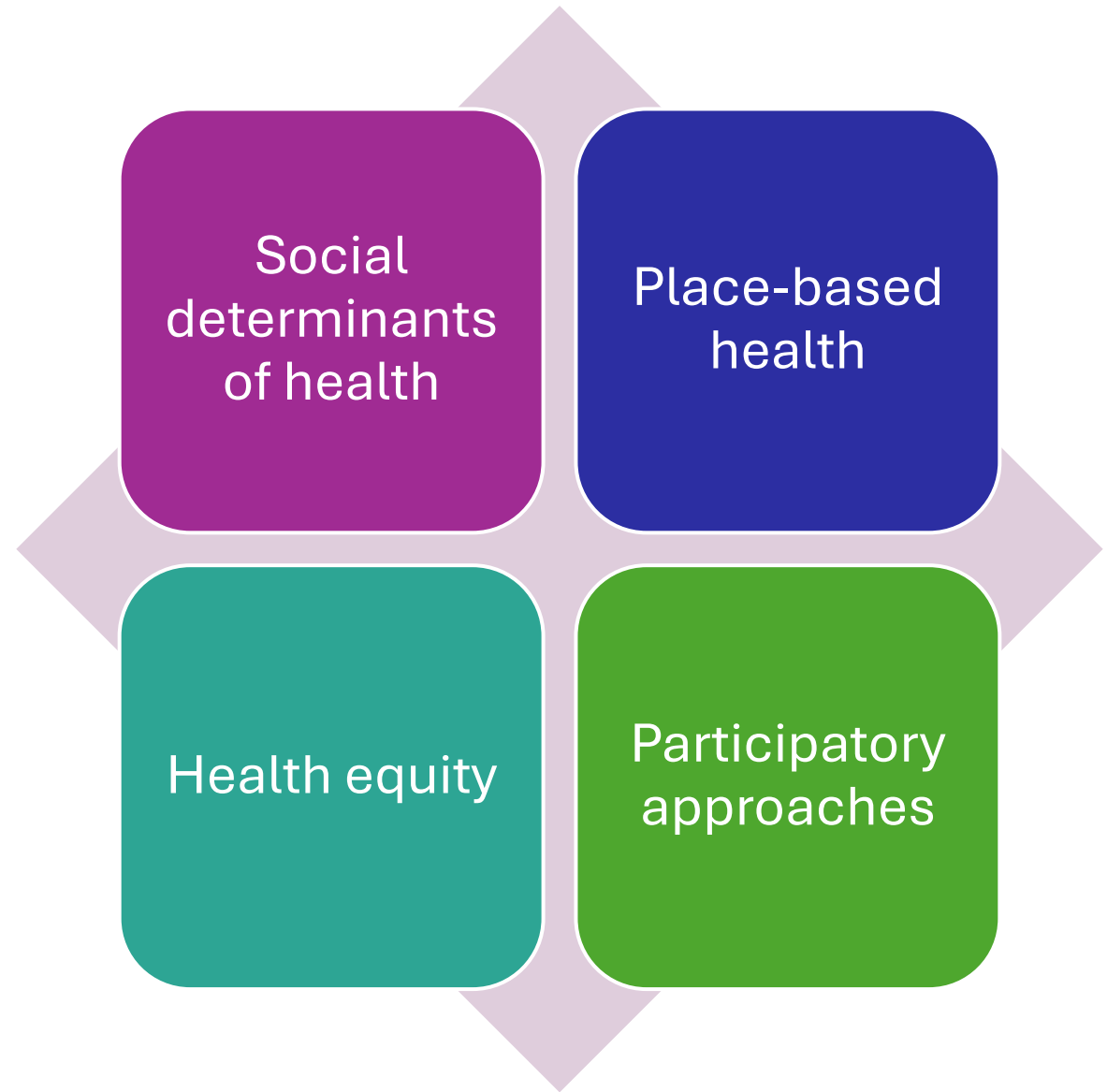
Mobilizing Civic Engagement to Advance Community Health: 29th & Grove Contamination Site

