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Letter from the Director

Our nation and state are at a critical precipice for advancing health equity for medically underserved populations.

The interdigitation of COVID-19 and upticks in racialized violence have ushered in a fierce urgency for systems change. Ensuring that we adopt dignifying healthcare delivery policies and practices. Designing approaches that allow us to pay for care differently. These are the kinds of true north goals we need to set and accomplish to address longstanding and contemporary health inequities. And, there is nothing more important in this moment than rising up to meet populations, communities, families, and individuals at their highest intentions for radical healing. We view our work at the Health Disparities Institute as an opportunity to ignite radical healing across the State of Connecticut. As members of a robust health equity ecosystem, we value community based participatory action research, coalition building, and providing technical assistance to leaders and organizations. This annual report provides an overview of the work we have accomplished in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021. Highlights of this work include hosting our first State of Health Equity among Boys and Men of Color Summit. There were over 240 registrants, 95 speakers, 60+ planning committee members, and over 30 sponsors. Having the opportunity to join forces with health leaders from across the country to host this unique, solutions-focused virtual convening was a true labor of agape love. We are equally as excited and humbled by the outpouring of sponsorship we received. Each of the grants and contracts we secured this year will assist us with furthering our mission. However, we fully recognize that these accomplishments are not ours alone. Rather, they illustrate what happens when passion meets political will and strategic alignment. I feel extremely blessed to have the opportunity to lead the HDI alongside faculty and staff so deeply committed to eradicating structural racism and other divisive forces at the root of health disparities. I am looking ahead to FY 2022 with great anticipation and radical hope. There is so much sacred work ahead.

In solidarity,

Wizdom Powell, Ph.D.
Overview of FY’21

HDI has sustained and deepened its work in health equity among boys and men of color across our focus areas of:

- Behavioral health;
- Neighborhoods, housing, and health;
- Healthcare delivery, finances, and services utilization; and
- Chronic disease prevention and control.

Within these focus areas, HDI continues to leverage its four strategic approaches to advance health equity and reduce health disparities:

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

From July 2020 through June 2021, HDI has achieved several milestones. We hosted the largest event in our organization’s history—the State of Health Equity among Boys and Men of Color Summit and Ideas Lab—where we celebrated boys and men of color and re-imagined innovative solutions to advance health equity. In partnership with the UConn Foundation, we raised over $150,000 in event support for the Summit. We brought in $170,000 in new funding from the Commonwealth Fund and the CT Health Foundation for our work in behavioral health among CT’s Medicaid recipients. We redesigned the HDI website, started the HDI newsletter, and launched a causality website dedicated to translating advanced statistical insights for general audiences. Dr. Victor Villagra, former Associate Director of HDI, influenced national policy action from Senator Chris Murphy’s office with his work on medical debt. Dr. Wizdom Powell, Director of HDI, was awarded R34 funding from NIDA for Project BrEAtHe (Brothers, Reclaiming, Emotional, Awareness, Tranquility, Healing, & EX-istence): Disrupting Racialized Stress, Trauma, & Problematic Substance Use in Young Adult Black Men.

This year, the HDI team bid farewell to Dr. Villagra, who retired from his Associate Director position. Dr. Villagra’s expertise and contributions to health insurance literacy, simplification, and navigation and medical debt have been invaluable assets to HDI, the state of CT, and the national conversation on reducing healthcare disparities.

Our highlighted accomplishments and more are included in this report as well as HDI’s initial plans for the coming year.
On June 8–11, 2021, the UConn Health Disparities Institute hosted the inaugural State of Health Equity among Boys and Men of Color Virtual Summit and Ideas Lab.

**SUMMIT**

This unprecedented, one of a kind, global Summit featured solutions-driven, interactive, and high-powered sessions that employed arts-based approaches along with intergenerational dialogues designed to amplify youth voice. The virtual convening aimed to ignite public discourse and action to advance health equity, racial justice, and systems change for radical healing among boys and men of color.

The Summit was organized by an over 60 member planning committee—including members of our BMOC Alliance—representing approximately 30 organizations. As part of the planning committee, the Youth Planning Council ensured youth voices were a central piece of the Summit. The convening hosted 95 speakers and 18 artists, performers, & storytellers for an audience of 243 people globally. Our speakers and artists focused on the following theme areas:

1. Behavioral Health
2. Trauma
3. Incarceration & Justice
4. HIV/AIDS

**IDEAS LAB**

After the Summit concluded, it was time to take action! The companion event, the Ideas Lab, took place on June 11. It is an incubator that focuses on developing and providing seed funding for innovative solutions to complex problems by harnessing the collective creative energy of a multi-sector team. Thirty-two (32) people participated and are currently preparing proposals for seed funding. HDI plans to fund three (3) teams at $15,000 each for one year. A selection committee will evaluate each proposal submission based on a rigorous scientific review process to determine which projects to fund. Projects are anticipated to begin in fall 2021.

The Ideas Lab was jointly funded by the CT Health Foundation and the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. See joint press release here.

**TOOLKIT**

HDI designed and released the Digital Summit Toolkit for all attendees, speakers, sponsors, and planning committee members to continue
learning, discourse, and action from the Summit. With permission from the speakers, this toolkit includes recorded presentations, speaker bios, and curated resources that allow stakeholders to continue conversations, deepen learning, apply new knowledge, and activate change among BMOC. In addition, materials will be added periodically to the toolkit.

Access the toolkit here.

FUNDRAISING

In partnership with the UConn Foundation, HDI raised $152,226 in event support and in-kind donations. HDI received support from 12 external sponsors, 18 internal sponsors, and 1 in-kind sponsor. HDI also participated in UConn Gives in March 2021 to fundraise for the Summit.

