

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



INTRODUCTION

Over the past year, UConn Health Disparities Institute (HDI), our institution, and our nation at large have seen many changes, some of which none of us could have imagined a year ago.

In the midst of dual pandemics – novel COVID-2019 and pre-existing structural racism – HDI’s mission and legislative mandate to eliminate health disparities and advance health equity have been elevated to a national agenda. The essential nature of our work and service to the state is clear, now more than ever, and we are proud to serve. We highlight below key accomplishments from the past year, July 2019 – June 2020.

These outcomes are a result of leveraging our **4 strategic approaches** to advancing health equity and reducing health disparities:

1. Enhance health equity **research, training, and innovation.**
2. Deepen **community engagement** and cultivate cross-sector **collaborations.**
3. Support **policy action and systems change.**
4. Change **data-driven and public narratives** about vulnerable populations.

Since February 2020, HDI has welcomed **three new staff members** to our ranks:

- Willie Frazier, Research Associate I
- Emy Flores, Administrative Program Coordinator
- Valen Diaz, Projects Manager and Research Associate I

We have also added **two new faculty affiliates**, Dr. Kristen Cooksey Stowers from the Department of Allied Health Sciences and Dr. Loneke Blackman Carr from the Department of Nutritional Sciences.

With our team fully staffed for the first time in over a year, we reflect on our accomplishments over the past year and continue to strategize together on a path forward in our new reality.

2020
FY!

COVID-19 RESPONSE



Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S., HDI has been working tirelessly to respond to the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and racism, with calls to embed equity in our emergency response. For a detailed report of our COVID-19 response, please see the enclosed report, **“Advancing Health Equity and Promoting Racial Justice during COVID-19.”**

Through our COVID-19 response efforts, HDI has gained greater statewide and national visibility, which has resulted in HDI leadership being called to serve in the following ways.

- Invited by **Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi** to speak at closed door strategy session with the Ways & Means and Education & Labor Committees around health equity legislation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Invited by **Mayor Luke Bronin** to lead the Public Health Working Group of the City of Hartford COVID-19 Recovery Task Force and make recommendations for Hartford’s reopening process.
- Interviewed as a public health and racial equity expert for over **20 media pieces**.
- Requested to **speak as a subject matter expert on policy and systems change, health equity, and racism** at statewide and national forums, including but not limited to the:
 - Black and Puerto Rican Caucus
 - Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity
 - Opportunity Ministerial Health Fellowship
 - State of Connecticut Maternal and Infant Mortality Work Group on Maternity, Postpartum & Well-baby Care
 - American Psychological Association
- Published **6 op-eds and articles**, including two in partnership with Health Equity Solutions, on COVID-19, health equity, and racism.

Across our COVID-19 response, our reach continues to grow and includes over:

OUR REACH

147.9 MILLION
POTENTIAL
READERS OF
OP-ED AND
NEWS ARTICLES

17 MEDIA
INTERVIEWS

265K
ENGAGEMENTS
ON SOCIAL
MEDIA

73 PARTNERS
ACROSS
AND BEYOND
UConn

45K
VIEWERS/
PARTICIPANTS
IN COMMUNITY
CONVERSATIONS
/PRESENTATIONS

12
PRESENTATIONS
/WEBINARS

HEALTH EQUITY WEEK 2020!

APRIL 5 - 11, 2020

A SOCIAL MULTIMEDIA EXPERIENCE
#HEALTHYWEED

For the second year, we launched Health Equity Week in partnership with Health Equity Solutions. We rapidly shifted our campaign in early April to a virtual platform, given COVID-related closures. Coming at the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Health Equity Week campaign was a jump start to building statewide momentum around addressing racial disparities and centering health equity in Connecticut's COVID-19 pandemic response.

Our call to action was for the consistent collection and public reporting of race, ethnicity, and language data for COVID-19 testing, cases, hospitalizations, and deaths. We also recommended that standardized data collection be required across health, basic needs, and economic supports, such as Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and unemployment.

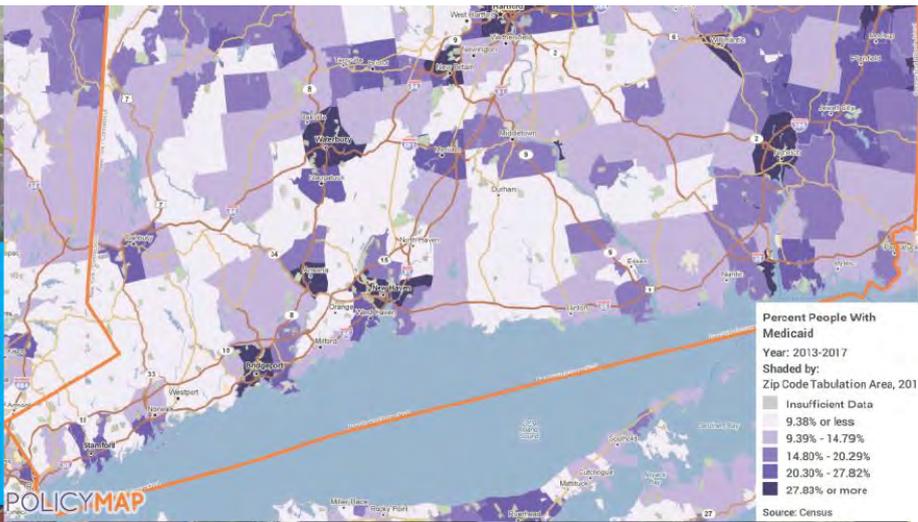
In partnership with Health Equity Solutions, we published **2 op-eds**, deployed a social media campaign with original content, and shared a social media toolkit in English and Spanish.

Dr. Wizdom Powell gave the keynote address at the Ministerial Health Fellowship Town Hall on COVID-19, health disparities, and policy and systems solutions. At least **7 state legislators** attended the town hall and we conducted follow-up with each legislator, including representatives from the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus.