Elizabeth Ablah, PhD, MPH, CPH

Department of Population Health

University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita

Community Health



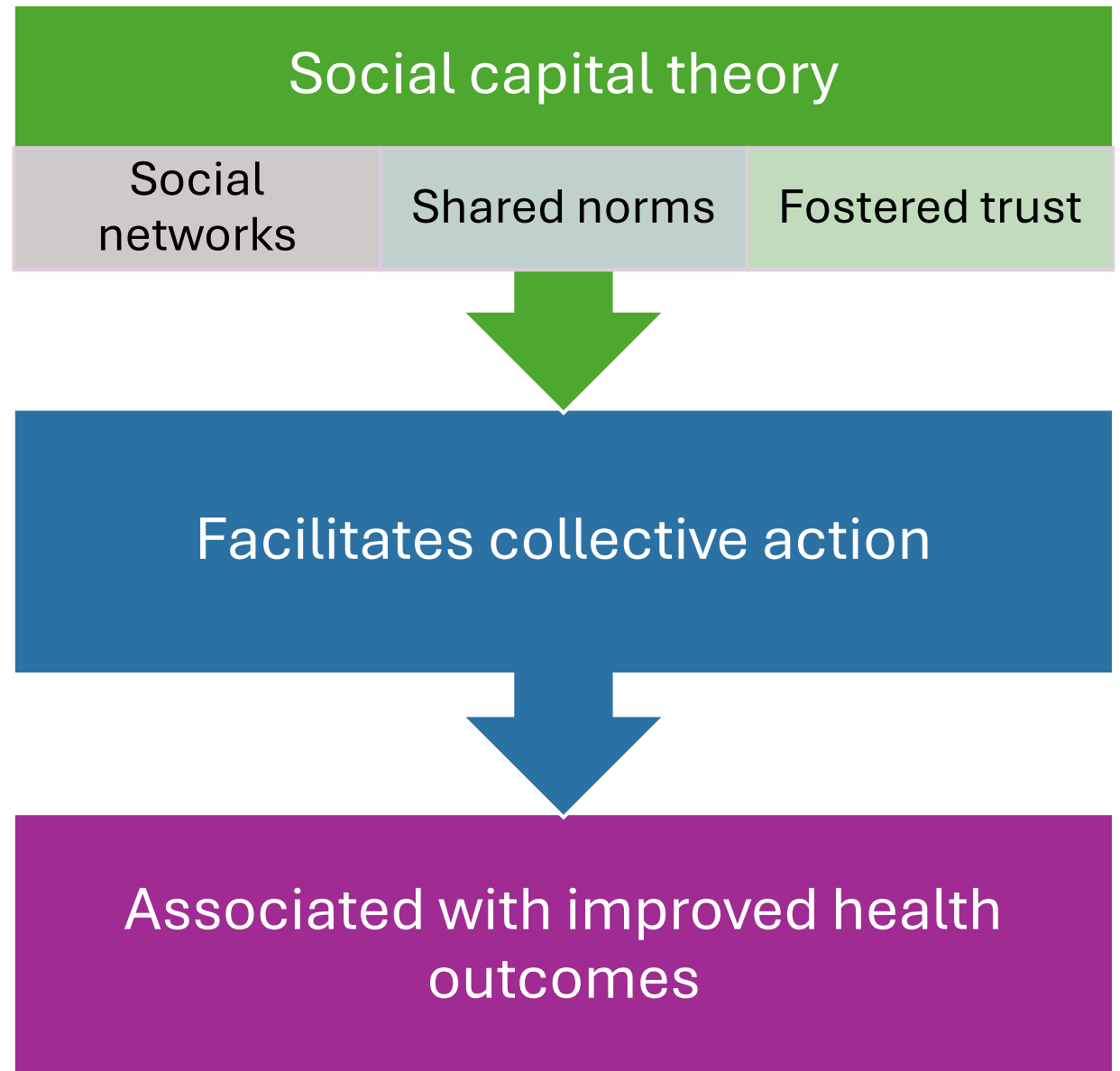
Civic Participation

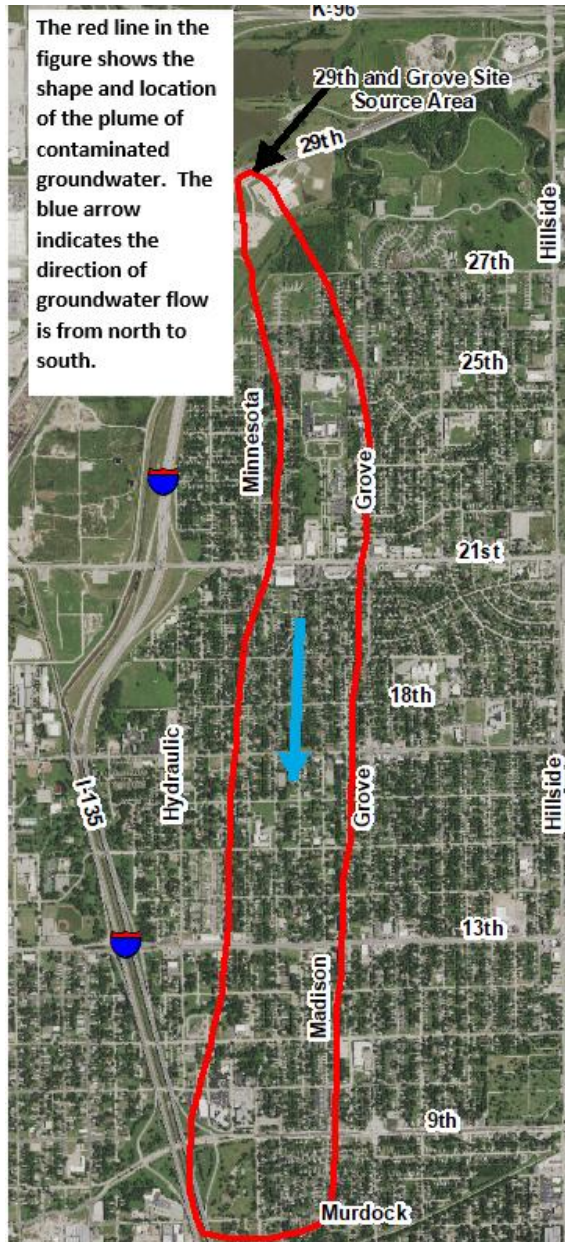
Protective factor

A driver of change



Community Health and Civic Participation





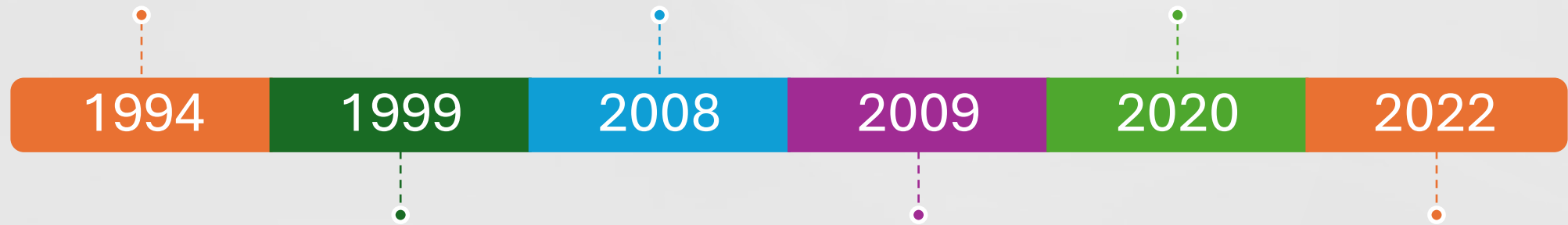
Groundwater Contamination Identified

Timeline

Union Pacific
Railroad spill in
Wichita, Kansas
railyard –
identified in
1994

First feasibility
study of cleanup
options

Second
feasibility study
of remedial
alternatives



KDHE confirmed
contamination

Interim remedial
measures began

Residents
learned of
contamination



Communications

Sparse

Fragmented

Technical language

Outcomes



Health
Concerns



Devalued
Properties



Residents
Feeling
Devalued



Contributions

- In 2024, Kansas Legislature made state dollars available, with required match, for narrow definition of health tests
- Regular meetings of representatives from:
 - City of Wichita
 - Sedgwick County
 - Kansas Health Foundation
 - Federally qualified health centers
 - Health leaders
 - Residents