ENGAGEMENT & TESTIMONIALS

Our attendees and speakers joined us from across the nation and even across the globe. Summit participants represented Connecticut and 20 additional states, as well as Washington DC, Canada, and Uganda.

243 registrants
95 speakers
18 artists, performers, & storytellers
60+ planning committee & event production team member
12 external sponsors
18 internal sponsors
1 in-kind sponsor
$152,226 raised in event support and in-kind donations

Testimonials & Feedback

Survey respondents (n=50) found the Summit better than most they attended (76%), and better than the best they attended (56%).

This was an amazing summit. Completely different from other things I have experienced. It felt like a completely safe space to be vulnerable and share ideas. I am feeling inspired to create and bring change!

What a powerful and inspiring conference! Loved the format—mix of speakers, ignite talks, breakouts, music, meditation, artists. The pace and visual structure kept it moving throughout the day. The variety of speakers and styles. The strength and authenticity of each presentation.

Boogie’s presence was a special touch—thank you for the anchor back to main stage and the relaxing pause with music to process the info between sessions. Loved the personal stories, the inter-generational connection, youth voice, the expressive arts, spoken word, visual arts...The message to be creative and outside the box with interventions. I’m filled up with gratitude for the experience. Heartbreaking, heart-opening, and uplifting, inspiring me toward action and service. Thank you—and congratulations on a great summit!

Hands down this is THE BEST summit I have ever attended. The level of excellence of the presenters, the material presented and the fabulous use of technology was bar none.

For more details on the outcomes and reactions to the Summit and Ideas Lab, please see the enclosed reports, “Post-Event Report” and “Evaluation Report.” View the Summit event page, including a complete list of planning partners and sponsor. View a comprehensive list of Summit speakers, artists, and performers.
In FY’21, HDI received new funding to bolster and expand our work in behavioral health disparities, particularly given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. With support from both the Commonwealth Fund and the Connecticut Health Foundation, HDI is conducting a study to explore the impacts of COVID-19 on telehealth use for behavioral healthcare among Black adult Medicaid beneficiaries in CT.

The purpose of this study is to:

1. Investigate patterns of behavioral health services utilization among CT’s Black adult Medicaid beneficiaries using Medicaid claims data;

2. Examine the geospatial distribution of the Medicaid-eligible behavioral health services (in-person, telehealth, and telephonic) they access using PolicyMap and GeoDa; and

3. Explore potential socially determined barriers to and facilitators of services utilization.

In addition to analysis of Medicaid behavioral health claims data, this mixed-methods project includes a qualitative arm inclusive of in-depth interviews (IDIs) with Black adult benefit ciaries, and Delphi sessions with key stakeholders (Medicaid staff and behavioral health providers), to gather perceptions of the effectiveness of CT’s Medicaid program in facilitating adjustments to behavioral health services delivery amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, we explore facilitators of and barriers to telehealth behavioral health services access, delivery, and access among Black adults. Taken together, this information will be used to inform Medicaid policy, administration, and systems transformation in CT. Such data will also yield powerful insights about the role of social determinants of health in Black adult benefit ciaries’ behavioral health services use patterns, and the geospatial distribution of Medicaid-eligible services they utilize.

Over the past year, HDI has achieved several key project milestones. HDI has:

- Assembled a point-level dataset of all Medicaid eligible behavioral health services locations in Connecticut with telemedicine capabilities. Analyses of these data are
Currently underway (PolicyMap and GeoDa) to identify the geospatial distribution of these locations/services across Connecticut.

- Reported the first set of findings on geospatial distribution of behavioral health access points in CT in a policy brief entitled, Does telehealth reduce geographic barriers to behavioral healthcare for Connecticut’s Medicaid benefit claimants of color?, which will be published on the HDI website and via the Commonwealth Fund in the near future.

- Initiated recruitment of Black males to participate in in-depth interviews about their experiences accessing telebehavioral health services through Medicaid before and during the pandemic. HDI is recruiting through established points of contacts, including Amplify, Inc., Charter Oak Health Center, Family Medicine Center at Asylum Hill, and other partners through the Community Health Center Association of Connecticut. The project team has completed two IDIs to date.

- Received the first round of CT Medicaid claims data for analyses. After months of a lengthy negotiation, HDI reached an agreement with CT Medicaid regarding the specifications of the claims data request and obtained a fully executed data use agreement in July 2021.

Healthcare Delivery & Telehealth Projects Partnership

In partnership with the UConn Health Center for Quantitative Medicine and Dr. Tom Agresta, HDI worked on a telehealth project funded by the Community Health Center Association of CT (CHC ACT). The purpose of this project was to evaluate health center operations data, patient data, and billing data to determine the impact telehealth has had on the federally qualified health centers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The project objectives included:

- Measure utilization of the various components of telehealth;
- Measure the impact, positive or otherwise, on the patient population, the revenue to the health center, the cost to the state, and the potential down-stream savings that may have resulted from the use of telehealth;
- Gain knowledge of how telehealth services have impacted segments/cohorts of the population;
- Gain an understanding of the utilization patterns across various cohorts including race and ethnicity.
- Capture additional empirical data that may support the adoption of telehealth as a permanent benefit for Medicaid patients.

HDI supported provider survey development, data collection, and quantitative analysis as well as patient focus group development, implementation, and qualitative analysis.

HDI will continue its partnership with the Center for Quantitative Medicine through funding from the Office of Healthcare Strategy, to develop user-interface requirements for patient and provider facing medical reconciliation applications (an extension of Dr. Agresta’s existing work on Medication Reconciliation and Polypharmacy). HDI supported the development of questions for web-based surveys and in-person focus groups. HDI will also support qualitative analyses of data collected from surveys and focus groups.
Advancing a Radical Healing Agenda & Holding Space for Boys and Men of Color

Throughout this past year, under Dr. Wizdom Powell’s leadership, HDI has led several health equity initiatives to advance a radical healing agenda and operationalize holding space for boys and men of color.

