

CENTER FOR 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

Our programs are designed to address the Healthy People 2030 definition of health disparities: "...a particular type of health difference that is closely linked with social, economic, and/or environmental disadvantage..."

They 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 – Enhancing Minority Engagement in Research and 2) for researchers – Becoming a Self-Reflective Researcher: Successfully Engaging 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: sph.umd.edu/buildingtrust



Stephen B. Thomas PhD

Professor, Department of Health Policy & Management and Director, Maryland Center for Health Equity

“M-CHE is committed to improving the health of Marylanders, and developing models for the region and nation.”

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Research:

Our research is grounded in “Fourth Generation Disparities Research,” which applies and translates current knowledge about the causes and potential solutions for 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.
- » **Mission of Mercy and Health Equity Festival:** Organized in collaboration with the Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington and the Maryland State Dental Association, these events (hosted at the University of Maryland, College Park) provide emergency free dental clinics, as well as wraparound health care services. Our faculty and students also conduct research studies at the event, which allows us to better characterize the population utilizing the services and to propose programs to alleviate the unmet dental, health and social needs of this group.
- » **Health Advocates In-Reach and Research (HAIR):** Building upon a decade of community-based research, this initiative established 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. It offers science-based information to clients about their individual risks for developing CRC.

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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.

sph.umd.edu/collegium-scholars

Community Outreach and Engagement:

M-CHE has established and maintains a community-engaged research infrastructure based upon trust and trustworthiness which includes:

- » Our **Maryland Community Research Advisory Board** consisting 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 D. Mona Center for Health & Wellness:** 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. This initiative includes an urban farm co-located with the clinic.



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PUBLIC HEALTH
CENTER FOR HEALTH EQUITY

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