

Quarterly Newsletter:

Volume 18, Issue 1:
January-March 2023

We're Hiring!

Now is the time to join our team. SUHI is looking for:

Associate Director of Evaluation: <https://jobs.sinaichicago.org/jobs/1537862-associate-director-of-evaluation>

Senior Manager, Health Services Research: <https://jobs.sinaichicago.org/jobs/1463168-senior-manager-health-services-research>

Community Health Worker Supervisor SSHCO:

<https://jobs.sinaichicago.org/jobs/1428579-community-health-worker-supervisor-sshco>

Operations Manager SSHCO: <https://jobs.sinaichicago.org/jobs/1494154-operations-manager>

CHW II Clinical SSHCO: <https://jobs.sinaichicago.org/jobs/1403376-community-health-worker-ii-clinical>

CHW II Clinical, Behavioral Health: <https://jobs.sinaichicago.org/jobs/1536191-behavioral-health-community-health-worker-ii-clinical-bilingual-spanish>

Spread the word, apply today, or connect with us at suhi@sinai.org to learn more about these exciting opportunities.

News and Events

Sinai Population Health Institute – June 5-9, 2023

Expand your professional capacity in the field of population health and social epidemiology. The weeklong Institute provides an invaluable experience to explore this area from a holistic, equitable perspective with guidance from top specialists. Through interactive teaching methods that focus on practical knowledge as well as structural factors, you can prepare yourself for better serving marginalized populations by gaining key insight into evidence-based best practices. The Sinai Population Health Institute is being held virtually June 5-9, 2023, from 9am-4pm each day. For more information, please see our website.

\$1.5 million Awarded to SUHI to Study Optimal Care for Patients with Diabetes

SUHI has been awarded a \$1.5 million grant from the [Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality \(AHRQ\)](#) to conduct a mixed-methods randomized study that explores how to optimize care for patients living with diabetes served by the Sinai Center for Diabetes and Endocrinology. This study will explore how to reduce A1c levels among patients randomized to the following intervention components: use of a one-on-one glucose monitor, participation in up to four diabetes education sessions, and one-on-one engagement with a community health worker. This study will be among the first, nationwide, to determine the optimal combination and sequence of diabetes-focused interventions that can support patients most impacted by chronic disease and social disadvantages.

\$75,000 Awarded to SUHI through Planning Grant to Develop Career Pathways in the Behavioral Health Field

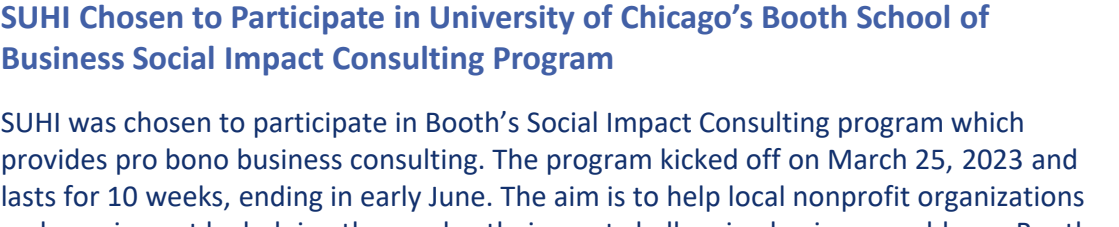
[Otho S.A. Sprague Memorial Institute](#) awarded SUHI a \$75,000 planning grant to develop career pathways in the behavioral health field. With this planning grant, SUHI is convening a specialized subcommittee of local and national experts in behavioral health, career pathways and workforce development to catalogue gaps in the workforce and identify field skills, competencies and certifications, which will result in a well-defined career pathway in behavioral health for community health workers. In addition, the grant allows SUHI to develop the optimal care continuum for behavioral health that includes CHWs. It also provides SUHI the opportunity to convene experts, assess industry needs, create innovative programming, and plant seeds for the emerging role of CHWs in behavioral health.

SUHI Graduates 40 New CHWs in Population Health Career Pathways!