Kansas Health Foundation



Hired KUSM-W to
coordinate efforts



Organized fundraising
efforts

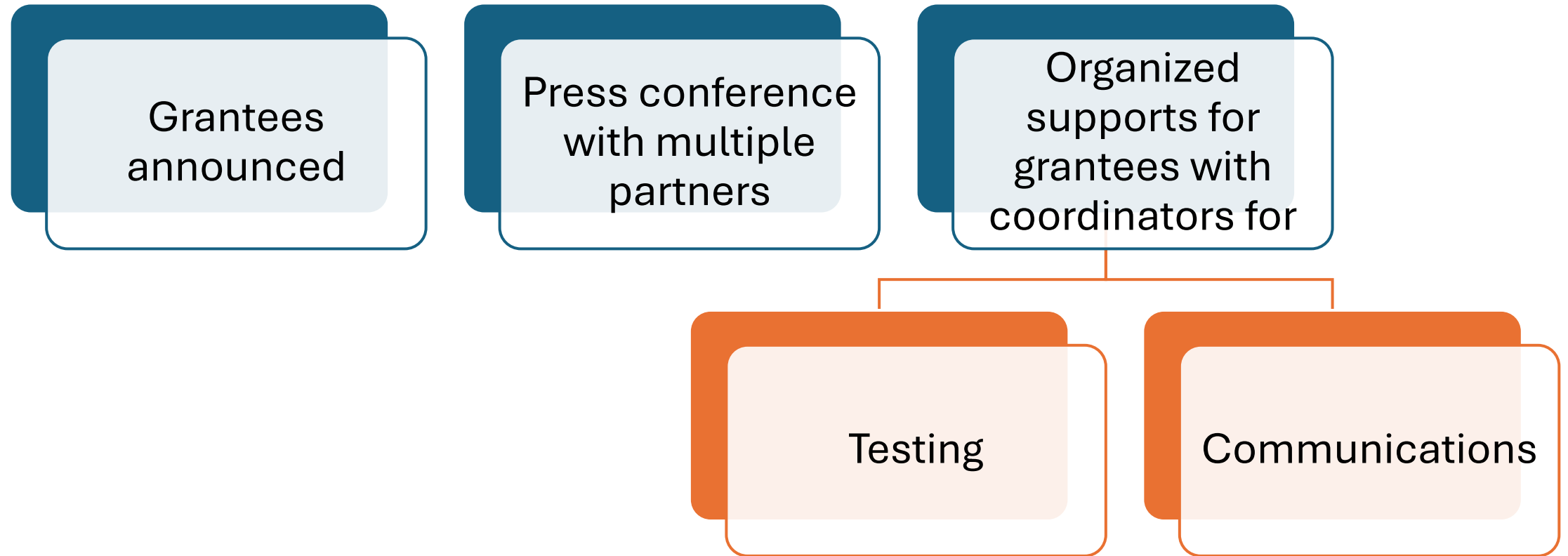


Offered a grant program



Recruited community
advisory group

Progress, So Far



Intended Outcomes

1

Establish
Shared
Purpose

2

Improve Trust

3

Strengthen
Community
Cohesion

4

Improve
Health
Outcomes



Christina Pacheco, JD, MPH

Assistant Professor
University of Kansas Medical Center



Health Equity Starts with Us: Community-Driven Change in Action

Christina M. Pacheco, JD, MPH

Assistant Professor

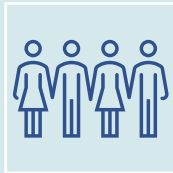
Family Medicine & Community Health

University of Kansas Medical Center

Communities Organizing to Promote Equity



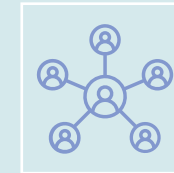
**COMMUNITIES
ORGANIZING TO
PROMOTE
EQUITY**



Goal of engaging with communities as health experts to address equity issues.