[See our webpage for our Health Equity Week 2020 Call to Action and resources page.](#)

COVID-19 DATA MAPPING

APPROACH: DATA-DRIVEN & PUBLIC NARRATIVES

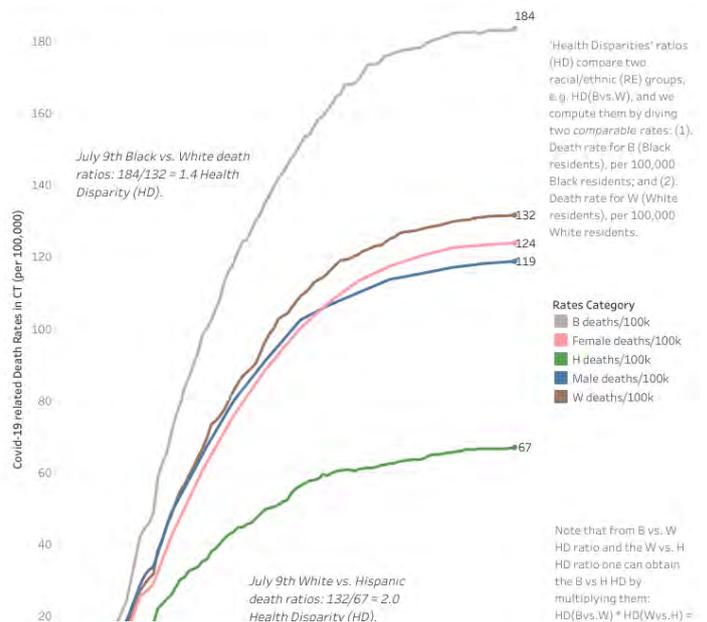


We leveraged our data analytics expertise and the [PolicyMap](#) tool to track COVID-19 health disparities in CT.

We are working with the CT Department of Health to provide accessible, up-to-date data by race/ethnicity, gender, and age to draw focused attention to disparate infection rates, number of tests, and mortality rates. Specifically, we created a dashboard that reports death rates per 100,000 residents by gender and race/ethnicity; COVID-19 infections in CT per 10,000 residents by town, and daily changes in COVID-19 tests in CT.

We continue to make these data and maps available for public consumption. See maps presented on the [UConn HDI Website](#) and [Tableau](#).

Death rates (per 100,000 residents) by gender and race/ethnicity (RE)



COLLABORATIONS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

APPROACH: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & COLLABORATION

In response to the racial/ethnic disparities in COVID-19 across Connecticut, UConn HDI brainstormed a series of strategic actions to reduce these disparities. We engaged with our **coalition members** on the Equal Coverage to Care Coalition and Boys and Men of Color Multi-Sector Alliance to identify priorities for action.

- We created a survey to assess priorities among our partner organizations. **Over 45 organizations received the survey and 22 organizations responded.** We convened these multi-sector organizations for discussion of the priorities that emerged from the survey. The result of this coalition engagement was an advocacy tool, the **“Racial/Ethnic Disparities in COVID-19: Priorities for Action”** report.
- In the report, these priorities are set forth by multi-sector organizations currently delivering urgently needed social, economic, spiritual support and health services to people of color. These short, mid, and long-term priorities for action are aimed at **reducing racial/ethnic disparities in COVID-19 across Connecticut.** The group of multi-sector organizations identified testing, contact tracing, hazard pay, and personal protective equipment (PPE) for people of color as priorities for reducing disparities. The group also prioritized the disaggregation of data by race/ethnicity.

In response to the racist murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and Black men and women across the nation, HDI organized a series of virtual gatherings and conversations on racial profiling of Black men and women during the pandemic, facilitated by Dr. Wizdom Powell.

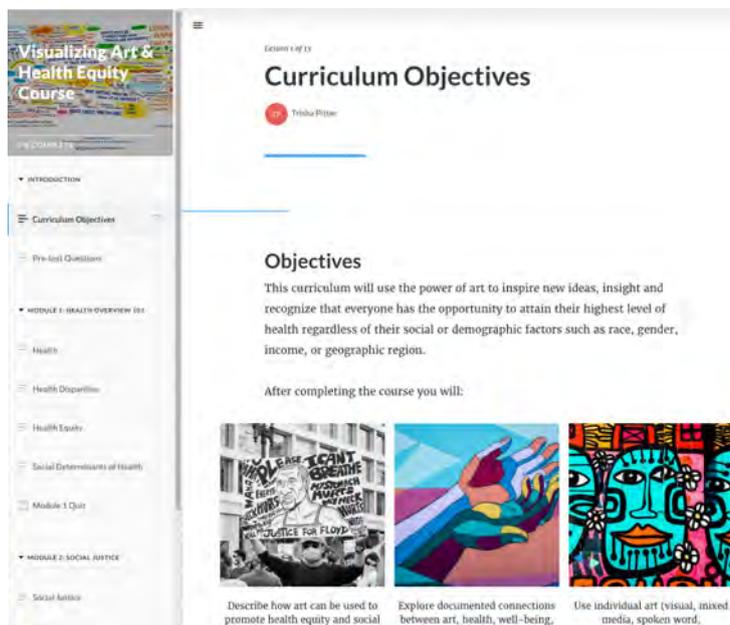


HDI partnered with Amplify, Inc. and the Ministerial Health Fellowship to host a town hall and community conversation (fishbowl dialogue) series on **healing from COVID-19 and racism**, with a focus on behavioral health. Dr. Powell gave the keynote address at the town hall and facilitated the fishbowl dialogue. **4 state legislators** and the Office of Health Strategy attended these events.

ARTS AND HEALTH EQUITY

APPROACH - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & COLLABORATION

HDI Curriculum Developers



Arts-based strategies to advance health equity are gaining national traction and HDI is at the forefront of this trend. Our arts and health equity strategy has been amplified in local Hartford schools and through partners like the [CT RISE Network](#). Our efforts have earned statewide visibility, with growing community partner interest and momentum.

