







## Community and Collaboration

Greater Lowell Health Alliance Annual Report 2019





GLHA Board of Directors: Front Row: Kerrie D'Entremont, Susan Rosa, Deirdra Murphy, Amanda Clermont. Back Row: Sovanna Pouv, Andrea Saunders Batchelder, Cece Lynch, Damian Folch. Not pictured: Jayne Andrews, Joel Boyd, Karen Frederick, Susan West Levine, Jeffrey Stephens, Kerran Vigroux.

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#### We thank the following for their years of service

JEANNINE DURKIN (Through June 30) Former Acting Superintendent of Schools, Lowell Public Schools

IRENE EGAN (Vice Chair through June 30)
Former Director of Community Relations and Development, Circle Home

## Letter from the Board Chair

We are pleased to share with you this annual report highlighting the activities and impact of the Greater Lowell Health Alliance.

The growth, impact, and success of the GLHA over the past year—and over the past thirteen years—is due in large part to our continued focus on collaboration and engagement of individuals and organizations throughout our region. The strength of the Alliance is in bringing together healthcare providers, business leaders, educators, and civic and



community leaders and inspiring them to work together to identify and address the health priorities that directly impact our communities.

As a member of the University of Massachusetts Lowell, I am particularly proud of UMass Lowell's deep commitment to the GLHA mission. UMass Lowell faculty and students dedicated countless hours conducting the 2019 Greater Lowell Community Health Needs Assessment, including a first-ever region-wide needs assessment survey, that will provide a strong foundation in setting future health priorities. And GLHA's success simply would not be possible without the dedication of UMass Lowell students—both undergraduate and graduate—serving as GLHA interns.

I extend my sincere thanks to the dedicated members of our board, to the industrious GLHA task forces, and to our outstanding GLHA team: Executive Director Kerrie D'Entremont and Community Engagement Coordinator Amanda Clermont, who amaze us with the volume and quality of work produced by a staff of two. Thank you all for your tireless commitment to the Greater Lowell community.

Together, we are stronger. Together, we will continue to change lives and fulfill our critical mission to improve the overall health of Greater Lowell's communities.

Sincerely,

Devidea

Deirdra A. Murphy, PT, DPT, MS, MHA Chair, Board of Directors

Our mission is to sustain a strategic alliance of community organizations that improves the overall health and wellness of those living in the Greater Lowell region.

## Letter from the Executive Director

We are so excited to share with you the progress and accomplishments of the Greater Lowell Health Alliance in our 2018/2019 annual report.

Alliance task forces and community partners made great strides over this past year in addressing the health priorities identified through the 2017 Greater Lowell Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). You will read about many of the CHIP-driven initiatives and their impact in this report.



You will also read about the new Greater Lowell Community Health Needs Assessment and a first-ever inter-agency, cross-disciplinary health survey—products of our collaboration with Lowell General Hospital and the University of Massachusetts Lowell. The assessment and survey will lay the foundation for a new CHIP process and provide a road map for future health improvement, guiding the investment of resources—including our annual GLHA grants—as we address our communities' top health priorities.

The success of the GLHA is the result of our collaboration and engagement with our communities, supported by our dedicated Board of Directors, steering committee, task force leaders and members, and hundreds of community partners. I thank each of you for your dedication and commitment to this great organization. I also extend my gratitude to Amanda Clermont, our Community Engagement Coordinator, who is so adept at keeping the GLHA ship on course.

As the GLHA grows in both scope and impact, so do the demands for our resources. As a nonprofit 501(c)(3), we rely on the support of the communities we serve, and we are most appreciative of our community members' generous donations of both time and money that enable us to fulfill our mission.

I am grateful for the opportunity to lead this vital community organization. Together, we are changing lives and paving a new path for a healthier Greater Lowell.

Sincerely,

Kerrie D'Entremont Executive Director



Steering Committee: Front Row: Amanda Clermont, Kerrie D'Entremont, Back Row Amy Pessia, by Ho, Maria Lucci, Lisa Taylor-Montminy, Handin Munson, Marilyn Graham, Heather Hilbert, Katherine Etkins, Tami Marshall, Not pictured: Mercy Anampiu, Michael Collins, Michael Hall, Ainat Koren, Sheila Och, Maria Ruggiero.

