



# Nonprofit Annual Report 2021



10th Anniversary Edition

Bridging Silos, Building One Community for Health Equity

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# Letter from our Founder and Board President

Greetings to our members, supporters, board of directors, advisory council members, staff, and volunteers,

2021 was an exciting year for Health Equity Initiative. We celebrated our 10-year anniversary and had the opportunity to reflect on the incredible projects and initiatives that we've engaged in with our partners and collaborators over this last decade. We were able to lift-up important lessons that we learned during this remarkable journey and took the time to celebrate the value of working in community with those who share a passion for health equity.

We also continued to feel the very real effects of COVID-19 on the organizations and community leaders with whom we closely partner. The pandemic laid bare health inequities in an unprecedented and mainstream manner which did lead to a heightened awareness for health equity. Thanks to 10 years of building awareness and programming, HEI was extremely well-positioned to serve as a valuable resource to many organizations.

Over our next ten years, HEI will continue to advocate for community engagement and ownership of local and multisectoral solutions to advance progress on the root causes of health inequities. We will double down on addressing social discrimination and promote equity in all arenas that connect to social determinants of health—including the built environment, health care, education, and transportation. And we will remain committed to our focus on systems-change across professional sectors and disciplines by harnessing the power of partnerships

In the pages that follow, we are excited to share with you some of Health Equity Initiative's key accomplishments of 2021. We clearly could not have been as successful without your hard work and dedication to reducing health inequities. Thank you for being part of our community, supporting our efforts, and collaborating with us.

We hope that the year ahead will bring an increased investment on achieving health, racial, and social equity in all of our communities.

In solidarity,

**Renata Schiavo**

PhD, MA, CCL  
Founder and Board President



# 10 Years of Health Equity Initiative!



When we started Health Equity Initiative, there was no way we could have imagined the impressive group of organizations and individuals that would become members of our dynamic network. We have had the immense good fortune to learn from innovative community leaders, dedicated practitioners in fields as far-reaching as education, urban planning and design, housing, disability advocacy, transportation, business, municipal services, policy and journalism, as well as engaged funders, inspiring coalition members, and committed people from across the world who all seek to create a more equitable world and reduce health disparities.

Through the years, HEI and our broader network have focused on raising awareness about health inequities, finding new paths for collaboration across sectors and disciplines, being responsive to communities and individuals working to eliminate health disparities, and identifying both short-term and systemic long-term strategies for change.

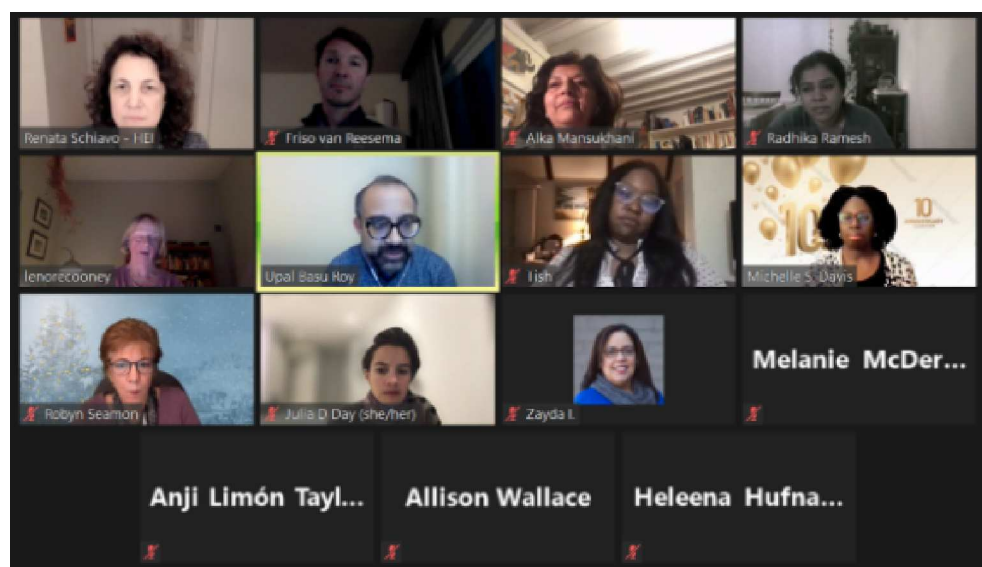
Reflecting back on this last decade, HEI identified "10 Lessons from 10 Years!" to advance health equity. Here are the fundamental lessons learned, which were shared by the organization's Board President at the 10th anniversary celebration :