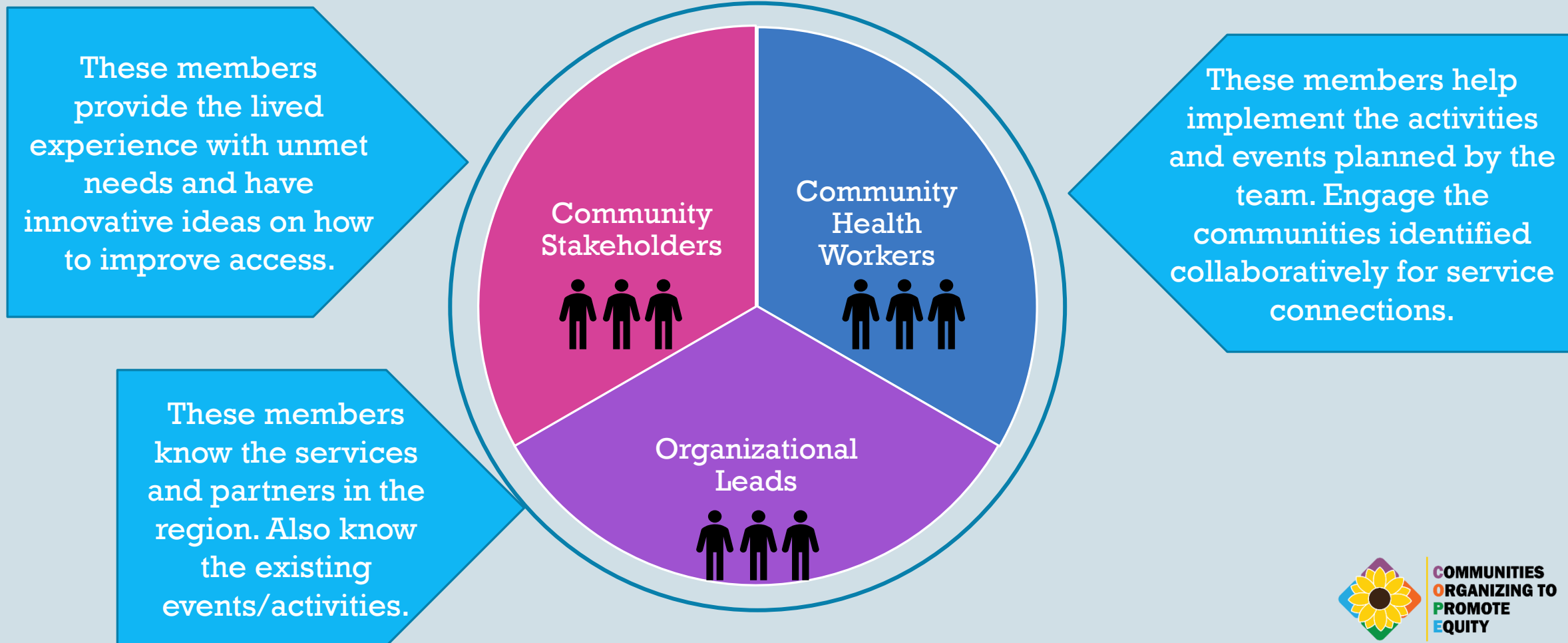


Funded through a CDC grant to KDHE to address COVID-19 health disparities



Activates a network of public health and community-based organizations, CHWs and partners in 20 counties throughout Kansas.