Policy Briefs

In February 2021, Dr. Powell and the Radical Healing Collective published the policy brief, “Breath, Eyes, Memory: Transforming Health Systems and Advancing Public Health Policies for Radical Healing.” This brief lays the groundwork for a radical healing agenda as an antidote for racial trauma and injustice. The authors outline five principles of radical healing to reimagine health policies and systems where Black, Indigenous, and People of Color can thrive.

Also, in partnership with the APA Division 51 members-at-large, two policy briefs on holding space for boys and men of color are slated to be published.

Radical Healing Action Team

In partnership with Amplify, Inc. and the Ministerial Health Fellowship, HDI formed the Radical Healing Action Team with organizational and community members to put the radical healing agenda into action in Connecticut. This group formed as a result of a town hall series, “Healing Covid-19 and Racism: Bridging Behavioral Health Gaps to Build Healthy Communities,” hosted in July 2020 by Amplify, Ministerial Health Fellowship, and HDI. View the report here.

The Radical Healing Action Team designed and is conducting a landscape analysis of the radical healing principles across CT agencies and organizations. The group disseminated the policy brief to CT legislators, listserv contacts, and through social media. They plan to hold virtual interactive educational sessions on the principles and approaches for radical healing before the next legislative session.

Health Equity Week 2021

In April 2021, HDI participated in Health Equity Week (HEW) for the third year and focused on raising awareness about behavioral health disparities and a radical healing agenda. Dr. Wizdom Powell served as a panelist in the HEW launch event, “The Path to Health Equity in CT,” hosted by Health Equity Solutions. HDI also
produced a student-led social media campaign on behavioral health and radical healing, including a Twitter chat and partner outreach about the meaning of radical healing.

**David Makes Man**

In collaboration with Dr. Powell’s APA D51Brain Trust, HDI created and released a public syllabus focused on the OWN television drama series, *David Makes Man*, a coming of age story about a young, gifted Black boy exploring themes of race, identity, masculinities, manhood, and more within the context of trauma exposure, neighborhood environments, and programmatic practices and structures. The *David Makes Man* series and public syllabus emphasize the vital importance of holding space for Black boys and demonstrate how to reimagine masculinities, transform systems, and advance health equity for boys and men of color. View the *David Makes Man* public syllabus on the learning experience webpage. The webpage also includes HDI’s Visualizing Health Equity curriculum as a continued educational resource.

HDI hosted a five-part conversation series on the themes from David Makes Man in June 2021 in partnership with APA Division 51, Rutgers University Newark School of Arts and Sciences, and Big Picture Learning to further engage educators, community, parents, and families in training opportunities. Dr. Wizdom Powell hosted national experts in the health, wellness, and identity of Black men and boys as they discussed the themes of each episode of the first season of David Makes Man. View all five *David Makes Man* webcasts on HDI’s YouTube channel.

Dr. Powell plans to offer a J-Mester course on the David Makes Man public syllabus to UConn SCHOLA2RS House Learning Community and Morehouse University students during the winter academic session.

**Podcast**

HDI released the *Holding Space for Boys and Men of Color* podcast this year. This podcast invites listeners into a series of courageous conversations between boys and men of color, thought leaders, scholars, activists, artists, and other grassroots organizers. HDI’s goal is to tell whole, complex, and dynamic stories about the lived experiences, hopes, wishes, and aspirations of boys and men of color worldwide. The audience will walk away with a deeper appreciation and understanding of how boys and men of color navigate the world; a newfound agape love for them; and a fierce sense of urgency to develop policies, practices, and community initiatives that better position them to heal, grow, and thrive. Listen to the *Holding Space for Boys and Men of Color* podcast trailer and episodes here.
COVID-19 and Racial Justice

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S., HDI has been working to respond to the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and racism. Our work has evolved over the past year with the introduction of the COVID-19 vaccine and the national discourse around vaccine hesitancy and skepticism, as well as the continued calls for racial justice and equity.

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

- Invited to speak as a subject matter expert on health equity, medical mistrust, vaccine hesitancy/skepticism, racism, and radical healing at statewide and national forums, including but not limited to:
  - TEDx Santa Barbara
  - CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
  - Office of CT Lieutenant Governor
  - American Psychological Association
  - Ministerial Health Fellowship
  - CT Black and Puerto Rican Caucus
  - ABC News
  - CBS This Morning

- Spoke on live national television—ABC News and CBS This Morning—as a subject matter expert on the trauma and mental health implications of the Derek Chauvin trial and George Floyd killing for Black Americans.

- Partnered with APA Division 51 Society for the Psychological Study of Men and Masculinities to host a fatherhood webinar, Parenting During Periods of Uncertainty and Unrest.

- Engaged by two foundations—Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and UConn Foundation—to speak with stakeholders regarding racial/ethnic disparities in COVID-19 and solutions to advance health equity.

- Interviewed as a public health and racial equity expert for over 24 media pieces.

- Published four op-eds and articles on COVID-19, health equity, and racism.

- Serve as a subject matter expert to support the offices of Senators Chris Murphy and Chris Van Hollen in the introduction of federal legislation to reform medical debt and strengthen consumer protections in 2020 and again in 2021.

In July 2020, HDI was proud to partner on the Black Art Heals event led by the UConn Asian and Asian American Studies Institute (AAASI), the Afro Yaqui Music Collective, the People’s Collective for Justice and Liberation, and Kamora’s Cultural Corner. The event was sponsored by the Africana Studies Institute, Center for Treatment of Developmental Trauma Disorder and the Center for Trauma Recovery and Juvenile Justice. HDI partnered in this event because of its shared commitment to racial justice and foundational belief that the arts and creative expression are the most powerful vehicle for healing and transformation.