- **Lesson 1.** It takes a village to advance health equity. This is why we focus on building a multisectoral community!
- **Lesson 2.** We need to accept that health equity in policy and practice means different things to different communities, organizations, and places
- **Lesson 3.** Some people are in it for the journey, some people for the trend... or other reasons. Finding common ground is an important challenge!
- **Lesson 4.** Community voices – and more specifically community and patient engagement – are key to addressing health inequities. Yet these remain under-resourced and under-implemented areas! Advocacy is key to implement at scale
- **Lesson 5.** We need to focus on changing values and social norms rather than changing attitudes
- **Lesson 6.** Trust is at the core of everything we do to advance health, racial, and social inequities

- **Lesson 7.** Context and history matter, so we need always to allow time for stories to emerge and influence narrative change, policies, and programs
- **Lessons 8.** Be resilient and willing to put in the work. Advancing health equity is not for the faint of heart!
- **Lesson 9.** Anticipate change, experiment, and evolve, but make sure to have a clarity of purpose!
- **Lesson 10.** The most powerful and rewarding thing in this journey is the community you build, the conversations you have, and the people you meet and who share your passion for health equity!

A [presentation](#) on these lessons learned was shared by HEI's Founder and Board President, Dr. Renata Schiavo, at the December 9, 2021, Health Equity Initiative 10-year anniversary event.

To get into the 10-Year Anniversary spirit, you can also watch a [video](#) with highlights from the past 10 years and read about [HEI's History](#).



# Our Impact

WE TRAINED

**1,600+**

professionals and leaders on health equity strategies and topics via online and regional events

WE BUILT A GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF

**14,000+**

members, followers, and subscribers who engage on health equity across sectors and disciplines

WE REACHED

**7,000,000+**

people through our resources, programs and media outreach

WE DEVELOPED

**60+**

resources to further the health equity impact of our members and community

WE ORGANIZED

2 national partnership summits, which attracted

**250+ PARTICIPANTS**

from local, national and global organizations

WE ENGAGED WITH

**30+ PARTNERS**

and organizational sponsors across different sectors and disciplines

WE ORGANIZED

**45+**

cross-sectoral events

**We pioneered a community-driven and multi-sectoral/multidisciplinary approach to health equity across all strategies, resources, and events.**

WHAT  
ARE  
PEOPLE  
SAYING?

"We need this group now more than ever."

"Thank you very much for the great effort in getting such a wonderful and diverse group of members and event participants together!"

"Great info as always. It was eye-opening. Keep it up, HEI!"

"We are happy to support such a vital organization."

[www.healthequityinitiative.org](http://www.healthequityinitiative.org)



@HlthEquityInit



# Who We Are

Health Equity Initiative (HEI) is a member-driven volunteer nonprofit membership organization dedicated to build a global community that engages across sectors and disciplines to advance health equity. By bringing together and enlisting the efforts of the public and private sectors, professions and communities that have both a stake and an influence on social determinants of health, HEI advocates for improving conditions and achieving equity in health for all. We focus on championing transformative change to advance health equity, supporting knowledge, engaging communities and leaders, and building capacity to address barriers that prevent people from leading a healthy and productive life.