#### STEERING COMMITTEE

**TAMI MARSHALL, Chair –** Thom Anne Sullivan Center

MERCY ANAMPIU – Lowell Community Health Center

MICHAEL COLLINS – Community Teamwork, Inc.

KATHERINE ELKINS - Lowell Health Department

MARILYN GRAHAM - Lowell WIC

MICHAEL HALL - Lowell Health Department

HEATHER HILBERT - Lowell General Hospital

IVY HO - University of Massachusetts Lowell

AINAT KOREN - University of Massachusetts Lowell

MARIA LUCCI – Lowell House Addiction Treatment and Recovery

NANDI MUNSON – Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley and North Shore

SHEILA OCH – Lowell Community Health Center

AMY PESSIA - Merrimack Valley Food Bank

MARIA RUGGIERO – Tewksbury Police Department

LISA TAYLOR-MONTMINY – Lowell General Hospital

#### **GLHA STAFF**

KERRIE D'ENTREMONT Executive Director

AMANDA CLERMONT
Community Engagement Coordinator

#### **INTERNS**

Doctoral - HANNAH TELLO

Graduate – MERVE ARMAGAN, KRYSTA BRUGGER, MOLLIE MCDONAH, IARED SOCOLOW

Undergraduate – SHIRLEY ARCHAMBAULT, LARISSA MEDEIROS, VIVIAN LAM, CHANDINI PAUL

High School – ANUSHKA BHAT, JOSHUA CHO, ANDREW NGUYEN



## Greater Lowell Health Alliance: Who we are

At the GLHA we:
INFORM
CONSULT
INVOLVE
COLLABORATE
EMPOWER

The Greater Lowell Health Alliance (GLHA) of the Community Health Network Area 10 brings together healthcare providers, business leaders, educators, and civic and community leaders with a common goal to improve the overall health of our communities. The GLHA serves as a catalyst in identifying and addressing unmet healthcare needs, raising awareness, and providing resources for community partners to take actions that will lead to significant change.

The GLHA serves as an advocate for non-profits, securing funding and sharing resources with the outstanding front-line organizations addressing the region's health priorities.

Working collaboratively, the GLHA helps break down barriers that threaten our most vulnerable populations, linking them to available services and resources to address their needs.

# The Greater Lowell Health Alliance continuously seeks input in determining the region's most urgent health care needs.

In partnership with the GLHA, Lowell General Hospital commissioned researchers and students from the University of Massachusetts Lowell to conduct the **2019 Community Health Needs Assessment**. Similar assessments were conducted in 2010, 2013, and 2016. As in previous years, this process involved primary data collection using focus groups—including twenty listening sessions with more than 200 participants—key informant interviews, and online and in-person surveys, as well as secondary data sources, such as the Massachusetts Department of Public Health MassCHIP database and the United States Census

#### Community Health Survey

For the first time, an inter-agency, cross-disciplinary survey team conducted a **Greater Lowell Community** 

**Health Needs Assessment Survey**, addressing demographics, community health resources, health needs, health issues, community safety, health access barriers and service utilization history. The survey was distributed on paper, online and through mobile platforms throughout the region, in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Khmer, Arabic, and Swahili. A total of 1,355 completed surveys were analyzed.

#### Foundation for Action

The community needs assessment provides a foundation for the GLHA and its partners to build ongoing consensus on the area's priority health needs and develop future Community Health Improvement Plans (CHIPs) to improve the health of the area's residents. The 2019 Greater Lowell Community Health Needs Assessment was released to the public in October of 2019.



## Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

A Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) serves as a road map for the GLHA and our partners, steering us in the direction we need to take to improve health outcomes within the communities of the Greater Lowell region. The results of the 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment will help generate the 2020 Community Health Improvement Plan, with a goal to address current and developing health issues that our communities are facing.

The CHIP's mission is to turn data into action to address our community's top health priorities.

CHIPs succeed only with the collaboration of community partners, bringing together community members, leaders, agencies, and businesses to help create objectives and develop strategies. Over the next several months, we will be hosting listening sessions to engage our community partners and set our course for the future.