COVID-19 Data Mapping

HDI continues to leverage our data analytics expertise and the PolicyMap tool to track COVID-19 health disparities in CT. Dr. Emil Coman presents a health disparities assessment of COVID-19 infections and deaths in CT as well as maps of COVID-19 infections by town. Dr. Coman creates and updates these data weekly. HDI makes these data and maps available for public consumption. See maps presented on the UConn HDI website and Tableau.
Under the leadership of Dr. Victor Villagra, Associate Director, HDI concluded its Health Insurance Academy (HIA) project, funded by the CT Health Foundation, in January 2021. The conclusion of HIA marks two important milestones: (1) the culmination of a five-year effort focused on health insurance literacy, navigation, and simplification, together known as Health Insurance Advance; and (2) Dr. Villagra’s retirement from HDI.

Health Insurance Academy (HIA)

HDI completed the design and production of the digital HIA modules to serve as a scalable resource to improve, at a population level, the health insurance literacy of racial ethnic minorities and non-native English speakers in Connecticut. HIA comprises 20 self-learning audiovisual modules (and 20 Spanish audio-only modules) covering topics on selecting and using health insurance. HIA modules also include related topics such as avoiding incurring in medical debt, responding to lawsuits for past due debt, and identifying racist interpersonal and institutional behaviors. A complete table of contents is outlined below:

1. Introduction to HDI’s Health Insurance Academy
2. How Health Insurance Works: The Basics
3. Understanding Healthcare Pricing Practices
4. Cost Sharing: What YOU Have to Pay for Health Insurance
5. Understanding HMO, PPO, POS, Health Savings Accounts
6. Health Insurance Covered Benefits and Exclusions
7. Different Types of Health Insurance You Can Get
8. Your Pharmacy Benefits
9. Before You Choose Insurance: Know This
10. What is a “Just Right” Insurance Plan
11. Understanding Prior Authorization

12. How to Use Health Insurance to Be Healthy
13. Know your Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders Insurance Benefits
14. Having Trouble with Insurance? Resources You Have
15. Surprise Medical Bill: Out-patient
16. Surprise Medical Bill: Prevention vs. Diagnostic
17. Surprise Medical Bill: In-patient
18. Surprise Medical Bill: In/Out-of- Network
19. Avoiding and Getting Out of Medical Debt
20. You Are Sued for Uncollected Medical Debt
21. Common Sources of Healthcare Disparities

HDI partnered with four community-based organizations for a time-limited, initial dissemination of the HIA modules. Amplify, Inc., Hispanic Alliance of Southeastern CT, Project Access-New Haven, and Hartford Knights Youth Organization shared HIA with their clients during the open enrollment period. Partners found the module content to be a useful tool, even for their staff to better understand health insurance. They also expressed interest in continued access to and dissemination of the modules.

Medical Debt

Dr. Villagra has also led HDI’s pioneering work in medical debt through a funded project with the Hastings Center and policy action with Senator Chris Murphy’s office.

Dr. Villagra advised The Hastings Center bioethics research institute on their surprise medical billing project, funded jointly by the American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation and the Ethel Donaghue Foundation. This project convened a working group of experts for deliberation sessions to identify solutions and system-level reforms to reduce/eliminate surprise medical bills and medical debt, reduce/eliminate healthcare disparities, and enhance public trust in healthcare professionals and the healthcare system. While this project began in the fall of 2020, it changed course...
after the passage of the “No Surprises Act,” federal surprise billing legislation included in the $900 billion COVID-19 relief bill that went into effect at the end of December 2020. The group recognized that it would take time to know whether surprise medical billing has been addressed by the legislation and implementing regulations. After deliberation and discussion, the majority of the group expressed interest in tracking what happens with this law and learning from it, but not in further expanding the group’s scope. The group decided to pause the project and reconvene when there is a need for a multi-stakeholder group to come together to address problems with the legislation, which will likely not occur for several years.

Dr. Villagra also provided valuable advice to the UConn Foundation upon receipt of a $2 million grant from the Widows Society to support programs that focus on supplementing the medical bills of female uninsured and underinsured patients and mitigate the risk of incurring in medical debt.

Medical debt has become a national policy priority, spear-headed by Senators Chris Murphy and Chris Van Hollen. Based on his work in medical debt, Dr. Villagra serves as a subject matter expert and advisor to Senator Murphy’s office. Dr. Villagra helped create and reference The Strengthening Consumer Protections and Medical Debt Transparency Act, federal legislation first introduced in 2020 by Senators Murphy and Van Hollen to reform and reduce medical debt, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The senators plan to reintroduce the legislation in 2021 and continue to consult with Dr. Villagra. Senator Murphy hosted roundtables on medical debt throughout CT in 2021, which remains a policy focus area for the senator. Dr. Villagra and Dr. Emil Coman, HDI statistician, joined the Hartford roundtable at Charter Oak Health Center, pictured here.

Dr. Emil Coman pictured with Senator Chris Murphy during medical debt roundtable.