# Our Values

- **Passion** – for making a difference in people’s health and lives
- **Commitment** – to social justice as it relates to health equity as well as intersectoral approaches to address key social determinants of health and other root causes of health inequities
- **Participation** – as the basis of our volunteer approach for all HEI action areas, activities, and partnerships
- **Entrepreneurship** – to make things happen in new and creative ways
- **Inclusiveness** – in feeling that all opinions are welcome and should be carefully considered and evaluated
- **Dedication** – to our mission, members, partners, and ultimately the communities that suffer from health inequities
- **Integrity** – as our motivation to go beyond organizational agendas, and focus only on evidence-based practices in developing our activities and partnerships
- **Sustainability** – as our goal in fostering new approaches to join across sectors, pooling resources and mobilizing for a common cause
- **Teamwork** – in our “zero politics” attitude when it comes to working with others and helping make progress toward health equity
- **Professionalism** – as our basis for our problem-solving perseverance as well as respecting internal and external stakeholders, and recognizing the expert in everybody, every partner and interlocutor

# 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

## PROGRAMMATIC AND ORGANIZATIONAL WORK

HEI's programmatic and organizational work encompasses several action areas:

- **Community/membership building:** HEI serves as a convener of its member organizations and facilitates collaborative relationships between members
- **Partnership development:** HEI pursues partnerships with other health equity-focused associations and institutions and engages in joint project development
- **Professional development, capacity building and training:** HEI, using workshops, webinars and other resources, offers on-going skills-building for its members, broader community, and the public
- **Education and advocacy programs:** HEI organizes and/or presents in-person and on-line forums, meetings, and other engagements to bring people together to learn about current health equity challenges and share potential solutions





# Community/membership building

Health Equity Initiative's Professional Development Member Committee organized a webinar on "Community-driven Urban Planning: Urban Planners Partner with Community Residents to Promote Health Equity and Address Bias." The webinar discussed solutions to the systemic power dynamics that can help eliminate inequities in the urban design process.

HEI also developed new free resources and tools to bring attention to systemic issues that contribute to health inequities and to promote a health equity- and community-driven approach to COVID-19 response and recovery.



## SPOTLIGHT: Community-Driven Urban Planning Webinar

Health Equity Initiative's Professional Development Member Committee organized a webinar on "*Community-driven Urban Planning: Urban Planners Partner with Community Residents to Promote Health Equity and Address Bias.*" The webinar discussed solutions to the systemic power dynamics that can help eliminate inequities in the urban design process.



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# Professional development, capacity building and training

During 2021, HEI delivered innovative professional development and capacity building programming to engage professionals from multiple sectors, disciplines and community-based organizations. Because of the pandemic, these events were virtual, so the pictures in this page refer to previous in-person events.

Topics included:

- Addressing implicit and institutional bias and social discrimination
- Community engagement for health and social change
- Community-based risk communication during COVID-19 and beyond
- Population health and the value proposition for health equity in clinical settings
- Inclusive and community-driven urban design
- How to implement a health equity lens in the work of local health departments and other organizations.



# Partnership Development

## SPOTLIGHT: Implicit Bias Workshop

### Challenging Implicit Bias: Exploring the Way Forward

Health Equity Initiative co-designed and co-sponsored a workshop with [Sustainable Jersey \(SJ\)](#) on “Challenging Implicit Bias: Exploring the Way Forward”. The workshop was part of the 2021 Sustainable Jersey Summit and featured an interactive, guided discussion on implicit bias and how it may show up in local municipalities or schools. The session used a participatory approach to explore how local governments and communities may be affected by individual and institutional bias, reflecting assumptions based on race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, immigration status or other perceived identities.





# Education and Advocacy Programs

With the generous support of [Macy's Inc.](#) HEI hosted two Community Leaders Forums highlighting the work and thinking of key community leaders across the country. This was the second year for this series. The events brought together a cross section of community-based organization leaders and staff, activists, educators, community planners, government agency staff, and public health experts. Each forum resulted in policy recommendations and a Call-to-Action brief.

## Spotlight: Community Leaders Forum

### October Forum

#### The Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Girls: Implications for Health Equity

The forum offered policy solutions and other interventions to address emerging and pre-existing needs of women and girls, with an emphasis on those experiencing marginalization.

