“M-CHE is committed to improving the health of residents in the state of Maryland and developing models for the region and nation.”

DR. STEPHEN B. THOMAS
PROFESSOR, HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION AND DIRECTOR, MARYLAND CENTER FOR HEALTH EQUITY

THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
CENTER FOR HEALTH EQUITY

The Maryland Center for Health Equity (M-CHE) is committed to accelerating the advancement of health promotion and the elimination of health disparities to achieve health equity.

OUR MISSION
To advance the elimination of health disparities and achievement of health equity through innovative research, teaching and service.

OUR VISION
A world in which everyone has an equitable opportunity to live a healthy life.

SIGNATURE INITIATIVES
Designed to address the Healthy People 2020 definition of health disparities: “...a particular type of health difference that is closely linked with social, economic, and/or environmental disadvantage...” our projects include:

BUILDING TRUST BETWEEN MINORITIES AND RESEARCHERS: a research-focused educational tool with an interactive web-based portal and two curricula: 1) for the community entitled Enhancing Minority Engagement in Research and 2) for the research team, Becoming a Self-Reflective Researcher: Successfully Engaging Minority Communities, with the goals of:

- Increasing participation of minority populations in public health and biomedical research, including clinical trials.
- Strengthening capacity of investigators, institutional review board members, and other research personnel to work effectively with minority communities.
- Creating a sustainable infrastructure of training and educational initiatives to improve minority participation in research.

Visit: http://sph.umd.edu/buildingtrust
**Research:** Our research is grounded in “Fourth Generation Research,” which applies and translates current knowledge about the causes and potential solutions to health disparities to research interventions. We engage multidisciplinary scholars and work with community leaders to design, implement, evaluate and sustain scientifically sound and culturally-tailored interventions, such as:

- **Uncovering and Addressing Cultural Beliefs Behind Vaccine Racial Disparities:** This study seeks to uncover the factors responsible for lower immunization rates in African American adults and test the effectiveness of new communication materials to increase routine and emergency immunization.

- **Sisters Healthy and Physically Empowered (SHAPE):** This is a beauty salon-based study that aims to assess the health behavior and physical activity support networks of African American women, and to determine if these networks vary by age or physical activity level of the women.

- **Health Advocates In-Reach and Research (HAIR):** Building upon a decade of community based research, this initiative, funded by the NIH National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, establishes and maintains a network of Black and Hispanic barbershops and beauty salons that have been mobilized as venues for the delivery of health promotion and disease prevention services designed to eliminate health disparities and advance health equity. An example of our work through HAIR is the Colorectal Cancer (CRC) Screening and Prevention Project, in partnership with the CIGNA Foundation, which is training barbers and stylists to provide CRC information to customers and offers science-based information to clients about their individual risks for developing CRC.

Learn more: [http://sph.umd.edu/healthequityresearch](http://sph.umd.edu/healthequityresearch)

**Education:** The goals of our educational programs are to:

- Assist minority communities in understanding research, research methods, human subject protections and benefits of research.

- Increase capacity of researchers to become “culturally confident” investigators, committed to establishing ethical working relationships with minority communities, and to recruit and retain minorities in research.

- Accelerate the research career development of scholars committed to achieving health equity by eliminating health disparities.

**Collegium of Scholars:** A monthly educational forum that engages scholars in meaningful discussions regarding the complexities and impact of race, racism, ethnicity, gender, class, and discrimination on health and wellness [http://sph.umd.edu/collegium-scholars](http://sph.umd.edu/collegium-scholars)

**Community Outreach and Engagement:** MCHE has established and maintains a community-engaged research infrastructure based upon trust and trustworthiness which includes:

- **Our Maryland Community Research Advisory Board** consists of researchers and community members working to build trust between minority communities and researchers, and ensure that the results of health science research benefit vulnerable populations. It provides researchers with community insight to strengthen their research and inform data collection materials.

- The Susan B. Mona Center: a partnership with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington and Doctor’s Community Hospital will provide an array of high quality integrated services in primary care, preventive, dental, legal and other social services to residents in communities surrounding Temple Hills, Maryland. The services will seek to promote healthy lifestyles, enhance health literacy, and reduce chronic diseases.

- The Mission of Mercy & Health Equity Festival: working in partnership with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington and the Maryland State Dental Association, MCHE provides two days of emergency dental, medical, public health and wellness services to Maryland residents in need.

**About M-CHE**

M-CHE is an NIH-designated Center of Excellence in Race, Ethnicity, and Health Disparities Research, funded by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities.

**M-CHE Contact:**

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