As a continuation of HDI’s medical debt work, Dr. Coman has pursued funding to study credit scores and medical debt. Dr. Coman was invited to submit a full proposal to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for their Health Data for Action program on this topic. Although not funded, Dr. Coman has submitted a manuscript on spatial analytics and another grant application to USDA as a by-product of this collaboration.
HDI continues to advance its educational mission through the health equity leadership initiative and mentoring of students and trainees. Over FY’21, HDI invested $7,000 in stipends for 11 student interns as part of our health equity leadership initiative. Each student intern carried out project deliverables that aligned with HDI initiatives. These projects included: the State of Health Equity Among Boys and Men of Color Summit, the Radical Healing Action Team, Health Equity Week, the CT Report Cards on Health Equity, the Visualizing Health Equity Curriculum, behavioral health projects funded by Commonwealth Fund and CT Health Foundation, APA D51 the Holding Space for Boys and Men of Color podcast, and independent research projects. HDI hosted both graduate and undergraduate UConn students and one graduate student from Southern CT State University. The student interns who joined HDI this year and more details are outlined below:

### Health Equity Leadership Initiative & Mentoring

#### GRADUATE STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Project(s)</th>
<th>Semester(s)</th>
<th>Preceptor(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jillian McNamara</td>
<td>M.P.H.</td>
<td>David Makes Man Public Syllabus</td>
<td>Summer 2020</td>
<td>Allison Joslyn/ Dr. Wizdom Powell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris Pruitt</td>
<td>M.A., Educational Psychology</td>
<td>Student research</td>
<td>Summer 2020</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maya Welfare</td>
<td>M.P.H.</td>
<td>Radical Healing</td>
<td>Fall 2020</td>
<td>Dr. Rocio Chang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shamira Chappell</td>
<td>M.P.H.</td>
<td>Behavioral health and telehealth among Black Medicaid recipients in CT</td>
<td>Fall 2020–Summer 2021</td>
<td>Willie Frazier</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Project(s)</th>
<th>Semester(s)</th>
<th>Preceptor(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ajshe Zulf</td>
<td>Economics/Healthcare Management</td>
<td>Student research – medical debt</td>
<td>Summer 2020</td>
<td>Dr. Victor Villagra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avolyn Nieves</td>
<td>Allied Health Sciences</td>
<td>APA D51 Holding Space for Boys and Men of Color podcast</td>
<td>Summer 2020</td>
<td>Allison Joslyn/ Dr. Wizdom Powell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sayaka Awaoo</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>Visualizing Health Equity</td>
<td>Summer 2020–Spring 2021</td>
<td>Dr. Rocio Chang</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Several members of HDI team, including Dr. Wizdom Powell, Dr. Emil Coman, and Willie Frazier, serve as mentors and advisors to students and trainees across UConn and beyond.

Dr. Wizdom Powell served as an advisor for a medical resident and supports several tenure-track faculty as a mentor or collaborator on their NIH career development awards:

**Medical resident mentorship**

- Dr. Lenora Codrington, UConn/CCMC pediatrics resident
- Dr. Codrington had one of her rotations at HDI, where she worked on the Women and Girls of Color Report card and policy briefs on holding space for boys and men of color.
Mentor or collaborator for NIH career development awards

- Dr. Eileen Condon, UConn School of Nursing
  - NINR K99/R00, Examination of biological, behavioral, and genetic mechanisms in the intergenerational transmission of toxic stress among maternal-child dyads, with a major emphasis on exploring the relationship between stress and sleep/circadian rhythm
  - Funded

- Dr. Kalisha Bonds, Emory University School of Nursing
  - NIA K23, Designing a Culturally Tailored Formal Care Decision-Making Intervention for African American Dementia Dyads and Families
  - JIT request, still pending funding decision

- Dr. Kristen Cooksey-Stowers, UConn Department of Allied Health Sciences and HDI faculty affiliate
  - NHLBI K01, Are Food Swamps Linked to Disparities in Ethnically Diverse Parents’ Food Shopping Behaviors & Young Children’s Diets?: Implications for Policy & Environmental Strategies
  - Not funded, will resubmit for October 2021

- Dr. Leslie Adams, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
  - NIMH K01, Uncovering proximal antecedents to Black male suicide using real-time approaches
  - Under review

Dr. Emil Coman serves as a mentor for family medicine residents, Master’s students, and doctoral students at UConn Health and UConn Storrs. One of the medical students he advises, Jessica Bertenshaw, and their work together on structural health inequities was showcased in the Fall 2020 UConn Health Journal. See the story on p. 8–15, including the map on p. 15 that features HDI’s work mapping inequities in CT.

Could Dr. Coman have specifically provided advising on the causal effects of place on health and health disparities through weekly training sessions on spatial analytics and Stata, and SEM.

Willie Frazier serves as an advisor for an UConn MPH student on her capstone project, to be completed in fall 2021. He has also worked with this student over the past year as her internship preceptor.

- Shamira Chappell, Still Underrepresented, Still Underserved: A Literature Scoping Review and Gap Analysis of ADHD in Black Adults

Student advising on masters theses & practicum project at School of Medicine

- Emily Huang, food insecurity and substance use practicum and COVID-19 mortality data MPH thesis (Dr. Angela Bermudez-Millan)

- Suleiman Abiola, Underrepresented Minority Family Physicians Experience Burnout Less Frequently than Their Family Physician Counterparts (Dr. Jane Ungemack)

Capstone research projects advising

- Jessica Bertenshaw, Use of Medical Coding of the Social Determinants of Health in North Hartford Promise Zone Area Hospitals and Community Health Sites (PI: Dr. Kirsten Ek)

- Chase Foster-Spence (previously Nurudeen Osumah), Geographic relationship of COVID-19 rates and death in medically uninsured compared to medically insured in Connecticut (PI: TBD)

- Will Doemland, Medical debt and patient-provider trust (completed; PI: Dr. Victor Villagra)

Doctoral student advising for PhD dissertation

- Nana Marfo, Does Where You Live Determine How Much You Lose? Associations between Neighborhood Environments and Weight Loss Outcomes (mentor: Dr. Amy Gorin)

- Dr. Coman has specifically provided advising on the causal effects of place on health and health disparities through weekly training sessions on spatial analytics and Stata, and SEM.