The forum speakers also considered:

- how the pandemic has impacted women and girls in areas such as health, employment and mental health
- how the impact from the pandemic was likely to further exacerbate existing health and gender inequities



# November Forum

## Racial Healing and Health Equity: A Look at Promising Policies and Community-Driven Interventions

The forum offered a reflection on how local communities can promote racial healing, and how racial healing can contribute to health equity. Participants shared insights relating to:

- the central role of community leaders and community-based organizations in shaping policies and promoting racial healing
- the on-going need to spotlight health and racial inequities in our communities, through mass media, and in policymaking settings
- the benefit of using storytelling to promote racial healing, and to influence policy and intervention design
- the use of promising emerging practices and policies to promote racial healing



The 2021 Community Leaders Forum series is supported by a generous grant from  
Macy's Inc. macy's inc

## SPOTLIGHT: College Toolkit

The [college toolkit](#) was developed as a way to help bring health equity-related conversations to college campuses. The toolkit provides sample ideas for in-person and virtual events, discussion starters, a glossary of health equity-related terms and other relevant resources for undergraduate and graduate students who want to become engaged and engage their peers in the health equity movement.



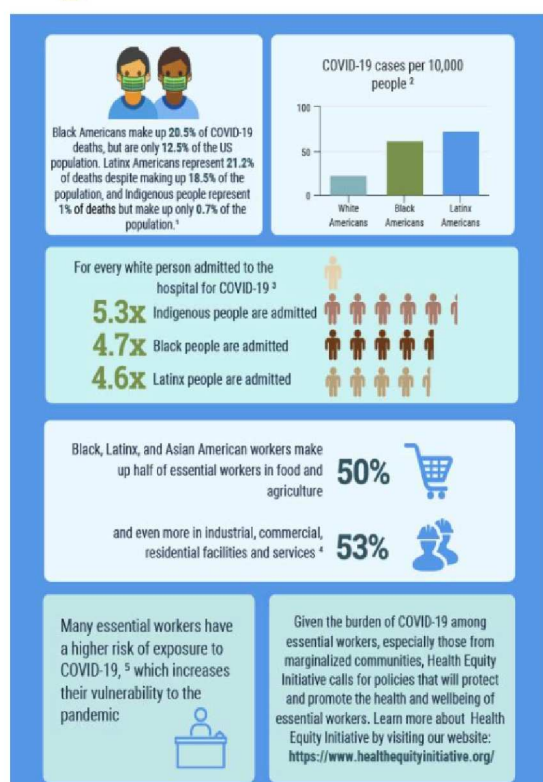
# RAISING OUR VOICES: RESOURCES

In 2021, HEI continued to make its voice heard on health equity through different formats and media. HEI designed and made available infographics on COVID-19 as a health equity issue and published blog posts on topics such as how to create inclusive healthy places and how gender-related implicit bias influences patient health.