- Our **Visualizing Health Equity curriculum** has been delivered to two schools. The curriculum was also recently transferred to an e-learning platform and will be disseminated to our partners for pilot testing.

- We are partnering with the UConn Asian and Asian American Studies Institute, Kamora's Cultural Corner, the Afro Yaqui Music Collective, the UConn Health Center for Treatment of Developmental Trauma Disorder, and the UConn Health Center for Trauma Recovery and Juvenile Justice to host a series of community events focused on **arts and healing in the face of COVID and racism**. These events will take place in July 2020.

POLICY AND SYSTEMS CHANGE

APPROACH: POLICY ACTION & SYSTEMS CHANGE



On November 6th, 2019, HDI presented data on the burden of medical debt in Connecticut to a Task Force (TF) appointed by Governor Ned Lamont. The TF charge was to study the impact of high deductible plans (HDHPs) on enrollees and report its findings and recommendations to the legislature. HDI presented the results of a study showing that from 2011-2016, **twenty-eight Connecticut acute care hospitals had sued over 85,000 patients to collect more than \$110,000,000 in medical debt.** HDI linked the lawsuits to unaffordable deductibles of HDHPs and hospitals' high prices as synergistic co-drivers of medical debt.

Based on the HDI data, on Nov. 12th the *Hartford Business Journal* published an article **singling out Danbury Hospital** as an outlier in the number of lawsuits accounting for nearly half of all the cases compared to the other 27 hospitals in the state.

Six days later another headline in the *CT News Times* read **"Danbury Hospital 'changing' policy that makes it tops for suing patients."**

The speed with which the Danbury Hospital changed its policy suggested a high level of sensitivity on the part of Danbury Hospital administrators to the public image projected by their aggressive debt collection practices. During the following weeks HDI responded to additional media requests from a local TV station, National Public Radio and others for more information about hospital as well as medical groups, dental practices, and outpatient clinics' lawsuit activity. HDI also presented medical debt data at several towns' public meetings organized by Connecticut Senator Chris Murphy.

POLICY AND SYSTEMS CHANGE (CONT.)

APPROACH: POLICY ACTION & SYSTEMS CHANGE

During approximately the same time period, the national press including the ***New York Times***, ***Wall Street Journal***, ***ProPublica***, ***CNBC***, ***Washington Post***, and ***Kaiser News***, as well as ***some local newspapers*** in other states were also reporting statistics and case stories of egregious but legal hospital collection practices including large-scale patient lawsuits, garnishing of salaries, personal savings, 401K retirement, charging high-interest rates, placing liens on property and even collection agencies **jailing of debtors**.

In many instances news headlines resulted in swift policy reversal by hospitals, an effect seldom seen following academic publications. The short timeframe for policy changes contrasts sharply with the lengthier legislative pathway to needed reforms aimed at reducing patient's burden of medical debt as exemplified by the HDHP TF. In light of the Danbury Hospital response to a **"transparency intervention"** we asked if public exposé could lead to quicker and a more generalized reduction in lawsuits by hospitals not singled out in media reports suggesting a sentinel effect.

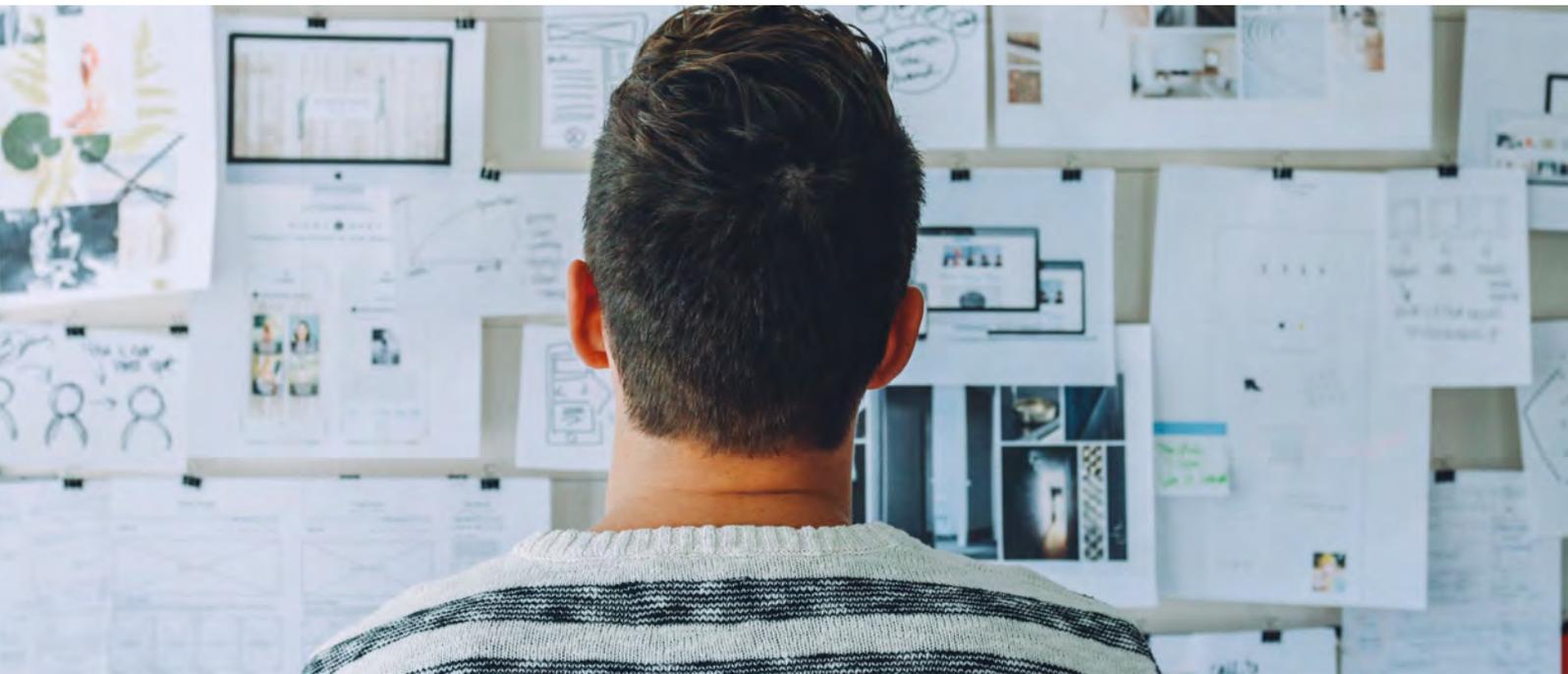
To determine the impact of a natural experiment we call a "transparency intervention" we compared the number of active lawsuits by 28 acute care hospitals in Connecticut at two separate times; before and after a period of intense local and national media coverage of aggressive hospital debt collection practices.

