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Giving thanks to the Health Equity community!



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Thank you for all of your work in support of health equity both in the U.S. and globally!

Whether you work in a community organization dedicated to advancing social justice in your neighborhood; or are building a new park or recreational facility in your community; or are a teacher preparing our future citizens for the world they will inherit; or a transportation designer thinking about how to connect elderly people to healthcare services in their cities; or an architect improving housing conditions for the underserved; or a public health or healthcare professional dedicated to prevent and/or address disease and its many determinants; or a corporation that responsibly invest in the health of its employees and its broader community; or one of the many other kinds of professionals and citizens who work toward a better and healthier future for all, ***YOU ARE ALL MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE MOVEMENT FOR HEALTH EQUITY!***

Our collective progress has been steady and our voices across different cities, communities, organizations, and professions stand strong. While great challenges lie ahead, never has it been as important as now to continue our work in support of health equity and social justice.

I am grateful for everything you do.

Please also allow me to thank Health Equity Initiative's [board of directors](#) and members for their dedication to our mission and many contributions to our work. And thanks to [Dr. Upal Basu Roy](#), a board member, who co-edited with me this issue of our newsletter and co-chairs our Communication Committee. Thanks also to our project coordinator, Kimia Ahmadi.

With gratitude and appreciation for all.

Renata Schiavo

Renata Schiavo, PhD, MA
Founding President, Board of Directors
Health Equity Initiative
Connect with me on [LinkedIn](#)

Join the Movement for Health Equity! Become a HEI Member!

Not a HEI member yet? Join us in the movement for health equity and become part of our efforts to bridge silos and build ONE community for health equity!

Be part of a fast growing movement that has already reached [2,000,000+](#) people via HEI media and community outreach efforts, resources, events and programs. Our community is made of [nearly 200](#) dues-paying members and [10,000+](#) subscribers and followers. We are engaged citizens, professionals, community leaders, and students from many different sectors, including public health, healthcare, parks and recreation, information technology, global health, community leadership and development, urban design, nonprofit, communication, faith, academia, education, and more! To learn more, click here for HEI [highlights of accomplishments](#)



[Join HEI today](#) to be a part of a unique member-driven nonprofit membership organization, which engages globally across sectors and disciplines to advance health equity! We are the only member-driven membership organization solely dedicated to health equity that brings together different lay and professional communities all concerned with health equity! As such we are an untraditional membership organization. We are a social movement, in which we hope all can feel included!

Why You Should Join

- There is more to *health* than *healthcare*, and you can all contribute to remove the many systemic barriers that prevent many people from staying healthy and effectively coping with disease and crisis
- "Health equity is a key issue of our times! It provides a lens through which to examine health, social and economic issues, and to identify a range of priorities within and beyond the boundaries of health disparities"
- Healthy communities mean people who are more likely to connect with social and economic opportunities and therefore contribute to safer and thriving neighborhoods for all
- Healthy communities also mean healthy businesses

- For too long, "health inequities have undermined the opportunity of too many communities, neighborhoods, and cities to thrive and prosper"
- This is about the future of our children, grandchildren, and loved ones
- The time for health equity is now!

Do you need any additional reasons to join? Please take a look at our [member-exclusive benefits!](#)

You can [join](#) as an individual, or you can sign up your organization and let your staff benefit from being a part of the HEI community. By joining you will:

- 1) Gain access to special rates on great resources and educational opportunities by HEI and its partners, including HEI partnership summit
- 2) Participate in HEI member-only special events, workshops, and webinars
- 3) Hone new skills by joining our member committees
- 4) Build your network and get professional or community support as you work on advancing health equity in your profession and communities

Take action today and become an HEI member! See [who should join!](#)

Don't wait! [Join](#) the fastest growing social movement for health equity!

Spread the word! Go to our website and download some of our [resources](#) on health equity to start a conversation with your family, co-workers, and friends on why this is important!

References: 1) HEI, [Why Health Equity Matters](#) Fact Sheet; 2) [HEI 2016 Summit Report](#)

Addressing Health Equity: The Quiet Success of the ACA

On March 23, 2010, President Barack Obama signed into law the Patient Protection and [the Affordable Care Act](#). In recent weeks, many of the shortcomings of the ACA have come to light. Most notably, the rise in insurance premiums, higher than expected consumer deductibles, and the narrowing of provider networks for health care.



However, it is important to point out that in addressing health equity, the ACA has brought about many provisions specific to race, ethnicity, and language and other benefits with significant implications for racially and ethnically diverse populations. Many in the public health community continue to see the ACA as the best opportunity in a generation to promote health equity.

We all know that if a health outcome is seen to a greater or lesser extent between populations, there is an inequity. In light of the sharp political battle being waged over the Affordable Care Act (ACA), it must not be lost how the ACA has contributed to achieving health equity in the United States.