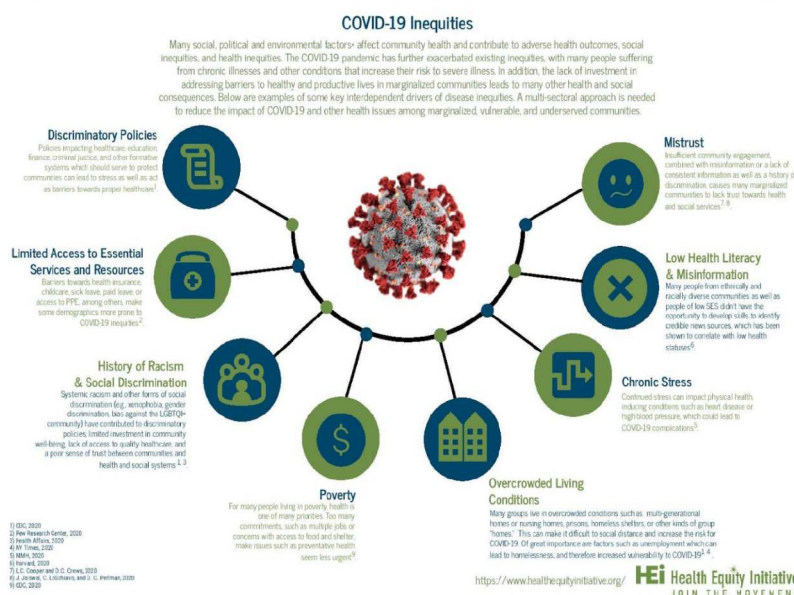
## Infographics

HEI designed and made available infographics on COVID-19 as a health equity issue. These infographics were used by HEI staff and organizations within the HEI membership base and broader community to educate the public on how COVID-19 was both exacerbating and exposing the massive health inequities in our society today.

### COVID-19 is a Health Equity Issue: The Pandemic and Essential Workers



### COVID-19 is a Health Equity Issue: Key Drivers of Disease Inequities





# BLOG

HEI connected with its stakeholders and shared relevant and topical information through its blog. Bringing in expert voices to share their knowledge (including a few board members!), blog posts included data, snapshots of the literature around health equity, and practical information for readers to use.

**Here's a look at some blog post headlines from 2021....**

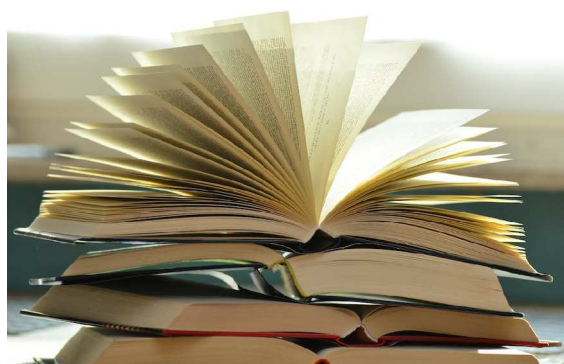
[COMMUNITY-DRIVEN URBAN PLANNING TO PROMOTE HEALTH EQUITY AND ADDRESS BIAS](#)



[CREATING A SHARED VISION FOR INCLUSIVE HEALTHY PLACES](#)



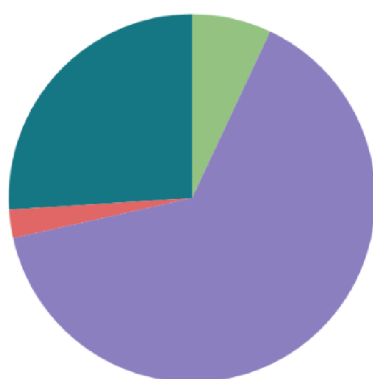
[WHAT WE'RE READING ON HEALTH EQUITY: A SUMMER READING LIST FROM HEI TEAM](#)



# 2021 FINANCIALS

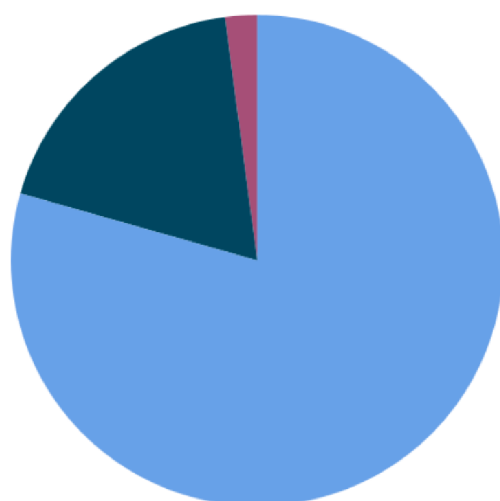
Health Equity Initiative is a federally recognized 501(c)3 member-driven nonprofit membership organization. Below are breakdowns for 2021 revenue streams and categories of expenses. Filing reports can be consulted on publicly available IRS sources. Full financial statements are available upon request.