Combined, Connecticut non-profit hospitals had 1,082 active lawsuits on a single day prior to the "transparency intervention" period. The total number of active cases decreased to 90, a **ten-fold reduction** recorded on a single day during the post-intervention period.

Public exposé of hospital lawsuits resulted in an immediate reversal of patient suing policy. This suggests that greater public access to information about standardized, understandable hospital debt collection practices including lawsuits can deter such practices. A state-wide reversal in lawsuits by hospitals would benefit disproportionately the large number of racial/ethnic minorities, non-native English speakers and the uninsured who are often the target to such lawsuits.

DATA TO CHANGE NARRATIVES

APPROACH: DATA-DRIVEN & PUBLIC NARRATIVES



At HDI, we use our data analytics expertise and the mapping tool, PolicyMap, to tell the story of the data and change narratives.

PolicyMap Success Story

Dr. Montgomery Douglas initiated a paper publication in the Annals of Family Medicine to explain why fewer racial/ethnic minority family medicine doctors seem to report burnout. Using U.S. county-level [PolicyMap](#) diversity index (DI) [data](#), merged into a large American Board of Family Medicine survey, Dr. Emil Coman has shown that this phenomenon is due to racial/ethnic minority family medicine doctors serving in more diverse counties. The manuscript received four positive reviewers' suggestions, and is now in revision stage to resubmit. Once the manuscript is published (and doctor real county location are scrambled), these data will be mapped and publicized online.

PolicyMap as a Resource for Students and Investigators

PolicyMap has been demonstrated to:

- UConn Storrs researchers (Dr. Amy Gorin and InCHIP team),
- School of Social Work graduate/doctoral students, and
- School of Medicine students, in Dr. Kristen Ek's clinical home class in 2019 and 2020.

Currently, it is being used as a resource to extend the findings investigated in a PhD dissertation (mentor: Dr. Amy Gorin) analyzing a weight loss intervention conducted in three Connecticut communities.

DATA TO CHANGE NARRATIVES (CONT.)

APPROACH: DATA-DRIVEN & PUBLIC NARRATIVES

PolicyMap is featured as a central data source and visualization tool for **two**

School of Medicine capstone projects:

- Nurudeen Osumah (PI, Dr. Wizdom Powell)
- Jessica Bertenshaw (PI, Dr. Kirsten Ek)

Data Analytics Support

Dr. Emil Coman is providing biostatistical support (10% effort) to UConn Health Family Medicine for:

- Family Medicine residents' research projects (quality improvement)
- Faculty research projects (Dr. Ohri – residents exams scores; Dr. Douglas: see PolicyMap Success Story)
- Faculty community-facing project (Dr. Mansilla-Rivera – residents engaged in the Hartford schools community)
- Minority faculty development fellowship program (Dr. David Henderson)
- COVID-19 related research on FQHC patients in CT (Dr. Agresta, with ProHealth)

- Rebecca Joseph (PI Dr. Hugh Blumenfeld; hospice attitudes among African Americans)
- School of Medicine practicum project: Emily Huang (Dr. Angela Bermudez-Millan & Dr. Seth Kalichman)

Dr. Coman provides data analytics support (15% effort) to the UConn Center on Aging for Dr. Lisa Barry's Aging Inmates Suicidal Ideation and Depression, "Aging Inside," R01 grant, funded by NIMH. The current focus is on publications – one manuscript was recently published in the **Journal of Affective Disorders** and a second manuscript led by Dr. Coman on health disparities among inmates is in progress.

EDUCATIONAL MISSION

APPROACH: RESEARCH, TRAINING, & INNOVATION



Even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, HDI has continued fulfilling our educational mission and service to UConn students and trainees through our internship and leadership program. Over the course of this year, we worked with students every semester for their internship/practicum and leadership experience:

- Fall 2019 – 3 students
- Spring 2020 – 7 students
- Summer 2020 – 5 students

We hosted **3 seminars** in fall 2019 and **5 seminars** in spring 2020 for students focused on a variety of health equity and professional development topics. During the shelter-in-place orders, we met collectively twice a week to check in with and support students as they finished out their semesters in the midst of the pandemic.

Each student carried out project deliverables that aligned with HDI projects. These projects include: building social media campaigns, preparing for the State of Health Equity Among Boys and Men of Color Summit, data analysis, reporting, and recommendations for the CT Report Cards on Health Equity, preparing the Visualizing Health Equity Curriculum, building the Health Insurance Academy, support in medical debt transparency intervention effect, medical debt questionnaire development, and independent research projects.