In the six years since the legislation passed, the Kaiser Family Foundation points out that the uninsured rate for non-elderly Blacks has dropped 47 percent and for non-

elderly Hispanics, there has been a 35 percent reduction; although, clearly, uninsured rates are still disproportionately higher among people of color.

The most recent, promising "fix" to the ACA is the issuance by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), in May of this year, of a final rule to advance health equity and reduce health care disparities. "Under the rule, individuals are protected from discrimination in health care on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability and sex, including discrimination based on pregnancy, gender identity and sex stereotyping. In addition to implementing Section 1557's prohibition on sex discrimination, this final rule also enhances language assistance for people with limited English proficiency and helps to ensure effective communication for individuals with disabilities."⁽¹⁾

Another important aspect of the ACA is that it promotes health equity by no longer allowing insurers to discriminate in their marketing or benefit design. Prior to the ACA, people who had a health problem or who were at higher than average risk of needing health care are referred to as having a pre-existing health condition. Those with pre-existing conditions (disproportionately poor people and people of color) payed premiums as much as 10 times higher than the premiums paid by healthy people. Affecting one-quarter of the nonelderly adult population in the United States, persons with pre-existing conditions, now, cannot be excluded or prevented from being insured. This has far-reaching ramifications for the one million Americans affected by HIV; a disproportionate number of racial and ethnic minorities, sexual minorities, and low-income populations.

The ACA also has promoted health equity by requiring the coverage of preventive care, which is critical to promoting positive health outcomes. Under the ACA, insurers must offer preventive care benefits without cost-sharing, allowing individuals to receive general examinations and health screenings, which can prevent or mitigate more serious health conditions down the road.

Overall, the ACA has made impressive strides in reducing health *inequity*, primarily with increasing access to health insurance coverage and to preventive care under such coverage. Moving forward, reducing health inequity in health insurance coverage will take better outreach and education to reach the remaining uninsured, particularly among groups with historically low and disproportionate uninsured rates.

Disparities are built into the health care landscape, and there is universal consensus, in varying degrees, that the ACA is not perfect. But, we can all agree that there has been great progress in the past six years in addressing health equity because of the Affordable Care Act.

Glenn Ellis is a Board Member of HEI, and a health columnist and radio commentator who lectures, nationally and internationally on Health Equity and Medical Ethics.

(1) HHS Finalizes Rule to Improve Health Equity under the Affordable Care Act - Accessed at http://nned.net/NNED_content/news_announcement/hhs-finalizes-rule-to-improve-health-equity-under-the-affordable-care-act on November 1, 2016

HEI member, Trevon Mayers, tells us why he

joined Health Equity Initiative

Why did you join HEI?

My passions are grounded in social justice and I see health equity as a framework that fosters awareness of the unique health needs of marginalized and historically disadvantaged communities. I joined Health Equity Initiative because I wanted to be a part of a diverse community that seeks to challenge structural inequities through cross-sectoral engagement because I believe that knowledge is best utilized when it is shared.



How does your work or area of interest help or may help advance health equity?

I strive to be an advocate for social justice by applying health equity principles to health policy decisions. My background in public health research and health advocacy has given me the knowledge to encourage systemic interventions that reduce the disproportionate impact communities of color face with issues such as racism, public safety, and unsafe or unreliable housing.

I currently work at Community Catalyst, a national non-profit advocacy organization that builds health advocacy networks through collaboration with state-based partner organizations and coalitions across the country, fostering consumer leadership to pursue health care reform and increase access, affordability, and quality of care. As a member of Community Catalyst's health equity team, I support our internal organizational capacity to embed meaningful efforts to achieve increased health equity across all programs and projects we undertake. Our team also works to develop collaborative strategies by cultivating national partnerships and supporting policy changes across systems that influence health, with increasing attention to the broader social determinants of health. Most recently, my efforts have focused on addressing the impact of implicit bias in health care to unravel the underlying social processes that perpetuate disparities in health status for people of color and LGBTQ people. I am hopeful that with continued emphasis on health equity, the awareness that I am helping to build will lead to accountability and change.

Trevon is Policy and External Affairs Program Associate at [Community Catalyst](#)

Communications and Social Media intern, Vandana Venugopal, discusses the importance of sustainability and health equity

As a student majoring in sustainability studies, I have always been interested in the relationship between health disparities and sustainability. Through my internship with Health Equity Initiative, I was able to combine these interests. Researching more about recent advancements and ongoing health disparities expanded upon my understanding of the correlation between the fields of sustainability and health equity.

The field of health equity is unique because of its connection to a variety of different sectors. Health equity is also well known for being impacted by social and natural factors, which makes it relatable to the field of sustainability. Due to their shared values,

the fields of sustainability and health equity are very interdependent. One direct connection between sustainability and health equity includes their connection to the environment.