Dr. Coman works with the following students:

**Family medicine residents research projects (quality improvement)**

- Dr. Rebecca Joseph, hospice attitudes among African Americans (PI: Dr. Hugh Blumenfeld)
Grants, Contracts, & Services

In FY’21, HDI led the submission of 13 grants and contracts, of which four were funded for a total of $941,484 in new funding. HDI supported the submission of eight grants and contracts, of which three were funded. HDI continued to lead two existing grants and to support three existing grants. HDI’s Dr. Emil Coman also provides data analytics support services to the School of Medicine. Below is a detailed outline of active grants and contracts, submitted grants and contracts, and services.

ACTIVE GRANTS & CONTRACTS

Led by HDI

The following funded grants and contracts are led by HDI. They are grouped by existing funding, newly funded in FY’21 and newly funded for FY’22.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXISTING</th>
<th>Funder</th>
<th>PI</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Awarded Funding</th>
<th>Project Period</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CT Health Foundation</td>
<td>Dr. Victor Villagra</td>
<td>Health Insurance Academy</td>
<td>$69,000</td>
<td>4/1/19 – 1/31/21</td>
<td>Concluded after NCE period</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIH NIDA</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell</td>
<td>MANHOODS</td>
<td>$825,049</td>
<td>7/1/14 – 6/30/22</td>
<td>In 3rd and final NCE period</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEWMELY FUNDED IN FY’21</th>
<th>Funder</th>
<th>PI</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Awarded Funding</th>
<th>Project Period</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation / Ethel Donaghue Foundation / The Hastings Center</td>
<td>Dr. Victor Villagra</td>
<td>Surprise medical billing project</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
<td>10/22/20 – 12/31/20</td>
<td>Concluded early due to new federal legislation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth Fund</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell</td>
<td>Exploring the Impacts of COVID-19 on Behavioral Health among Black Adult Male Medicaid Recipients</td>
<td>$120,000</td>
<td>11/1/20 – 6/30/22</td>
<td>In NCE period</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT Health Foundation</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell</td>
<td>Exploring the Impacts of COVID-19 on Telehealth Use for Behavioral Health Care Among Black Adult Female Medicaid Beneficiaries</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>5/14/21 – 6/30/22</td>
<td>In NCE period</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**NEWLY FUNDED FOR FY’22**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funder</th>
<th>HDI Team Member Role</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>PI</th>
<th>Awarded Funding</th>
<th>Project Period</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NIH NIDA</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell</td>
<td>Project BrEAtHe (Brothers, Reclaiming, Emotional, Awareness, Tranquility, Healing &amp; Ex-istence): Disrupting Racism-related Stress, Trauma, &amp; Problematic Substance Use in Young Adult Black Men</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell</td>
<td>$763,484</td>
<td>9/1/21 - 7/31/24</td>
<td>In pre-award, pending IRB approval</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Supported by HDI**

The following grants and contracts are supported by HDI and fund time & effort for various HDI team members. They are grouped by existing funding, newly funded in FY’21 and newly funded for FY’22.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funder</th>
<th>HDI Team Member Role</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>PI</th>
<th>Awarded Funding</th>
<th>Project Period</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXISTING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAMHSA</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell, Co-Investigator</td>
<td>The Center for the Treatment of Developmental Trauma Disorders</td>
<td>Dr. Julian Ford</td>
<td>$448,489</td>
<td>9/30/16 - 9/29/21</td>
<td>Concluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIH NIAAA</td>
<td>Dr. Emil Coman, Analyst</td>
<td>Individualized Assessment and Treatment for Alcoholism: Treatment Mechanisms</td>
<td>Dr. Mark Litt</td>
<td>$351,288</td>
<td>8/1/16 - 7/31/21</td>
<td>Concluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIH NIMH</td>
<td>Dr. Emil Coman, Analyst</td>
<td>Aging Inmates Suicidal Ideation and Depression (Aging INSIDE) Study</td>
<td>Dr. Lisa Barry</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
<td>6/1/16 - 3/31/22</td>
<td>In NCE period</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| NEWLY FUNDED IN FY’21 | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Community Health Center Association of CT / HRSA | Dr. Wizdom Powell, Co-Investigator | Telehealth Data Analysis | Dr. Tom Agresta | $122,196 | 11/1/20 - 8/31/21     | Concluded                 |
| CT Office of Health Strategy | Dr. Wizdom Powell, Co-Investigator | Medication Reconciliation | Dr. Tom Agresta | $49,977 | 10/1/20 - 9/30/21     | Concluded                 |
## Grants & Contracts Submissions