Local Health Equity Action Teams



COPE on the Ground



**West & Central
CHW PM
Angela Scott**



**RCL West
Clarissa Carrillo**



**RCL Central
Nadine Long**



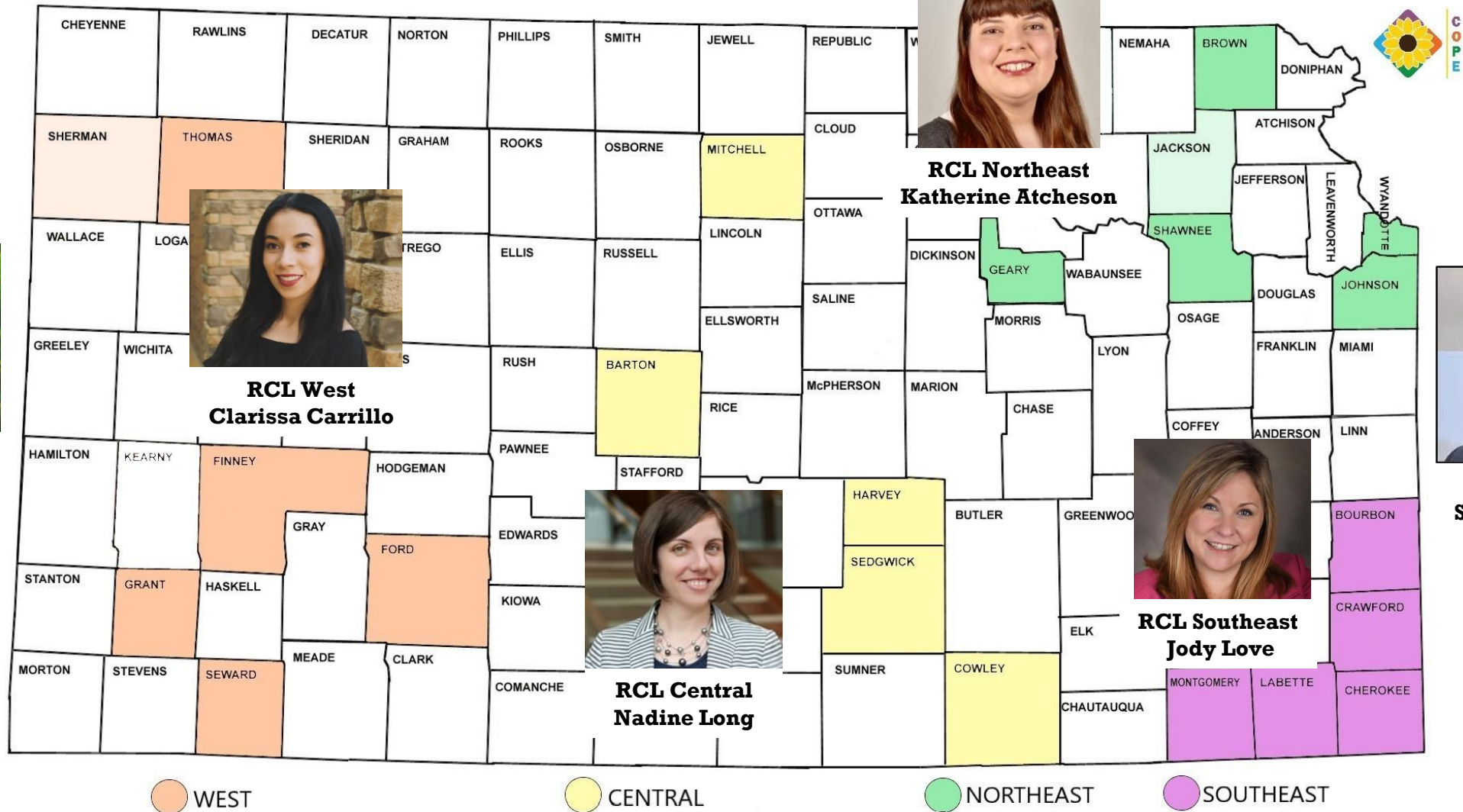
**RCL Northeast
Katherine Acheson**



**RCL Southeast
Jody Love**



**North &
Southeast CHW
PM
Ton Miras**

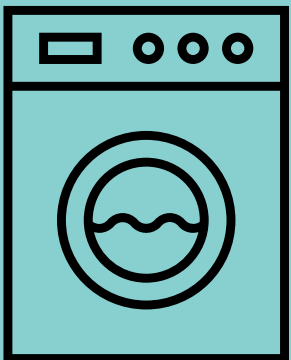


Example: Laundry Love

- 98 Laundry Events Hosted
- > 2,680 individuals served
- Strategy highlights:
 - Initiating local Laundry Love chapters
 - Funding installation of laundry equipment
 - Expanding laundry events to serve as connection points to other resources
 - Addressing social isolation



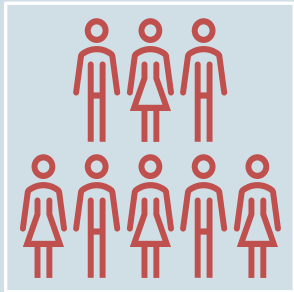
<https://www.kansascity.com/news/local/article278865859.html>



Across 10 counties, our communities helped residents with more than 17,000 loads of laundry

COPE Outcomes

[Communities Organizing to Promote Equity 2024 Celebration Video - YouTube]