Both fields encourage individuals to work towards improving environmental quality for society. An area of concern shared between both fields includes environmental racism. Health equity aims to raise awareness for cases low income and minority families being housed in areas with environmental hazards. These practices in environmental racism pertain to sustainability as well, because this situation is not compatible for the quality of life of the involved individuals and their surroundings.



The internship at Health Equity Initiative expanded my knowledge about health disparities. My responsibilities as a Communications intern involved research that reinforced my understanding of the importance of awareness and community involvement towards improving disparities within society.

I look forward to continuing to champion for health equity and sustainability - because without one you cannot have the other.

Vandana Venugopal is a Senior at Stony Brooks University. She is majoring in Sustainability Studies.

2016 Infographic #GivingTuesday

#GivingTuesday is a global day of giving fueled by the power of social media and collaboration. Celebrated on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving (in the U.S.) #GivingTuesday kicks off the charitable season, when many focus on their holiday and end-of-year giving.

One of the best ways to get involved is in your own community. Check out our 2016 Infographic [here](#) to find out why you should give to Health Equity Initiative on November 29!

Why You Should Give to Health Equity Initiative

#GIVINGTUESDAY

Your support could help make a difference in the lives of many people by contributing to our efforts to bridge the silos between different professional sectors and communities, and build ONE community for health equity!

Since its creation, HEI has...

- been consistently listed among one of the top 10 #HealthEquity influencers on Twitter
- attracted 115+ participants from national and international organizations to its 2016 inaugural multisectoral partnership summit
- reached nearly 2,000,000 people via mass media campaigns, social media outreach, public events, and online resources
- built capacity for the development of multi-sectoral task forces dedicated to infant mortality prevention among high-risk groups in 4 U.S. cities
- Provided capacity building and training on issues related to health equity, multisectoral collaborations/ public-private partnerships, health communication, and social determinants of health to 400+ professionals and community leaders
- and much more!

Here's How You Can Help Us Achieve Our Goals

- #1 visit our website
- #2 become a member
- #3 donate to our organization
- #4 join our community!

November 29, 2016

In the spirit of #GivingTuesday we urge you to consider giving to HEI. We are a membership-driven nonprofit membership organization dedicated to build and sustain a global community that engages across sectors and disciplines to advance health equity.
For more information: www.healthequityinitiative.org

HEI Summit 2018 - Save the Date!

Save the date for HEI 2018 Summit, *Engaging New Allies in the Health Equity Movement: A Partnership Summit*, February 22-23, 2018, in New York City. Click [here](#) for the summit announcement flyer and plan to join us there! For a copy of our 2016 Summit Report, click [here](#).



Discounted Peer-Reviewed Publications

As Maney Publishing was recently acquired by [Taylor & Francis](#) we are excited about continuing this collaboration with a global publisher in such a leading role as Taylor & Francis! HEI [membership benefits](#) continue to include special member-only subscription rates to 6 different peer-reviewed publications that focus on different health equity-related disciplines and sectors! Please check our [website](#) for additional information.



Member Committee Updates

We would like to thank all those who were involved in 2016 in our committees! Thank you all for your participation!

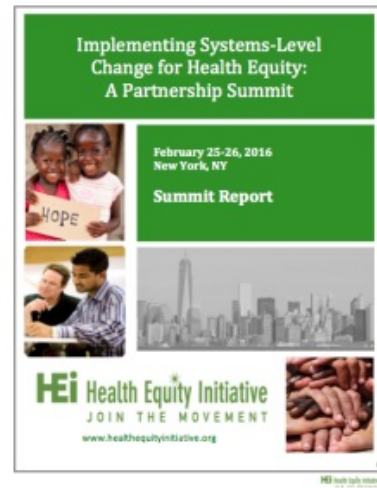
Join Our Member Committees!

HEI Member Committees are a great place to start networking. As a member-driven organization, you take ownership of direction and focus through the member committees and influence our organizational priorities! Your passion, commitment, and cumulative multisectoral and multidisciplinary experience is what makes HEI different. All committees are composed of volunteer members who agree to nurture and ignite conversation and engagement on health equity and work to develop activities and resources for all members and our broader community on one specific area. [Click here](#) to learn more about HEI member committees and get involved!

Resources

HEI Summit 2016 Report

This report summarizes the proceedings and recommendations of Health Equity Initiative's 2016 Summit, *Implementing System-Level Change for Health Equity: A Partnership Summit*, which took place on February 25-26 in New York City. Drawing upon the input and recommendations of the nearly 115 national and international participants at the 2016 summit, the report has implications for global health equity and development (both in U.S. and international settings) and also supports the strong link between health equity and everyone's ability to thrive and prosper. The Summit brought together community leaders, healthcare professionals, students, government staff, policymakers, urban planners, architects, transportation specialists, foundation officers, academics, educators and public health practitioners, among others. Please find the Summit 2016 Report [here](#) and on our website, within the [Resources](#) and [HEI summit 2016](#) sections.