**Led by HDI**

The following grants and contracts submissions were led by HDI in FY’21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funder</th>
<th>PI</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Requested Funding</th>
<th>Submission Date</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth Fund</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell</td>
<td>Exploring the Impacts of COVID-19 on Behavioral Health among Black Adult Male Medicaid Recipients</td>
<td>$120,000</td>
<td>Jul &amp; Sep 2020</td>
<td>Funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth Fund</td>
<td>Dr. Victor Villagra</td>
<td>Eliminating Barriers to Improve Health Insurance Literacy in Connecticut</td>
<td>$131,442</td>
<td>Aug 2020</td>
<td>Not funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation/ The Hastings Center</td>
<td>Dr. Victor Villagra</td>
<td>Surprise medical billing project</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
<td>Sep 2020</td>
<td>Funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIH NIDA K25</td>
<td>Dr. Emil Coman</td>
<td>Reducing substance abuse and racial/ethnic disparities among males through a closer integration of behavioral research and medical practice with advanced analytic methods</td>
<td>$809,058</td>
<td>Oct 2020</td>
<td>Reviewed and scored (48th percentile), not funded Will resubmit Oct 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funder</td>
<td>PI</td>
<td>Project Title</td>
<td>Requested Funding</td>
<td>Submission Date</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIH NIDA R34</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell</td>
<td>Project BrEAtHe (Brothers, Reclaiming, Emotional, Awareness, Tranquility, Healing &amp; Ex-istence): Disrupting Racism-related Stress, Trauma, &amp; Problematic Substance Use in Young Adult Black Men</td>
<td>$763,484</td>
<td>Oct 2020</td>
<td>Funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UConn CLAS Funding Opportunity in Big Data</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell</td>
<td>Supplement to Commonwealth Fund - Exploring the Impacts of COVID-19 on Behavioral Health among Black Adult Male Medicaid Recipients</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>Oct 2020</td>
<td>Not funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Data for Action</td>
<td>Dr. Emil Coman</td>
<td>Investigating causal mechanisms of health disparities in medical debt using spatial structural equation modeling</td>
<td>$99,895</td>
<td>Dec 2020 &amp; Apr 2021</td>
<td>Invited to submit full proposal, not funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard Pilgrim Foundation</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell</td>
<td>Healthy Youth, Healthy Community: BIPOC Youth-Led Ideas Lab Team - BMOC Summit</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>Feb 2021</td>
<td>Not funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT Health Foundation</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell</td>
<td>COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy Survey contract</td>
<td>$84,888</td>
<td>Mar 2021</td>
<td>Not funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT Health Foundation</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell</td>
<td>Exploring the Impacts of COVID-19 on Behavioral Health among Black Adult Male Medicaid Recipients</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>Mar 2021</td>
<td>Funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartford Foundation for Public Giving (via UConn Foundation)</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell</td>
<td>Ideas Lab – State of Health Equity among Boys and Men of Color Summit</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>Apr 2021</td>
<td>Funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT Health Foundation (via UConn Foundation)</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell</td>
<td>Ideas Lab – State of Health Equity among Boys and Men of Color Summit</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>Apr 2021</td>
<td>Funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UConn InCHIP</td>
<td>Dr. Emil Coman</td>
<td>Modern uses of spatial analytics to investigate causes of health disparities in CT</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>Apr 2021</td>
<td>Not funded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Supported by HDI

The following grants and contracts submissions were supported by HDI in FY’21 and proposed to fund time & effort for various HDI team members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funder</th>
<th>HDI Team Member Role</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>PI</th>
<th>Requested Funding</th>
<th>Submission Date</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brown University / Andrew W. Mellon Foundation / Just Futures Initiative</td>
<td>Dr. Rocio Chang, PI Dr. Wizdom Powell, Co-Investigator Trisha Pitter, Planning Specialist Dr. Emil Coman, Biostatistician</td>
<td>BIPOC Youth Voices on the Pandemic: Journaling, Arts, and Curriculum Project</td>
<td>Dr. Andrea Flores (Brown)</td>
<td>$598,670</td>
<td>Sep 2020</td>
<td>Not funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Health Center Association of CT / HRSA</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell, Co-Investigator Dr. Emil Coman, Biostatistician Willie Frazier, Research Associate</td>
<td>Telehealth Data Analysis</td>
<td>Dr. Tom Agresta</td>
<td>$122,196</td>
<td>Oct 2020</td>
<td>Funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIH NIA</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell, Co-Investigator, Co-Lead of Recruitment and Outreach Core Dr. Emil Coman, Biostatistician Allison Joslyn, Research Assistant II</td>
<td>Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Centers (P30 Clinical Trial Optional)</td>
<td>Drs. Kuchel and Fortinsky</td>
<td>$939,201</td>
<td>Oct 2020</td>
<td>Funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIH NICHD R21</td>
<td>Dr. Emil Coman, Co-Investigator and Biostatistician</td>
<td>Development of a culturally informed and ecologically valid method of evaluating emotion socialization within Hispanic/Latinx families</td>
<td>Dr. Carolyn Greene</td>
<td>$466,227</td>
<td>Feb 2021</td>
<td>Pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAMHSA</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell, Co-Investigator</td>
<td>The Center for the Treatment of Developmental Trauma Disorders (2021-2026)</td>
<td>Drs. Ford and Chang</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
<td>Feb 2021</td>
<td>Not funded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Upcoming Submissions

In FY’22, Dr. Emil Coman plans to resubmit his K25 to NIDA and serve as a mentor for Dr. Sharon Casavant’s K award application at the School of Nursing. HDI is also planning submissions for a NHLBI P01 grant with University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and a NIDA P50 center grant with InCHIP.

### Project Funding Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funder</th>
<th>HDI Team Member Role</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>PI</th>
<th>Requested Funding</th>
<th>Submission Date</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCMC / American Heart Association</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell, Co-Training Director</td>
<td>Touching the Lives of Cancer Survivors by Advancing Pediatric Cardio-oncology Care through a Lens of Racial Equity</td>
<td>Dr. Olga Toro-Salazar (CCMC)</td>
<td>$84,720</td>
<td>Mar 2021</td>
<td>Not funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UConn Storrs / USDA NIFA</td>
<td>Dr. Emil Coman, co-PI</td>
<td>Assessing the Impact of Rural Broadband on Economic Activities, Educational Achievement, and Health Outcomes</td>
<td>Dr. Sandro Steinbach (UConn Storrs)</td>
<td>$51,873</td>
<td>Jun 2021</td>
<td>Not funded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT Office of Health Strategy</td>
<td>Dr. Wizdom Powell, Co-Investigator</td>
<td>Medication Reconciliation</td>
<td>Dr. Tom Agresta</td>
<td>$49,977</td>
<td>Jul 2021</td>
<td>Funded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dr. Emil Coman provides biostatistical support (10% effort) to Department of Family Medicine for:

- Family Medicine residents’ research projects (quality improvement)
  - See Dr. Rebecca Joseph’s project in “student & trainee mentoring” section.
- Faculty research projects (Dr. Montgomery Douglas – burnout among family medicine physicians)
- Faculty community-facing project (Dr. Mansilla-Rivera – residents engaged in the Hartford schools community)

Dr. Coman also works with Dr. David Henderson to provide assistance to the UConn School of Medicine Pipeline Program to Promote Academic Diversity (P3AD) 2021-23.