On March 24, 2023, SUHI graduated its second cohort of Population Health Career Pathways students. Forty new CHWs received a certificate of completion and industry credentials in one of the specialty skills trainings we offered this Spring: behavioral health or health education.

All students had access to non-academic support including mentoring, career coaching, job readiness, digital literacy and job placement assistance.

We are grateful and proud to have the opportunity to serve our communities and help community members reach financial independence by providing skills training and job placement support. Hats off to the graduates!



SUHI Chosen to Participate in University of Chicago's Booth School of Business Social Impact Consulting Program

SUHI was chosen to participate in Booth's Social Impact Consulting program which provides pro bono business consulting. The program kicked off on March 25, 2023 and lasts for 10 weeks, ending in early June. The aim is to help local nonprofit organizations make an impact by helping them solve their most challenging business problems. Booth alumni and graduate students will help SUHI optimize its business plan for the Center for CHW Research, Outcomes and Workforce Development (CROWD). SUHI will also use insights gained to develop a business plan for its evaluation technical assistance business line. The aim is to generate revenue to support SUHI/Sinai and the communities we serve.

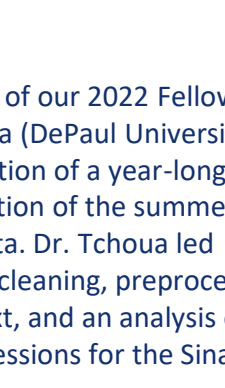
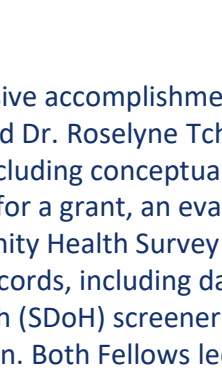
Health Inequities Research Talks and Lectures by Maureen Benjamins

Maureen Benjamins, PhD, Senior Research Fellow, was invited to give a plenary address at the Association for Prevention Teaching and Research conference in New Orleans on March 28, 2023. Her talk covered research from SUHI's latest book, [Unequal Cities: Structural Racism and the Death Gap in America's Biggest Cities](#), as well as new research SUHI has done in partnership with the AMA to understand city-level efforts to address racial health inequities. Maureen also was invited to speak about her research as part of Equal Hope's health disparities lecture series on February 22 and as part of a panel at Roosevelt University on March 23 during their Inaugural Women's Health Equity Symposium.

SUHI Partners with DePaul University to Leverage Health Informatics and CHWs to Mitigate Health Inequities

SUHI was awarded \$50,000 in unrestricted funding from the [Google Health Equity Research Initiative](#) to further develop work around data analytics and community health worker (CHW) interventions. With this grant, Kelly McCabe, Associate Director, Community Health Innovations, is collaborating with Roselyne Tchoua, Assistant Professor, School of Computing, DePaul University, on SUHI's CHW Support Program which focuses on post-discharge needs of high-risk Sinai patients.

Early indicators suggest that CHW integration into hospital care can reduce readmission rates while also providing improved patient outcomes overall. This collaboration is pioneering how data analysis works together with grassroots support networks to help predict patients at high risk of readmission.



The work was recently highlighted in a poster presentation on April 7, 2023 at UIC's Minority Health Conference, with Melinda Banks, CHW Program Coordinator, presenting. (Pictured above).

SUHI Fellow Acknowledgements

SUHI would like to acknowledge the impressive accomplishments of our 2022 Fellows, Dr. Ariel Smith (University of Illinois Chicago) and Dr. Roselyne Tchoua (DePaul University). Dr. Smith contributed to several projects, including conceptualization of a year-long Research Activism for Youth (RAY) program for a grant, an evaluation of the summer RAY program, and a paper utilizing Sinai Community Health Survey data. Dr. Tchoua led several data projects using patient health records, including data cleaning, preprocessing, and analysis of Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) screener text, and an analysis of data to predict the risk of 30-day readmission. Both Fellows led sessions for the Sinai Population Health Institute held in June.