## 2021 Revenues



- Individual Contributions 7%
- Corporate/Private Sector Grants and Contributions 64.5%
- Donated goods & services revenue 2.5%
- Program service fees 26%

## 2021 Expenses



- Programs 79.4%
- Administration 18.5%
- Fundraising 2.1%

# GRATITUDE

Health Equity Initiative is deeply grateful for the incredible partnership, support, wisdom, and friendship that has been generously provided by so many extraordinary organizations and individuals over the last decade. We are truly proud of our network and are honored to be in your company.

**We offer our sincere gratitude to our supporters, sponsors, and partners of the past 10 years.**

## Organizations (Sponsors and Partners)

Active Wellness Partners  
 Albert Einstein College of Medicine  
 Archive Global  
 Argo Tea  
 Averbuch Rail Art LLC  
 Baked by Melissa  
 Bank of America Charitable Gift Fund  
 Bonne New York  
 Bronx Health Link  
 Brooklyn Health Disparities Center  
 Center for the Study of Social Inequalities & Health, Columbia University  
 Mailman School of Public Health  
 Chamberlain Healthcare PR  
 Cooney/Waters Group  
 Core Group  
 Covititi  
 DHHS Office of Minority Health - Region II  
 Gehl Institute  
 Global Public Health Action Network (GPHAN)  
 Houston Jewish Community Foundation  
 Ichan School of Medicine  
 IntraMed  
 Jossey Bass, an Imprint of Wiley  
 Long Island University  
 Macy's, Inc.  
 Meritage Medical Network  
 Morris Heights Health Center  
 Natera  
 Office of Minority Health Resource Center (OMHRC), HHS Office of Minority Health  
 Policy Research Associates  
 Ranal Software Technologies  
 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
 Strategic Communication Resources (now SECI)  
 Sullivan Cotter  
 Sustainable Jersey  
 Taylor & Francis  
 The Raising of America, California Newsreel  
 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) - Region II

## Individual Donors

Angela Aidala  
 Julie Bataille  
 Kate Brown  
 Danielle Carino  
 Vikki Cerniglia  
 Reginald Chatman  
 Marlene Chuc  
 Natalie Cohen  
 Lenore Cooney  
 Michelle Davis  
 Deborah Eicher  
 Glenn Ellis  
 Sloan Gaon  
 Allan Greenberg  
 Kate Grimes  
 Erica Hersh  
 Kate Holt  
 Robert Samuel Hopkins  
 Robert Jenks  
 Kaleb Keyserling  
 Rachelle Lopp  
 Alka Mansukhani  
 Melanie McDermott  
 Wayne Mendes  
 Michael Moore  
 Stephanie Peters  
 Upal Basu Roy  
 Renata Schiavo  
 Sydney Sharples  
 Jonathan Sheena  
 Timothy Thomas  
 Katherine Tyler  
 Roger Ullman  
 Sally Ullman  
 Sean Walther  
 Jennifer Weiss  
 Lisa Weiss  
 Sunny Yu

# HEALTH EQUITY INITIATIVE TEAM

## Board of Directors



**Renata Schiavo**  
Founder and President



**Alka Mansukhani**  
Founding Treasurer  
and Co-Vice President



**Upal Basu Roy**  
Co-Vice President



**Lenore Cooney**  
Board Member



**Friso van Reesema**  
Board Secretary



**Bree Bode**  
Board Member



**Samantha Cranko**  
Board Member Emeritus

## Advisory Council



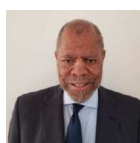
**Michelle Davis**  
Chair, Advisory Council



**Everold Hosein**



**Samantha Cranko**



**Kenneth Olden**



**Julia D. Day**



**Sally Maliski**

# HEALTH EQUITY INITIATIVE TEAM

## Staff



**Radhika Ramesh**  
Senior Project Manager



**Jennifer Weiss**  
Grant Writing and Strategy  
Associate



**Paige Hammond**  
Freelance Project Coordinator

## Volunteer Member Steering Committee



**Sai Reddy**



**Stephanie L. Burke**



**Lalitha Ramanathapuram**



**Carly Nocchi**