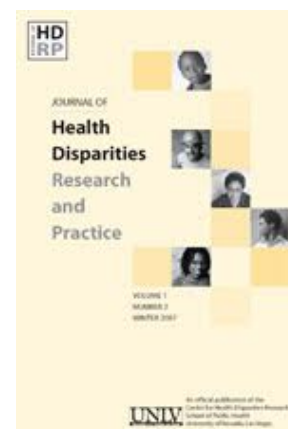


Building Community-Campus Partnerships to Prevent Infant Mortality: Lessons Learned from Building Capacity in Four US Cities

- Read about HEI work -

Renata Schiavo, Isabel Estrada-Portales, Elena Hoepfner, Denisse Ormaza, Radikha Ramesh

Infant mortality rate (IMR) is an important indicator of progress toward health equity and socio-economic development. Despite progress, the US is ranked 45th among 192 countries in IMR, with non-Hispanic black IMR 2.2 times that of non-Hispanic white rates, and higher than average IMR in Native American populations. The Preconception Peer Educators (PPE) program of the U.S. DHHS Office of Minority Health Resource Center (OMHRC) aims to raise awareness about IMR disparities in African Americans, and to promote preconception health behaviors among women of childbearing age and sexually active men. Building upon this program, this report focuses on lessons learned from a capacity-building and participatory planning pilot program designed and implemented in 4 US cities by **Health Equity Initiative** in collaboration with the OMHRC to encourage multisectoral partnerships, and engage local leaders and organizations in participatory planning and infant mortality prevention. [View article](#)



A message from the Commissioner of the NYC Commission on Human Rights:

No one in New York City should feel unsafe or threatened because of their religion, race, cultural identity, sexual orientation or country of origin. The NYC Commission on Human Rights enforces one of the strongest human rights laws in the country and fights every day to protect all New Yorkers from discrimination and harassment. If anyone believes they have been the victim of discrimination and harassment, we urge them to **call 311** and ask for the **Commission on Human Rights** or call the **Commission's**



What is Global Health? **MinuteVideos**

Global health and equity are prominent fields of our times that operate at the intersection of multiple health and social justice issues. Watch this easy-to-digest 3 minute video for a short introduction of what Global Health is all about. Good for use in academic and training courses as well as for everyone who is new to the field of global health!



[Click to view video](#)

News

MEDICC Awards Fellowship to HEI Founding President to Participate in a National Health Equity Leaders Exchange in Cuba

MEDICC, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting mutual learning opportunities between the U.S. and Cuba, awarded a partial fellowship to Health Equity Initiative's own Dr. Renata Schiavo, Founding President, Board of Directors, to participate in a strategic, week-long program in Cuba February 12-19, 2017 for health equity leaders at state and national levels in the U.S. Also traveling with the group will be representatives of MEDICC's Community Partnerships for Health Equity (CPHE) program.

An organizational member of Health Equity Initiative, for over a decade MEDICC and its CPHE program have offered participants from communities throughout the US the opportunity to learn from Cuba's health-related models, sparking fresh insights in their own efforts to create healthy and more equitable communities back home. For more about CPHE, see MEDICC's website: <http://medicc.org/ns/cphe/>

Give a gift that gives back!

Give back to Health Equity Initiative at no extra cost to you by shopping on Amazon via Amazon Smiles this holiday season! Support HEI's efforts to bridge silos and build ONE community for health equity!



- **Shop on Amazon via [Amazon Smiles](#)** - 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchase will be donated to Health Equity Initiative

Become a Partner!

Sponsoring Health Equity Initiative is an opportunity for your organization to expand its range! Our community is diverse and committed to working across sectors. We reach 10,000+ subscribers/followers via our mailing list and social media. Basic sponsorship benefits include free organizational membership, your logo on our website and newsletter, three complementary individual memberships to donate to your partners and clients, and the opportunity to offer an online or in-person workshop. We customize sponsorship opportunities to meet the needs of our partners.



Click [here](#) to learn more and become a partner today!

Thank you to our HEI Summit 2016 Sponsors:

Gold:



Silver:



General:



Baked by Melissa



Our Mission

Health Equity Initiative (HEI) is a member-driven nonprofit membership organization dedicated to building a global community that engages across sectors and disciplines to advance health equity.

***Bridging Silos,
Building ONE
Community for Health
Equity!***

www.healthequityinitiative.org

Health Equity Initiative is a federally recognized 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. All contributions are tax-deductible.