753
Individuals
recruited
as LHEAT
members



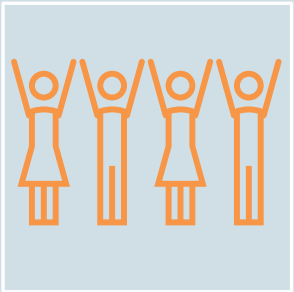
2,724
Partner
Organizations



384
LHEAT
Activities

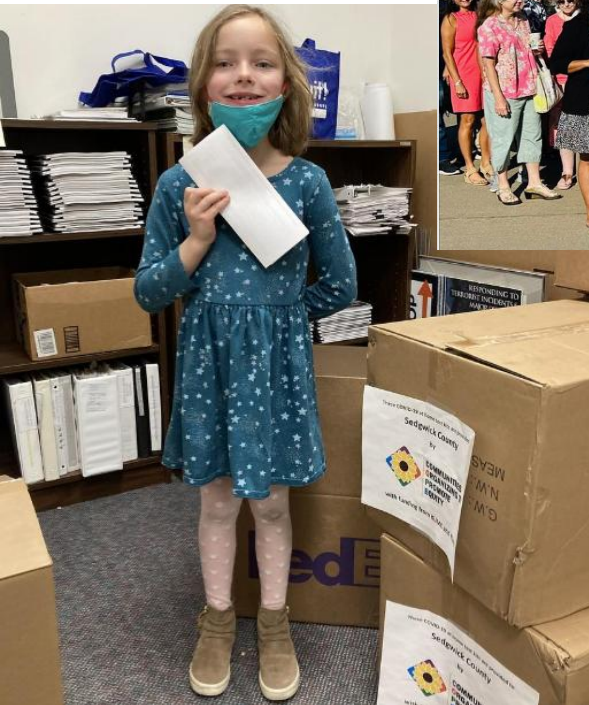


11,528
Direct
services
to
clients



235,184
Kansans
reached
**68% were
rural
residents**

Health Equity Priority Areas	COPE	LHEAT-led	Estimated
	Counties	Activities	Community Members Reached
	N=20	N=384	N=155,243
Community Resource Education & Connection	18	71	47,891
Food Access and Nutrition	15	52	55,546
Dignity Initiatives	16	84	6,256
Childcare & Youth Development	11	30	15,738
Transportation	12	22	9,931
Employment, Education, & Financial Literacy	9	46	874
Healthcare Education, Access to Care, and Preventive Screenings	9	26	6,448
COVID-19 Vaccination & Testing	7	12	2,940
Housing, Houselessness, Landbanks	6	8	1,847
Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Services	6	8	989
Woman and Infant Health	7	15	2,012
Community Cohesion	7	10	4,771



What is your role?

Johnny Curtis-Parker
(CHW Brown and
Jackson Counties) and
Ton Miras Neira (COPE
CHW Project Manager)
emphasized to
legislators that CHWs
bring cost savings to
health systems by
engaging in
preventative care.




Community Action: Advocacy Starts Local

From Practice to Evidence: Honoring Community Wisdom

Evidence-Based Practice	Practice-Based Evidence
Peer-reviewed studies	Lived experience
Randomized trials	Community-led solutions
Systematic reviews	Stories, shared knowledge, cultural insights, traditional healing
Standardized interventions	Adaptive, hyper-local innovations
Metrics & data	Human connection, community trust



A wide-angle photograph of a dirt road stretching into the distance. The road is flanked by dry, hilly terrain with sparse vegetation. The sky is bright with wispy clouds, and the sun is visible in the upper right corner, creating a lens flare effect. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

**When the dust
settles, we will have
work to do — and we
will be ready, because
health equity starts
with us.**

Recording

This webinar has been recorded and will be available on the webinar landing page soon.



Contact: externalrelations@asp-ph.org

Upcoming

ASPPH *PRESENTS* WEBINAR SERIES

Upcoming ASPPH *Presents* Webinar:

A Federal Update and the Power of Advocacy

November 19, 2025, 12:00 – 1:00 PM ET





THANK YOU!

ASPPH PRESENTS
WEBINAR 

ASPPH ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOLS & PROGRAMS
OF PUBLIC HEALTH