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Affiliate of the American
Public Health Association

New Jersey Public Health Association

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2016 Annual Report to the Membership

This report is a summary of the activities of the New Jersey Public Health Association (NJPHA) during the past year.

Major Projects

Trenton Healthy Communities Initiative

NJPHA, in collaboration with the New Jersey Chapter of the American Planning Association and the Rutgers University – Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, received a two-year *Plan4Health* grant in 2014. Plan4Health is a national project of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in collaboration with the American Public Health Association (APHA) and the American Planning Association (APA). New Jersey was one of ten states that received grants to fund projects developed through a collaboration between the state affiliates of APHA and APA.

The New Jersey project targeted the City of Trenton. Staff from Rutgers worked with the staff of Trenton's Departments of Planning and Health and Human Services, as well as staff from a number of other city departments, to develop a Health and Food Systems element for Trenton's Master Plan. Project staff also developed Physical Activity, Healthy Eating and Healthy Homes Toolkits for the city. In addition, the project staff developed a model Health and Food Systems element that could be used as a template for any municipality in New Jersey that wants to a similar element for its Master Plan. The project concluded with a presentation to Trenton's community partners in May 2016.

More information about the Trenton Plan4Health project can be found at its website: <http://plan4health.us/plan4health-coalitions/trenton-healthy-communities-initiative/>.

Climate Change

NJPHA collaborated with staff of the Rutgers Climate Institute on the development of the New Jersey Climate Change and Public Health Working Group. The Working Group is a sub-committee of the New Jersey Climate Adaption Alliance. The Working Group, which formed in October 2015, sponsored a workshop for public health practitioners – *Preparing for the Impacts of a Changing Climate on Public Health in New Jersey* – at Rutgers in June 2016, and has advised Rutgers staff on the development of a *New Jersey Climate and Health Profile*

Report. The final draft of the Report has been posted for review and comment at: <http://njadapt.rutgers.edu/resources/draft-new-jersey-climate-and-health-profile-report> . A news item about the Working Group and its activities appeared in the July 2016 edition of APHA's newsletter *The Nation's Health*.

Advocacy

Participated in 6 nation sign-on letters to Congress, including support for FY 2017 Federal Budget appropriations for HRSA and CDC and support for continuation and full funding for the Prevention and Public Health Fund.

Annual Conference

Gun Violence as a Public Health Issue was the theme of the 2016 NJPHA Annual Conference, which was held in Edison, NJ on October 16.

The opening speaker was the Honorable Senator Loretta Weinberg from Bergen County. She spoke about efforts in the NJ Legislature to prevent gun violence and her experience with these laws, using as an example to 2002 the implementation of the 2002 Childproof Handgun Law. Christopher Rinn, an Assistant Commissioner of the NJ Department of Health, spoke about the Department's recent initiatives in the area of Population Health.

The Keynote speaker was Bernadette Hohl, PhD, who has a joint appointment in the Schools of Public Health and Criminal Justice at Rutgers. Dr. Hohl gave an overview on the national and New Jersey data on deaths and injuries caused by firearms, and then described promising approaches to address this problem, drawing on her experience with violence prevention research conducted in New Jersey and Philadelphia.

The afternoon panel discussed initiatives currently being implemented in New Jersey to prevent gun violence. The panelists included Mighty Fine from the American Public Health Association, Karen Kanter, Chair of the Middlesex County chapter of the Brady Campaign for Gun Violence Prevention, and Gurbir Grewal, Acting Prosecutor for Bergen County. The message conveyed by the conference speakers and panelists is that gun control legislation is only one of several possible public health approaches to gun violence. These other options include community level programs that have been shown to be effective in reducing all forms of violence, as well as those that aim to reduce the fears that influence people to resort to guns for self-protection.

At the end of the day, the audience members gathered in small groups to discuss what they had learned from the presentation and to develop written recommendations that the Advocacy Committee will use in developing an action plan to guide NJPHA's actions to address this issue.

Other Activities

PHACE

NJPHA continues to participate in PHACE – the Public Health Associations Collaborative Effort. PHACE consists of the six public health associations in New Jersey. In addition to NJPHA, its members are the New Jersey Association of County and City Health

Officials (NJACCHO), the New Jersey Local Boards of Health Association (NJLBOHA), the New Jersey Environmental Health Association (NJEHA), the New Jersey Society for Public Health Education (NJSOPHE), and the New Jersey Association of Public Health Nursing Administrators. PHACE's major projects in 2016 were an interactive learning session – *How Do We Advocate to Improve Health* – on May 19 at Mercer County Community College, and a retreat for the leadership of the PHACE associations in June.

APHA

NJPHA President Kevin McNally and Past President Oliver Lontok attended the APHA Affiliates Day meeting at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Conference in December in October. Dr. Lontok also represented the NJPHA at the meetings of the APHA Governing Council that took place during the conference. In addition, Dr. Lontok served as the regional representative for Region 2 (New Jersey, New York State, New York City and Puerto Rico) on the APHA Council of Affiliates for most of 2016.

Communications and Social Media

The NJPHA website was revived and significant improvements made, thanks to the efforts of Executive Board member and Communications Committee co-chair Bernice Carr. NJPHA's activities were also actively promoted through the Association's Facebook page, Twitter account, and quarterly newsletter.

Outreach and Member Recruitment

NJPHA continuously works to promote awareness of the Association's work among the public health community in New Jersey and to attract new members to the Association, with a particular emphasis on recruitment of recent graduates of public health programs. Outreach activities in 2016 included an exhibit table at the Annual New Jersey Public Health Symposium, participation in the Rutgers School of Public Health's Public Health Practice Night for graduating MPH students, and presentations to the Senior Seminar of Montclair State University's Public Health Program and the Rutgers School of Public Health Convocation.

Submitted by: Kevin T. McNally, MBA, President

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