GRANTS AND SERVICES

APPROACH: RESEARCH, TRAINING, & INNOVATION

External Services Provided

- Fishbowl Dialogue Facilitation: Dr. Powell and the HDI team provided facilitation and design services for the following partners:
 - Office of Health Strategy – **two dialogues** hosted in New London, CT and New Britain, CT.
 - Amplify, Inc. – **one dialogue** hosted virtually.
- Data Analytics Consultation: Dr. Coman provided statistical assistance to the Community Health Center, Inc./Weitzman Institute (CHC) from 2015 through February 2020 to:
 - Publish **five papers** on care coordination ([BMC Health Services Research](#)); pain management ([Journal of Pain Research](#)); eConsult savings ([Health Affairs](#) and [American Journal of Managed Care](#)); adverse childhood experiences (manuscript accepted for publication in Addictive Behaviors Reports)
 - Assist medical students with **capstone projects** at CHC (on smoking)
 - Develop process to analyze CHC **data on opioid dependence treatment**
 - Paper #1 is in progress.
 - The data and advanced analytics is being used to develop Dr. Coman's **K25 application**, with Dr. Marwan Haddad as clinical mentor.

Active Grants

- **Health Insurance Academy, \$69,000**, CT Health Foundation, no-cost extension ends 9/30/20
- **MANHOODs, \$334,385**, NIH – NIDA K01, second no-cost extension approved and ends 6/30/21

Grant Submissions

- **NIH –NIMHD, P50 Center for Advancing Understanding of Stress, Environmental Disparities (CAUSE) and Cardiovascular Health in Racial and Ethnic Minority Males**, submitted November 2019, PI: Dr. Wisdom Powell, pending funding determination
 - If not funded, a P01 submission to NHLBI is planned for fall 2020.
- **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Clinical Scholars Program**, submitted March 2020, PI: Dr. Rocio Chang, unfunded
- **NIH P30, Claude D. Pepper Older American Independence Centers (OAICs)**, submitted September 2019, PI: UConn Center on Aging, unfunded
- **William Casper Graustein Memorial Fund, Visualizing Health Equity Arts-Based Initiatives and Brave New Spaces**, submitted in April 2019, PI: Dr. Wisdom Powell, **funded \$1,500**, Connecticut

GRANTS AND SERVICES (CONT.)

APPROACH: RESEARCH, TRAINING, & INNOVATION

- **Health and Educational Facilities Authority (CHEFA), CT PolicyMap Initiative: Building Community Capacity to Map from Evidence to Action**, submitted in March 2019, PI: Dr. Wizdom Powell, unfunded
- **NIH R24, Empowering community-invested researchers with practical statistical skills to increase the evidential power or substance use data**, submitted January 2019, PI: Dr. Wizdom Powell, unfunded

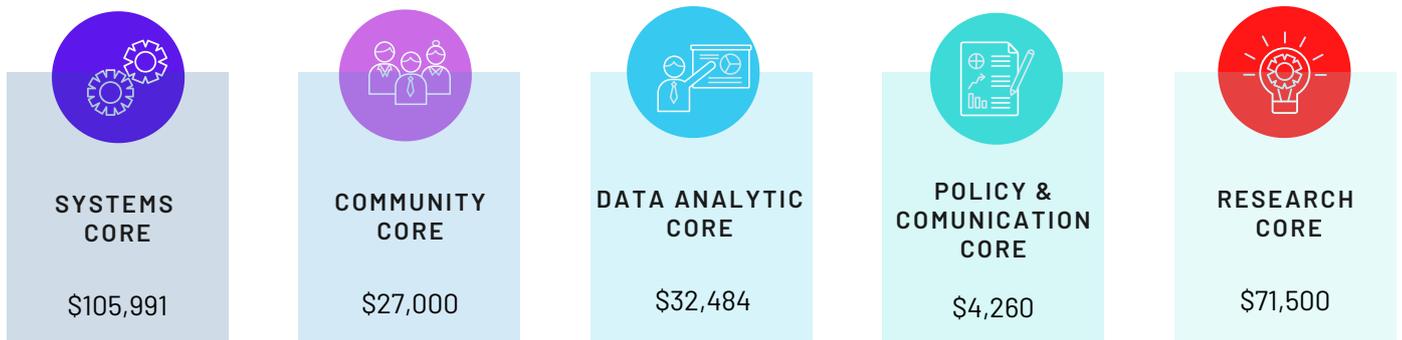
Upcoming Submissions

FUNDER	TIMELINE	PI	TOPICS	PARTNERS
NIH - NIDA	July 2020	Dr. Wizdom Powell	R34, Mindfulness based stress reduction intervention for Black emerging adult men	University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
COMMONWEALTH FUND	July 2020	Dr. Wizdom Powell	Letter of intent - Medicaid expansion and COVID-19	To be determined
NIH	October 2020	Dr. Emil Coman	K25 grant, opioid dependence treatment	Community Health Center/Weitzman Institute
NIH	October 2020	UConn Center on Aging Faculty	P30, Pepper Center grant	UConn Center on Aging
NIH - NHLBI	Fall 2020	Dr. Wizdom Powell	P01, if P50 is unfunded	UConn departments, UNC, RTI, community, etc.
NIH - NIDA	Fall 2021	Dr. Wizdom Powell	P50, substance use prevention	InCHIP
ABIM FOUNDATION	To be determined	Dr. Victor Villagra	Surprise billing	Hastings Institute

FINANCES

Given the current fiscal situation, HDI is being as proactive as possible with our budgeting for FY'21. We are budgeting for strategic priorities designed to generate revenue and return on investment. We aligned our FY'21 budget to our core structure and outlined priorities

FY' 21 Core Budgets = **\$241,235***



***Does not include salary and fringe expenses. FY'21 budget for School of Medicine operating expense funds (201122 and 201133).**

The IDEAS Lab, a partnership with InCHIP as part of the State of Health Equity among Boys and Men of Color Summit, has potential to generate revenue in new grant funds for innovation that comes out of the event. The Faculty Affiliate Pilot Seed Program would also position faculty for grant funding. HDI plans to leverage this funding to grow strategically and advance our mission and legislative mandate.