#### CHIP in action

Our first CHIP, developed in part from data collected by the 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment and released in 2017, is already having a significant impact on our region. Hundreds of community partners and dozens of community agencies and businesses collaborated to evaluate the community's health needs and create action plans surrounding those needs.

At the GLHA, those plans have turned into action through two key routes: GLHA task forces and GLHA grant funding, which complement other partner-focused efforts throughout the region.

#### **GLHA Grant Funding**

The CHIP provides guidance on priority areas for grant funding, enabling the GLHA to allocate funds to frontline organizations addressing the unmet needs of the community. The Community Health Initiatives grants on the following pages were awarded to programs and projects that targeted specific areas of focus.

#### **GLHA Task Forces**

The GLHA's six health-focused task forces—Cultural Competency, Healthy Eating & Active Living, Maternal Child Health, Mental Health, Social Determinants of Health, and Substance Use and Prevention—have adopted the CHIP as the driving force behind their efforts, creating working groups to set goals and objectives targeting specific areas of focus identified in the CHIP process.



Lowell Medical Assistant Day Institute

Among the dozens of CHIP-driven accomplishments over the past year, GLHA and our task forces:

- » Conducted a series of trainings in the community, called "Working Effectively with Diverse Populations," led by Lowell Community Health Center's Sheila Och and Mercy Anampiu, as well as a grant writing workshop for community partners, focused on how to implement CLAS (Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services) standards.
- » Hosted, in partnership with the Substance Use & Prevention Task Force, the first annual Merrimack Valley Substance Use Disorder Symposium on December 7, 2018, with more than 400 community members and partners discussing existing resources and where to focus future efforts. The second annual symposium will take place on December 6, 2019.
- » Held the second annual Lowell Medical Assistant Day Institute on Saturday, June 8, in partnership with Dr. Damian Folch, Health and Education Services, Greater Lowell Health Alliance, Lowell Community Health Center, and Middlesex Community College. The Institute aims to validate, support, empower and celebrate the contributions of Medical Assistants in the Greater Lowell area. This year the theme of the event was Social Determinants of Health, and brought in over 60 medical assistants for the full-day training workshop.
- » Hosted the Greater Lowell PRIDE Parade and Festival at Middlesex Community College on June 1, with participation from over 20 local agencies and businesses offering a wide variety of services (from HIV testing to mental health and substance use prevention resources).
- » Conducted "walking audits" to determine the safety and walkability of area streets.

Learn more about our GLHA Task Forces and their impact on pages 9-11.







Left: Local families participating in the Mill City Grows' Farm to Table program. Middle: Graduates of a 2019 training for the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell Emotional CPR (eCPR) program. Right: Greater Lowell Technical High School's RISE (Resilience in Student Effort) Classroom Opening for the 2019 school year.

## **GLHA Community Grants**

The Greater Lowell Health Alliance offers grants to support programs and services to improve the overall health of the Greater Lowell community. To date, we have distributed more than \$1.5 million in grants to organizations on the front lines of addressing unmet health needs. Over a 15-year period, the GLHA will distribute nearly \$5 million allocated by Lowell General Hospital through the hospital's Determination of Need process for its 2010 campus expansion.

Grants are awarded around the health priorities and programs that meet specific areas of focus identified by the GLHA's 2017 Community Health Improvement Plan process: Access to Healthy Food, Asthma, Cultural Competency, Mental Health, Physical Activity, Social Determinants of Health, and Substance Use and Prevention.



GLHA Board Chair Deirdra Murphy and Executive Director Kerrie D'Entremont (front row) with GLHA 2018/2019
Community Grant recipients, standing from left: Maria Lucci, Lowell House Addiction Treatment and Recovery;
Jake Cavanaugh, The NAN Project: Phu Duong, Middlesex Community College; Tammie Dubois, Merrimack Valley
Food Bank; Alyson Downs, Lowell Community Health Center; Cheryl Finney, Clarendon Early Education Services;
Sabrina Noel, University of Massachusetts Lowell; Lauren Friedman, Greater Lowell Technical High School;
Francey Stater, Mill City Grows; Angel Brunelle, Boys & Grits Club of Greater Lowell; Margaret McDonald,
Clarendon Early Education Services; Chief Timothy Sheehan, Tewksbury Police Department.

