



PRESS RELEASE

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Health Equity Initiative to host Inaugural Partnership Summit

New York, New York (February 18, 2016), Health Equity Initiative (HEI), a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to advancing health equity, is hosting its inaugural event, “Implementing Systems-Level Change for Health Equity: A Partnership Summit.” The event will take place on February 25 -26, 2016 in New York. The event will bring together a community of professionals from multiple sectors that are working towards eliminating health disparities on a global scale.

While evidence has shown the importance of access to healthcare services to the quality of an individual's health, social factors have a significant impact on well-being. Advancing health equity will require looking beyond the role of health *care* at the things that keep us healthy in the first place: economic opportunities, supportive social environments, adequate levels of preparedness to respond to health crises, and access to recreational facilities and nutritious, affordable food. A further need is for easily comprehended information that is relevant to the culture of the intended groups and individuals.

The Summit, the first of its kind, will offer professionals, community leaders, and students across sectors and disciplines a forum to explore the systemic barriers that contribute to health inequity and to exchange ideas focused on building and sustaining a global community that works to advance health equity.

“We think Health Equity Initiative is particularly suited to host this conversation on systems-change for health equity as we are unique in our dedication to bridge the silos among different professions, communities and stakeholders in health equity issues and to build ONE community for health equity,” said Renata Schiavo, PhD, MA, Founder and President, Health Equity Initiative. “This is a timely conversation as, despite progress, the movement for health equity has remained largely in the realm of a few professional settings. Yet, we need broader community and citizen engagement on this issue, so that we can all work together to address the different root causes of health disparities.”

The Summit will identify steps that society can take to advance equal opportunity for health among underserved and vulnerable populations. Speakers and attendees will include



participants who share a passion and commitment to creating better chances for better health among underserved and vulnerable populations. Speakers will include, Dr. Dwayne Proctor, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, as the keynote speaker; as well as, Dr. Rafael Obregon, UNICEF; Peter Williams, ARCHIVE Global and Patricia Doykos, Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation. There will also be interactive workshop sessions and poster symposium, which will highlight the effects of social impact interventions on systems-level change for health equity or specific social determinants of health. See the Summit's program here: <http://www.healthequityinitiative.org/hei/programs/summit/>

"All of us should have the opportunity to be healthy regardless of who we are or where we live. Too many of us face inequities from the start," said Dwayne Proctor, PhD, Director, Achieving Health Equity Portfolio and Senior Adviser, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. "Building a Culture of Health requires us to dig deeply into the systems that shape opportunities to be healthy and many sectors, not just health and health care, have an important role to play in advancing solutions. "

According to Peter Williams, MS, Founder and Executive Director of ARCHIVE Global, rapid worldwide urbanization is highlighting the importance of urban design to the health of vulnerable communities. "Improving living conditions for those in greatest need is fundamental to eliminating health disparities," he said.

Through this one-and-a-half day event, summit attendees will be able to:

- Hear from experts from multiple sectors and disciplines
- Develop an agenda for systems- level change for health equity grounded in a multisectoral and multidisciplinary partnership approach
- Develop detailed action plans via a participatory/consultative process at our workshops on different health equity topics
- Discuss social impact interventions to advance health equity at the Summit's poster session
- Pledge new partnership-based endeavors at the conference

To learn more and register for the summit, please visit:

<http://www.healthequityinitiative.org/hei/programs/summit/>

About Health Equity Initiative

Health Equity Initiative (HEI) is a nonprofit membership and member-driven organization dedicated to building and sustaining a global community that engages across sectors and disciplines to advance health equity. HEI works to build community, capacity, and communication resources in support of health equity. For additional information and to join the health equity movement/become a HEI member, visit www.healthequityinitiative.org. To view our infographic on systems-driven health, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/h2r4f2z>

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