We are also focused on monetizing our state level work, like fishbowl dialogue services and data analytics consultation. We are building our expertise in health equity curriculum development and e-learning platforms, with plans to offer these services and products to partners across the state and generate revenue.

FINANCES

Our FY'20 spending for operational expenses is outlined below.

	Description (SOM Funds 201122 and 101011)	FY'20 Activity
	Salary & Fringe	\$655,610
	Internal Contract Support	\$1,031
	Purchased Services	\$80,156
	Supplies	\$1,435
	Equipment	\$5,339
	Total	\$743,931

AWARDS, PUBLICATIONS, PRESENTATIONS, & MEDIA COVERAGE

APPROACH: RESEARCH, TRAINING, & INNOVATION



Dr. Wizdom Powell was awarded the FY'20 InCHIP Community-Engaged Health Research Excellence Award! This award recognizes an InCHIP-affiliated faculty member who has demonstrated excellence in health-related research conducted in collaboration with one or more community organizations and consistent with the mission of InCHIP. Excellence in community-engaged health

research is defined here as work that reflects a high degree of commitment to collaboration with a community partner(s) with the goal of enhancing the respective community's health and well-being through substantive, original, and impactful scientific contributions. Dr. Powell will receive \$500 in research funds and be recognized in InCHIP's annual report.

Publications

Adams, L.B., Lightfoot, A., Gottfredson, N., Corbie-Smith, G., Golin, C., **Powell, W.** (March 2019). Factor Analysis of the CES-D 12 in a Community Sample of Black Men. *American Journal of Men's Health*.

Hoggard, L., **Powell, W.**, Upton, R., Seaton, E.K., & Neblett, Jr., Enrique W. (2019). Personal growth initiative as a mediator of the relationship between everyday racism and depression among African American males. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/cdp0000264>

Powell, W., Richmond, J., Mohottige, D., Yen, I., **Joslyn, A.**, & Corbie-Smith, G. (2019). Medical mistrust, racism, and delays in preventive health screening among African-American men. *Behavioral Medicine*. DOI: [10.1080/08964289.2019.1585327](https://doi.org/10.1080/08964289.2019.1585327)

Farel, C.E., Golin, C.E., Ochtera, R.D., **Powell, W.**, & Wohl, D.A. (2019). Underutilization of HIV testing among men with incarceration histories. *AIDS and Behavior*. E-pub ahead of publication available online at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10461-018-02381-9>

Powell, W., Freirichs, L., Wonsley, R., Mayorga, M., Richmond, J., Corbie-Smith, G., Wheeler, S., & Hassmiller, L. K. (2020) The potential impact of the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid expansion on reducing colorectal cancer screening disparities in African American males. *PLoS One*. DOI: [10.1371/journal.pone.0226942](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0226942)

Allen, A. M., Wang, Y., Chae, D.H., Price M.M., **Powell, W.**, Steed, T.C., Rose Black, A., Dhabhar, F.S., Marquez-Magaña, L, Woods-Giscombe, C.L. (2019), Racial discrimination, the superwoman schema, and allostatic load: exploring an integrative stress-coping model among African American women. *Annals of the New York Academy of Science*. DOI: [10.1111/nyas.14188](https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14188)

Taggart T., **Powell, W.**, Gottfredson, N., Ennet, S., Eng, E., Chatters L.M. (2019). A person-centered approach to the study of Black adolescent religiosity, racial identity, and sexual initiation. *Journal of Adolescent Research*. doi: [10.1111/jora.12445](https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12445)

Villagra, V., Felix, M., **Coman, E.**, **Smith, D.**, **Joslyn, A.**, **Pitter, T.**, **Powell, W.** [When Hospitals and Doctors Sue Their Patients: The Medical Debt Crisis Through a New Lens](#). *Health Disparities Institute Issue Brief*. June 2019.

Barry, L. C., **Coman, E.**, Wakefield, D., Trestman, R. L., Conwell, Y., & Steffens, D. C. (2020). Functional disability, depression, and suicidal ideation in older prisoners. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 266, 366-373. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2020.01.156>

Albayram, Y., Jensen, T., Khan, M. M. H., Buck, R., & **Coman, E.** (2019). Investigating the Effect of System Reliability, Risk, and Role on Users' Emotions and Attitudes toward a Safety-Critical Drone System. *International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction*, 1-12.

Namazi, S., Dugan, A. G., Fortinsky, R. H., Barnes-Farrell, J., **Coman, E.**, El Ghaziri, M., & Cherniack, M. G. (2019). Examining a Comprehensive Model of Work and Family Demands, Work-Family Conflict, and Depressive Symptoms in a Sample of Correctional Supervisors. *Journal of occupational and environmental medicine*, 61(10), 818-828.

Zajac, K., Ginley, M. K., & **Chang, R.** (2019). Treatments of internet gaming disorder: A systematic review of the evidence. *Expert Review of Neurotherapeutics*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14737175.2020.1671824>

Powell, W., Mattis, Banks, K. Forgive and let live. American Journal of Public Health. In progress.

Powell, W., et al., Adaption of Neighborhood Inventory for Environmental Typology (NifETy) in systematic observations for measuring indicators of Violence, Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Exposures (VOTAD). Prevention Science Journal. In progress.

Powell, W., et al., Compliance and Feasibility paper. JMIR mHealth and uHealth. In progress.

Villagra, V., Coman, E., Joslyn, A., Pitter, T., Zulfi, A., Keo, A. Hospital Lawsuits Against Patient for Uncollected Medical Debt Before and After a Transparency Intervention. *Health Disparities Institute Issue Brief*. In progress.

Op-Eds

Our team has published a total of **six op-eds and articles**, including two in partnership with Health Equity Solutions, focused on the COVID-19 pandemic and health equity.