#### 2018/2019 Community Health Initiatives

- » Boys and Girls Club of Greater Lowell Emotional CPR (eCPR Training) Project – \$10,000
- » Clarendon Early Education Services Farm to Table Educational Program for Family Childcare Educators - \$13,750
- » The NAN Project Mental Health Awareness for Lowell's Youth - \$15,000
- » Greater Lowell Technical High School
  The Rise (Resilience in Student Effort) Program \$19,000
- » Lowell Community Health Center Training Frontline Workers to Improve the Health of Our Community: Northeast Region Community Health Education Center (CHEC) - \$30,000
- » Lowell House Addiction Treatment and Recovery Family Resource Coaching - A Program for Loved Ones of People in Recovery - \$34,250

- » Merrimack Valley Food Bank Operation Nourish - \$5,000
- » Middlesex Community College Law Center Fostering Healthy Behavior through Mediation in Juvenile Court, Lowell - \$5,000
- » Mill City Grows, Inc. Local Foods, Greener Meals Initiative - \$20,000
- » Tewksbury Police Department BRIDGE/JPD Pilot Transportation Initiative - \$10,000
- » University of Massachusetts Lowell Age Friendly Lowell: A Planning Grant - \$23,000

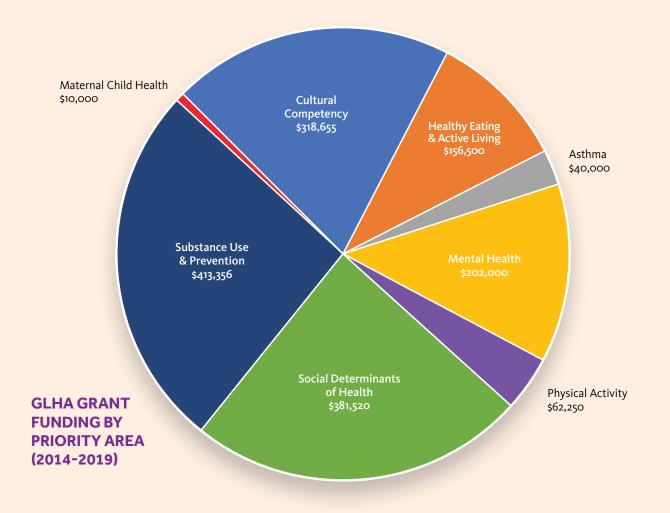
To learn about the impact of these grants in our region, visit greaterlowellhealthalliance.org

## GLHA Community Grants

#### 2019/2020 Community Health Initiatives

- » The Center for Hope and Healing Educating on Social Determinants of Health Impacting LGBQ/T Youth - \$30,000
- » Frederick Abisi Adult Education Center Mental Health Awareness for Adult Learners of English as a Second Language - \$15,000
- » Greater Lowell Community Foundation Asthma Spacers for School Kids - \$20,000
- » Lowell Community Health Center Training Frontline Health Workers to Improve the Health of our Community (CHEC) - \$25,000
- » Lowell Health Department Lowell 2020 Vision Program - \$23,500
- » Lowell Housing Authority Farm to Table Program - \$1,500

- » Lowell Parks & Conservation Closing the Gaps: Increasing Access to Trails - \$20,000
- » Megan's House Foundation Co-Occurring Disorders Professional Development - \$10,000
- » Merrimack Valley Food Bank Operation Nourish - \$5,000
- » The NAN Project
  Mental Health Awareness for Lowell Youth \$15,000
- » THRIVE Communities Community-based Support for People Transitioning from Incarceration - \$10,000
- » Wayside Expansion of PrideSide Lowell Program - \$10,000



### **GLHA Task Forces**

The work of each of the GLHA's task forces, individually and collectively, is creating long-term improvements in specific health areas and the overall health of our community, with a focus on encouraging collaboration among member organizations. These task forces are made up entirely of community volunteers who take time from their full-time commitments to focus on the health of others. These pages include just a glimpse of the profound impact these task forces and their leaders are making in our region.

