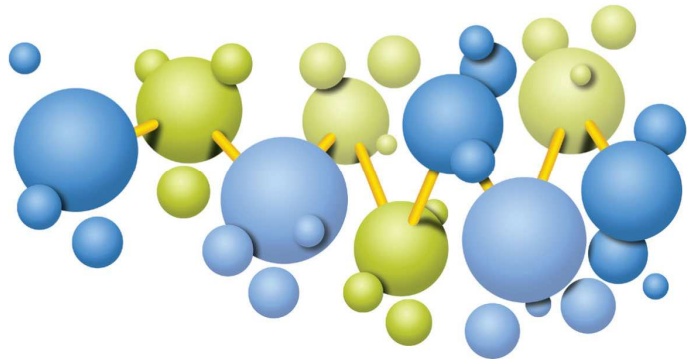


Communities of Health

coming together in **uncommon** ways
for a **common** purpose



February 13, 2009

Greetings, all,

Last week's Communities of Health gathering was another important step in considering the health of Las Vegas, and what's possible when we come together for a common purpose. In just a short time, we began to uncover deeper causes of some of the most devastating health and social conditions we face – and we gained a much greater appreciation for the diverse needs, perspectives and collective strengths that exist across this caring and committed community.

We are grateful for your ongoing participation in this important work!

Moving to Action

As we noted last week, coming together to connect needs and strengths will continue to point the way toward specific action. Over the past year, more than 300 people have gathered in similar sessions – and we are now beginning to see CoH-inspired plans, actions and collaborative efforts across business, public health, government, faith-based organizations, educators, youth, health agencies, and grass-roots community groups.

A good example is the December Policy Forum, where members of the Nevada Alliance to Eliminate Health Disparities (NAEHD) outlined four broad [focus areas](#) to support a new vision for a healthy Las Vegas: 1) safe neighborhoods that allow for an active, vibrant community; 2) effective education as a vehicle for economic opportunity; 3) fair access to existing health care systems; and 4) economic development and zoning of neighborhoods. NAEHD is meeting again to refine short-, mid- and long-term [actions](#) to influence policy change and to engage broader participation.

What's Next?

As these and other initiatives continue to emerge throughout Las Vegas and beyond, we think it's important to facilitate strong connections. In this sense, CoH is not defined by any single action plan, but as a movement that holds a common purpose and links together the many needs, assets and contributions of all. As June Coleman reminds us, "We need each other. We need all voices to be heard."

And so, CoH will continue to support community-driven action through the ongoing process of gathering, expanding, and connecting people across all sectors. That is our (Gary, Jeff and Rick) commitment to you. This includes continually learning new ways to create engaged participation. For instance, some of our time in coming months will be spent reaching out to business leaders in a way that makes social determinants of health relevant, specific and actionable for their organizations.

Most important, we want to hear from you! We ask that each of us consider...

- What am I most passionate about leading, creating or being part of?
- Who else should be connected to this movement?
- And, what role do I want to play in all of this?

Thanks to you all – and we look forward to hearing from you.

Rick, Gary and Jeff

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