- **Villagra, V.** [Can the COVID-19 Pandemic Save Other Lives?](#) The Donaghue Foundation Soapbox, July 8, 2020.
- **Powell, W.** [It's time to speak unapologetically to Black America's emotional wounds](#), Medical News Today, July 4, 2020.
- **Powell, W.** [This Father's Day I'm grieving with Black children who have lost their fathers to police brutality. Here's why you should also mourn – and how to support them](#), Business Insider, June 21, 2020.
- **Villagra, V., & Coman, E.** [There are tools to address the racial/ethnic health disparities exposed to the coronavirus](#), CT Mirror (CT Viewpoints), May 22, 2020
- Everette, T., & **Powell, W.** [Data to promote health equity amid multiple threats of COVID-19](#), CT News Junkie, April 14, 2020
- **Powell, W.** & Everette, T. [Why we Need to be talking about health equity during the Coronavirus pandemic](#), Hartford Courant, April 11, 2020

Presentations/Webinars

- **Powell, W.**, [A Hidden Pandemic: Mental Health, Trauma, and Racial Healing](#), July 8, 2020, virtual.
- **Powell, W.**, Healing through COVID-19 and Racism: Bridging behavioral health gaps to build health communities, Keynote Address at Town Hall, June 24, 2020, virtual.
- **Powell, W.**, How Race, Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity Impact Treatment of Trauma, June 16, 2020, virtual.
- **Powell, W.**, [Beneath the Masks: Men Masculinities, and COVID-19 Disparities](#), June 12, 2020, virtual.
- **Powell, W.**, [Health Inequities: Addressing the Disease Burden in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color Communities](#), June 16, 2020, virtual.
- **Powell, W.**, [When We See Them: Optimizing supports for boys and their families amidst the COVID-19 pandemic](#), May 2020, virtual.
- **Powell, W.**, [Universal Exposure, Disproportionate Impact: the Imperative of an Equity Response to Pandemic and Healthcare](#), May 27, 2020, virtual.
- **Powell, W.**, [COVID-19 and Challenges Faced by Diverse Families - Parenting in the Age of COVID-19](#), May 14, 2020, virtual.
- **Powell, W.**, [The Stage is Set: The Imperative of Leadership Now](#), May 6, 2020, virtual.
- **Powell, W.**, [Black and Puerto Rican Caucus Tele-Health Town Hall](#), April 30, 2020, virtual.

- **Powell, W.**, Justice for All: Pandemic Response in Incarcerated Populations, April 29, 2020, virtual.
- **Powell, W.**, Same River Twice? Reflections on Centering Health Equity in Connecticut's COVID-19 Response. Keynote Address at Ministerial Health Fellowship Town Hall, April 15, 2020, virtual.
- **Powell, W.** Importance of mentors in the lives of youth who've experienced trauma, National Mentor Summit, January 2020
- **Powell, W.** Let's talk about It: Behavioral Health & Emotional Wellness in the Black Community, Panel Discussion, November 13, 2019
- **Powell, W.**, Preventing Gun Violence Research Symposium, Rutgers University, November 7, 2019
- **Powell, W., Chang, R., Jones, T., Gillman, J.; Smith, D., Pitter, T., Joslyn, A.**, Leveraging Arts-based Strategies and Creating Brave New Spaces to Address Trauma and Ignite Healing Among Boys and Men of Color (BMoC), International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Conference, November 2019
- **Powell, W.**, Visualizing Health Equity among Boys and Men of Color: Creating Brave New Spaces for Health Equity Dialogue and Action, American Public Health Association Conference, November 2019
- **Powell, W.** Addressing Behavioral Health Issues for Boys and Men and Effectively Using Men's Health Data to Identify and Address Men's Health Issues/Connecticut State Example (2 presentations), National Healthy Start Association Summit on Fatherhood and the Health and Wellness of Boys and Men, October 20, 2019
- **Powell, W.**, Speak to the Wounds: Unpacking Racial Trauma and Developing Healing-Centered Responses for Boys and Men of Color, Kennedy Krieger Institute Keynote Address, October 2019
- **Powell, W.**, Masculinity, medical mistrust, and health help-seeking among African American Men: Implications for Cancer Disparities, CT Cancer Symposium, September 19, 2019
- **Powell, W.**, Moving Fathers and Young Men Forward: Against a Climate of Racism, White Supremacy, and Policies that are Attacking the Black and Brown Community, Panelist, Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Washington DC, September 2019
- **Powell, W.**, Breath, Eyes, Memory: Optimizing emotional well-being among boys and men of color, Hofstra University, September 2019
- **Powell, W.** Rutgers University School of Social Work presentation, September 2019
- **Powell, W.**, American Psychological Association Announcement of Presidential 2020 Theme and Presidential Brain Trust - Holding Space for Boys and Men of Color, Fall 2019
- **Powell, W.** Systemic and community oriented solutions, CT Against Gun Violence Symposium, Fall 2019
- **Powell, W.**, Wellness Symposium: Building Bridges for Youth Wellbeing, July 26, 2019
- **Villagra, V.**, Connecticut Maternal Mortality Review Committee, April 2020: "COVID-19 and Social Determinants of Health"
- **Villagra, V.**, CT Commission of Human Rights and Opportunity, August 2019: "High Deductible Plans The End-User Perspective"
- **Villagra, V.**, High Deductible Health Plan Task Force, November 2019: "High Deductible Plans: A Product Assessment from the Consumer Perspective"
- **Villagra, V.**, Connecticut Primary Care Coalition, June 2019: "Health Insurance Literacy - The Gateway to Healthcare"
- **Villagra, V.**, Connecticut Health Foundation, November 6, 2019: "Health Equity in Connecticut What Do High Deductible Plans Have to Do with It?"