To learn more about the impact of these task forces and subcommittees, please visit greaterlowellhealthalliance.org.

#### **CULTURAL COMPETENCY TASK FORCE**

TRI-CHAIRS: MERCY ANAMPIU, IVY HO, NANDI MUNSON

The mission of the Cultural Competency Task Force is to increase the capacity of healthcare and human service providers to encompass and provide better services to **individuals** of diverse backgrounds. The Cultural Competency Task Force fulfills this mission by increasing provider awareness of cultural diversity and skills related to working with diverse client bases to better serve those in our community.

IMPACT HIGHLIGHT: This year, among its many other initiatives, the Cultural Competency Task Force has taken on the task of re-creating the 2005 Access to Health Care Video to support new arriving and emerging groups in the Greater Lowell area. The Task Force has updated the video with information relevant to today's health care system, as well as making it culturally competent, diverse, and easy to understand.

#### LGBTQ SUBCOMMITTEE

CO-CHAIRS: JACKIE DIAMOND, ALAN FLAG

Under the Cultural Competency
Task Force is the LGBTQ Subcommittee,
comprising professionals and community
members with the mission of addressing
the issues pertaining to the LGBTQ
population, as well as raising awareness
and ensuring that all members of the
Greater Lowell community have access
to culturally competent, inclusive and
high-quality services and support.

IMPACT HIGHLIGHT: On May 31, 2019, the LGBTQ Subcommittee held the second annual Lowell PRIDE flag raising at City Hall in Lowell to celebrate our LGBTQ community and the beginning of PRIDE Month. Following the flag raising was our PRIDE Parade and Festival on June 1st at Middlesex Community College which saw over 500 people in attendance.



Lowell PRIDE 2019



Walking Audit



TRI-CHAIRS: MARILYN GRAHAM, HEATHER HILBERT, AMY PESSIA

The mission of the Health Eating & Active Living Task Force is to develop and strengthen partnerships within the Greater Lowell community with the goal of leading the community and its residents to **living healthier lives**. Cross-cultural and intergenerational partnerships and collaborations brought about by this task force help educate the community on how to adopt healthier lifestyles that will lead to healthier and more fulfilling lives.

The Task Force is broken up into two working groups: The Access to Healthy Foods Working Group and the Physical Activity Working Group.

**IMPACT HIGHLIGHT:** On July 19, the Physical Activity Working Group scheduled and fulfilled a Walking Audit in collaboration with the City of Lowell and Walk Boston. Task force members identified the Drum Hill area in Chelmsford as a potential danger for pedestrians due to the lack of sidewalks, crosswalks, and heavy traffic. Walk Boston provided the Greater Lowell Health Alliance with a written report documenting all the identified hazards and needs of this area. It also included recommended next steps to make the Drum Hill area safer for both pedestrians and drivers.



World Breastfeeding Week 2019

#### MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH TASK FORCE

CO-CHAIRS: AINAT KOREN, TAMI MARSHALL

Bringing together and collaborating with key stakeholders of the Greater Lowell area, the mission of the Maternal Child Health Task Force is to address the most pressing health issues related to **mothers and their families.** The efforts of this task force focus on both prenatal and perinatal health.

**IMPACT HIGHLIGHT:** The Maternal Child Health Task Force participated in another successful World Breastfeeding Week celebration, with a theme of "Empower parents, enable breastfeeding." Dozens of new and expecting moms and their families attended the celebration, with a goal to inform, anchor, engage and galvanize action on breastfeeding and related issues, including parental social protection policies and legislation, parent-friendly workplaces in both formal and informal sectors. and parent-friendly values and gender-equitable social norms.

## PERINATAL MENTAL HEALTH COALITION

CHAIR: HEATHER BIEDRZYCKI

Part of the Maternal Child Health
Task Force is the Perinatal Mental
Health Coalition, which addresses
a wide range of perinatal emotional
complications. The mission is to bring
together medical and mental health
providers and community members.
The Perinatal Mental Health Coalition
strives to improve the emotional
wellbeing of pregnant and
postpartum women and their
families through education, outreach,
advocacy, and support.