Recent Publications

Chicago's Citywide COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Program: Protect Chicago Plus

Bijou Hunt, Sinai Infectious Disease Center, and Jackie Jacobs, Director of Evaluation, co-authored a publication, "[Chicago's Citywide COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Program: Protect Chicago Plus](#)" with two former SUHI Fellows, Dr. Amy Johnson and Dr. C. Scott Smith. Published in Public Health Reports, this study explored short-term impacts of Protect Chicago Plus (PCP). We found that PCP led to reduced vaccination disparities between Chicago communities with low and high vulnerability indexes over time.

Life Expectancy Gaps Among Black and White Persons and Contributing Causes of Death in Three Large US Cities

Nazia Saiyed, Epidemiologist, Maureen Benjamins, Senior Research Fellow and Pam Roesch (former SUHI caregiver) published a [study in JAMA Network Open](#) on March 11, 2023 (along with colleagues from the AMA). The study assessed the causes of death that contributed to the racial gap in life expectancy in three large US cities. It highlights the need for local-level data to drive cities' efforts toward health equity. The study has already been viewed over 2,000 times.

An Evaluation of the Implementation of the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Farmers Market Nutrition Program at Four Chicago WIC Sites

SUHI researchers Jackie Jacobs, Director of Evaluation, Jenny Holcomb, Senior Evaluator, Helen Margellos-Anast, President, Linda Martinez, Research Specialist, and Cindy San Miguel (former SUHI caregiver) published an [article in Nutrients](#) on February 23. The study evaluated the implementation of the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) in Chicago and documented the FMNP in practice at four WIC clinics serving predominately Black and Latinx families.

Jacobs, J.; et al. An Evaluation of the Implementation of the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Farmers Market Nutrition Program at Four Chicago WIC Sites. *Nutrients* 2023, 15, 1122. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu15051122>

Cause-Specific Mortality and Racial Differentials in Life Expectancy, Chicago 2018–2019

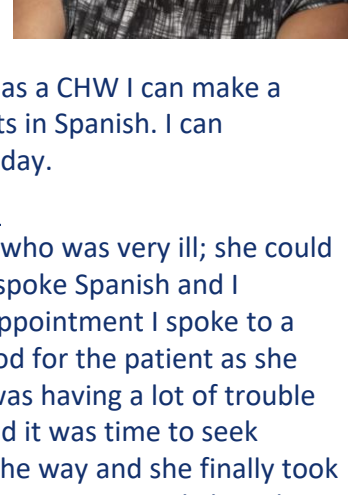
Nazia Saiyed and Maureen Benjamins co-authored [a publication](#) in the Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities, led by SUHI Fellow Jessica Bishop-Royse and colleagues from DePaul University. The study assessed the specific causes of death that most contributed to the Black:White gap in life expectancy in Chicago.

Policy Brief: Supporting Telehealth Expansion for Medicaid Patients in Illinois

The [Health First Collaborative \(HFC\)](#), incubated by Michael Reese Health Trust, funded three community health centers to test technology-focused innovative pilot projects seeking to improve access to care. As the evaluation lead for the HFC, SUHI worked with the community health centers to highlight key learnings and opportunities for healthcare system improvements. Building on a body of evidence, SUHI elevated HFC findings in a [policy brief](#) to advocate for expanding and codifying telehealth expansion measures for Medicaid patients in Illinois. The policy brief focuses on the HFC telehealth pilot project at Esperanza Health Centers and was supported by the Illinois Primary Healthcare Association and Mara Ruff, Vice President of Government Affairs for Sinai Chicago.

Community Health Worker Spotlight

Our most recent spotlight features Nataly Alvarez answering three questions regarding her role as a CHW Trainer.



What drew you into the CHW profession?