- **Villagra, V.**, Several Town Hall meetings with Senator Chris Murphy, Aug-Dec. 2019: "The Medical Debt Crisis in Connecticut"
- **Villagra, V.**, Panelist, Health Equity in CT Conference by CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, August 6, 2019
- **Chang, R.**, You Can't Talk About Trauma without Talking About Race: The Power of Story and Media. 2019. Boston, MA.
- **Chang, R.**, Leveraging Arts-based Strategies and Creating Brave new Spaces to Address Trauma and Ignite Healing among boys and men of Color (BMoC). 2019. Boston, MA.
- **Coman, E., Joslyn, A., Smith, D., Boland.** Research Connections Conference, Fall 2019
- **Smith, D.**, My Art, My Voice, My Community, My Change: Health Equity and Social Justice Art Curriculum for Youth of Color, American Public Health Association Conference, November 2019

Trainings and Teachings

- **Chang, R.** 2020 Think Trauma Curriculum, Carlos Albizu University – Puerto Rico (16 hours)
- **Chang, R.** 2019 TARGET training, Carlos Albizu University – Puerto Rico (16 hours)
- **Chang, R.** 2019 Think Trauma Curriculum, Capital Community College (2 hours)
- **Chang, R.** 2020 & 2019 Positive Psychology Class to Psychiatry residents (6 hours)
- **Chang, R.** 2020 & 2019 Medical Spanish (15 hours)
- **Chang, R.** 2019 The intersection among domestic violence, trauma and mental health, CT Coalition against Domestic Violence (16 hours)
- **Chang, R.** 2020 Developmental Trauma and its effects in the community, University of Central Caribe, Puerto Rico (6 hours)

Media Interviews and Coverage

Our team has been actively engaging with the public through multiple media outlets, including newspapers and podcasts. Please see below for a list of media interviews and coverage of our work that resulted in published pieces.

- [The federal government will pay COVID-19 bills for Connecticut's uninsured, but do they know that?](#), CT Mirror, July 9, 2020
- [Racism Is a Health Crisis. Why Aren't We Treating It Like One?](#), Healthline, June 23, 2020
- [Race is not the reason Black Americans have a higher risk of dying from the coronavirus. It's racism](#), Business Insider, June 19, 2020
- [White Shame: How To Convert Guilt into Action](#), Inverse, June 17, 2020
- [Amid the Protests and pandemic, a new call for health equity reform](#), CT Mirror, June 15, 2020
- [Hacen un Nuevo Llamado a la Reforma de Equidad en Salud en Connecticut](#), Identidad Latina, June 15, 2020
- [Depression and anxiety spiked among black Americans after George Floyd's death](#), The Washington Post, June 13, 2020
 - Also appeared in Anchorage News; UConn Today; Fox DC; National Collaborative; News Break
- [Beyond Protests: 5 More Ways To Channel Anger Into Action to Fight Racism](#), Morning Edition, National Public Radio, June 7, 2020
- [Doctors Clarify Why Racism Against Black Americans is a Public Health Crisis](#), Inverse, June 3, 2020

- [Your Anger is Healthy \(Especially Right Now\), According to A Psychologist](#), Well and Good, June 2, 2020
- Experts: Disparities in Hispanic and black coronavirus death rates worse than previously reported, CT Mirror & [CT Post](#), May 29, 2020
 - Also appeared in Meriden Record-Journal, Waterbury Republican American
- [Employees in Some Industries Face Risking COVID-19 Or Losing Their Jobs and Benefits](#), KCUR, Kansas Public Radio, May 22, 2020
- [Frustration growing in minority communities over government's response to pandemic](#), The CT Mirror, May 12, 2020
- [As coronavirus testing expands to Hartford's vulnerable communities, advocates see chance to mend decades of mistrust](#), Hartford Courant, May 7, 2020
- [Connecticut is battling coronavirus as it moves across the state, but for Hartford and Bridgeport, COVID-19 fight brings added dangers](#), Hartford Courant, April 19, 2020
- [Pandemic exposes stark health disparities generations in the making](#), Connecticut Health-I-Team, April 16, 2020
 - Also appeared in CT Mirror
- [Black and Latino residents hit particular hard by COVID-19 in Connecticut, as experts fear disparities well widen](#), The Hartford Courant, April 8, 2020
- [UConn researchers find blacks are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19](#), CT News Junkie, April, 8, 2020
- [Let's focus on Health Equity NOT Health Disparities, Raising Equity Podcast](#) with Dr. Kira Banks, April 24, 2020, Aired on Facebook, Twitter, Spotify, Apple Podcast
- [Preliminary Data Raise Questions about Coronavirus Risks for Connecticut Residents of Color](#), Connecticut Public Radio, April 5, 2020
- [Medical Debt Could Get You Sued](#), CT NBC, February 18, 2020
- [Danbury Hospital could get grilled over suing patients](#), CT Insider, November 25, 2019
- [Why No One Should Have to "Take It Like a Man"](#), Psychology Today, November 22, 2019
- [Danbury Hospital is Connecticut's Most Litigious: Report](#), The Patch, November 17, 2019
- [Connecticut hospital known for suing patients reviews its debt-collection policies](#), Becker's Hospital Review, November 12, 2019
- [Research IDs CT's most litigious hospital; thousands of patients sued annually](#), Hartford Business Journal, November 12, 2019
- [How long you live may be affected by your community](#), Connecticut Magazine, September 19, 2019
- [CT health insurance premiums going up 3.65%](#), The Middletown Press, September 16, 2019
- [Analysis: Tens of thousands of CT residents faced medical-debt lawsuits](#), Hartford Business Journal, September 2, 2019
- [Medical mistrust impacts African American men's preventive health, but racism also matters](#), Science News, August 7, 2019
- [Medical Mistrust Impacts African American Men's Preventive Health, But Racism Also Matters](#), UConn Today, August 2019
- [Different social expectations for boys and men result in different definitions of masculinity](#), KCUR Public Radio Up To Date, July 22, 2019
- [The Medical Debt Crisis in America](#), UConn Today, July 2, 2019