IMPACT HIGHLIGHT: The Perinatal Mental Health Networking Luncheon brought together 40 community providers who work with pregnant women and mothers with young children. This presentation defined perinatal mental health, discussed the risks associated with child development and highlighted the importance of continued screening by all providers who work with families with young children.



Innovative Transportation Efforts breakfast panel



The Social Determinants of Health Task Force was born out of the 2017 Community Health Improvement Plan's findings that demonstrated a need to address this area, which is defined as the circumstances under which people are born, live, grow, learn, and work and are influenced by complex interconnections between social structures and economic systems. The mission of this task force is to help create an environment that provides equitable access to education, employment opportunities, housing, transportation, positive social settings, and equitable healthcare to accomplish positive health outcomes within the community.

IMPACT HIGHLIGHT: The GLHA held a Networking Breakfast on March 22 titled "Innovative Transportation Efforts," hosted by the Lowell Community Health Center. Attendees learned about new projects and strategies to provide accessible and affordable transportation to residents. Panel members included Community Teamwork Inc., Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley, Merrimack Valley Project, and the Tewksbury Police Department.



Substance Use Disorder Symposium

## SUBSTANCE USE & PREVENTION TASK FORCE

TRI-CHAIRS: MICHAEL HALL, MARIA LUCCI, MARIA RUGGIERO

The Substance Use & Prevention
Task Force works together to bolster
collaboration within the Greater Lowell
community with a mission of **preventing and reducing substance abuse** within
our community. Focusing on
environmental strategies, the task force
utilizes policy making, substance use
intervention, and prevention education
as strategies to overcome this issue.

**IMPACT HIGHLIGHT:** Last year, the Substance Use & Prevention Task Force collaborated on the first annual Merrimack Valley Substance Use **Disorder Symposium** on December 7, 2018 at UTEC, with over 400 community members and partners attending. The Symposium served as a forum for all service providers, community members, and stakeholders to come together and discuss what is available and what is lacking in the realm of substance use prevention and where efforts need to be allocated to address this crisis. The second annual Merrimack Valley Substance Use Disorder Symposium will take place on December 6, 2019.



"Healthy Living in Lowell"

#### MENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE CO-CHAIRS: KATE ELKINS, SHEILA OCH

The Mental Health Task Force brings together mental health providers and community partners with a mission to **reduce stigma** related to mental health issues, **increase awareness** of mental health issues and available services, **improve access** to mental health care, and **identify and address** mental health issues that the Greater Lowell community faces. The task force also convenes to share resources, examine and develop best practices, and identify service gaps that can be collaboratively addressed.

#### **IMPACT HIGHLIGHT:**

Representatives from the GLHA Mental Health Task Force participated in the Lowell Health Department's new Lowell Telemedia Center (LTC) local access television show, "Healthy Living in Lowell." This thirty-minute show discussed mental health issues affecting youth—both early childhood and school-aged children—and innovative ways local providers and schools are working to alleviate this health crisis. This segment aired throughout August 2019 on the Lowell local access channels and was made available to stream on LTC's website.

## Community and Collaboration:

## The GLHA Needs You

The success of the Greater Lowell Health Alliance relies on the collaboration and engagement of our communities. There are many ways you can become involved and support the GLHA.

#### Join a task force.

The GLHA is always looking for new community members to join task forces and to collaborate on addressing the issues our community faces. All task force meetings are open to the public and all are welcome.

#### "CHIP" in.

The GLHA is embarking on the creation of the new 2020 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), which will guide our region's investment of resources over the next few years—but we need you to make it happen! Participate in a community forum. Participate in or lead a task force work group. Promote within your organization. However you choose to "CHIP in," you will be an integral part of this important community initiative!

#### Donate.

As the GLHA grows in both scope and impact, so does our need for resources. As a nonprofit 501(c)(3), we rely on donations from organizations and individuals to sustain our mission, grow our programs, and keep our events free and accessible to everyone. Please consider donating to the Greater Lowell Health Alliance at greaterlowellhealthalliance.org/donate.

For more information on these initiatives and other ways to get involved with the Greater Lowell Health Alliance, visit greaterlowellhealthalliance.org.