The opportunity to help people who don't have someone to advocate for them drew me to the CHW profession. I am a kind-hearted person and the work resonated with me as not only a career path but a vocation I can participate in by helping people and making a difference in their lives. Having the opportunity to help people who otherwise may not be able to seek help and truly impact their life is a gift. I love that as a CHW I can make a difference by providing health information to clients or patients in Spanish. I can educate, empower and help be the change the world needs today.

What's your most memorable experience working as a CHW?

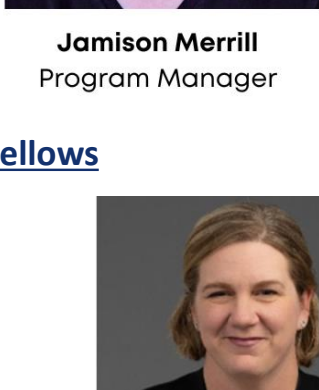
The most memorable moment I had was when I met a patient who was very ill; she could barely speak on the phone with me. I was the only CHW who spoke Spanish and I convinced her to try the organization's services. Prior to her appointment I spoke to a more experienced CHW and asked if a home visit would be good for the patient as she was very ill. My colleague and I went to her home where she was having a lot of trouble breathing and was unable to take even a few steps. We decided it was time to seek medical help for her. I told her I would be there every step of the way and she finally took the courage to call 911 herself. The ambulance came and she was very scared about how she was going to pay for the bill. I told her we will guide her, with her release once the time comes. I followed up with her while she was in the hospital, and she let me know I saved her life. I cried after the call because I never knew what an impact I could make by supporting, listening, and advocating for a client. I am thankful for that experience as it showed me that I can make a difference.

What is the biggest challenge in your work and how did you overcome it?

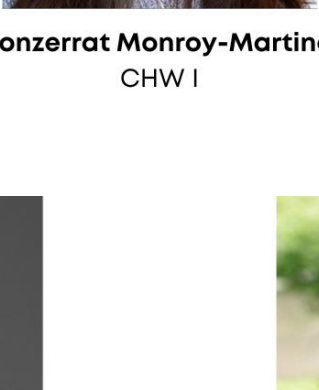
As I started my career as a CHW one of the biggest challenges was to have a conversation with a stranger. As a child, I was bullied and judged for being knowledgeable, which carried into my adulthood as well. Speaking to a stranger to overcome my fear of practicing how to speak to my patients via the phone and in-person. They knew I was capable of accomplishing this after I developed my approach and became comfortable with it.

SUHI Staffing Updates

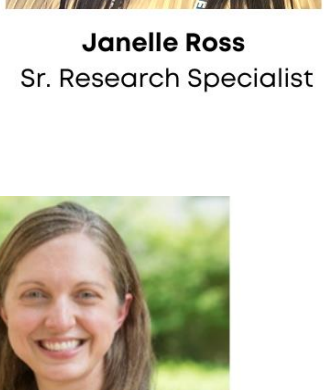
New Staff



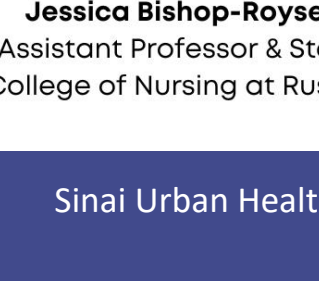
Maria Gonzalez
Career Coach



Melissa Gutierrez Kapheim
Director of HEAR



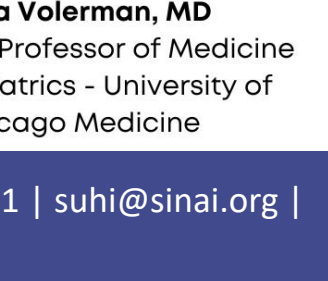
Anubhav Kidambi
Program Manager



Jamison Merrill
Program Manager



Monzerrat Monroy-Martinez
CHW I



Janelle Ross
Sr. Research Specialist

Fellows



Jessica Bishop-Royse, PhD, MS
Assistant Professor & Statistician -
College of Nursing at Rush University



Anna Volerman, MD
Associate Professor of Medicine
and Pediatrics - University of
Chicago Medicine