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 continues to be on publications – one manuscript is under review at the International Journal of Prisoner Health and a second manuscript led by Dr. Coman on health disparities among inmates is in progress.

Dr. Coman also continues his work with the Aging Center’s Data Resource Core (RC2) as a data methods and analysis content expert, providing assistance to ongoing faculty projects. The Aging Center was recently awarded a P30 Pepper Center grant, on which the HDI team will continue to partner.
Our FY’21 budget and spending for operational expenses is outlined below. For FY’21, our overall operating expenses were approximately $11 million.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>FY'21 Budget</th>
<th>FY'21 Spending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular Earnings</td>
<td>$501,340</td>
<td>$516,842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringe Expenses</td>
<td>$376,151</td>
<td>$400,341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Contract Support</td>
<td>$3,860</td>
<td>$2,878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchased Services</td>
<td>$307,481</td>
<td>$202,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
<td>$56,563</td>
<td>$4,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>$22,117</td>
<td>$2,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,267,512</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,128,623</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For FY’22, HDI selected budget priorities based on our core activities. We have aligned our FY’22 budget with our core structure and outlined investments by core accordingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core</th>
<th>FY'22 Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community</strong></td>
<td>$7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sponsorships and community engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data</strong></td>
<td>$25,484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• PolicyMap</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Data analysis software and trainings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy &amp; Communications</strong></td>
<td>$3,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Health Equity Week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Policy briefs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promotion and communications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research</strong></td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Student internship stipends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Systems</strong></td>
<td>$103,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rent of 241 Main St suite</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Graphic design services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Project management and e-learning software</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dues and memberships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• UCHC institutional expenses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cores Total</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>$145,544</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Does not include salary and fringe expenses. FY’22 budget for School of Medicine operating expense fund 201122.
The **PolicyMap tool** continues to be an investment that has demonstrated benefits to the UConn Health and larger UConn community. PolicyMap has been demonstrated to researchers at UConn Storrs researchers (e.g., InCHIP), UConn School of Social Work, and UConn Health. It has also been leveraged as an educational tool at the School of Medicine, in Dr. Kirsten Ek’s clinical home class (Jan 2021). PolicyMap is featured as a central data source and visualization tool for two School of Medicine capstone projects (Chase Foster and Will Doemland).

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 pilot projects. HDI secured $40,000 in grant funding for the Ideas Lab from the CT Health Foundation and the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. Teams will submit their proposals for seed funding in September and 1-year projects will begin in fall 2021. HDI expects these pilot projects to yield a return on investment as teams look for additional funding for their projects.
Looking Forward to FY’22

HDI goes into FY’22 with two newly funded grants and plans for community engagement initiatives.

**R34 Project BrEAtHe**

HDI continues its work in behavioral health, neighborhood contexts, and racism-related stress among young adult Black men from Dr. Wizdom Powell’s K01 award, MANHOODS, with the newly funded NIDA R34. Led by M-PIs Dr. Powell and Dr. Susan Gaylord, HDI will partner with the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and the Research Triangle Institute to implement Project BrEAtHe (Brothers, Reclaiming, Emotional Awareness, Tranquility, Healing & Ex-istence): Disrupting Racialized Stress, Trauma, & Problematic Substance Use in Young Adult Black Men. Over three years, the proposed research seeks to culturally adapt and assess the feasibility and acceptability of a validated mobile technology-assisted, instructor-led, group mindfulness-based stress reduction intervention for young adult Black men residing in disadvantaged neighborhoods in Durham, NC and Hartford, CT in an effort to mitigate the escalation of problematic substance use.

**BMOC Multisector Alliance**

In FY’22, HDI will reignite the alliance as a working group to address health disparities and advance health equity for boys and men of color throughout CT and beyond. We intend to plan, partner, and prioritize together. In March 2021, we polled each of our alliance members to find out what they want to focus on as a priority area(s) for FY’22: (1st) Policy Advocacy/Translation, (2nd) BMOC Summit, (3rd) COVID-19 Support & Resources. See included chart.

Which priority are you interested in working on?

- **1st** Policy Advocacy/Translation
- **2nd** BMOC Summit
- **3rd** COVID-19 Support & Resources
- **4th** BMOC Report Card

In addition to setting our priority areas, we have incurred three new alliance members. We are currently appointing inaugural co-chairs to serve as strategic thought leaders, collaborators, and catalysts for action and impact. Chairpersons will hold a one-year appointment, lead the BMOC Alliance, and ensure the group remains focused on its strategic matters. They will play a pivotal role in working closely with the Director of HDI, staff, and student interns to move priorities toward actionable solutions. See our following member list.

**P30 Pepper Center**

The Aging Center and HDI are building on their existing partnership for the newly funded P30 Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Center aimed at improving health and independence in older adults through a collective multidisciplinary focus on scientific approaches emphasizing Precision Gerontology. Dr. Wizdom Powell will serve as Co-Lead of the Recruitment and Outreach Core (RC1) and Allison Joslyn will serve as Research Assistant II of RC1. They will advise on and support the Center’s community-based participatory research (CBPR) activities and the development of the community advisory board. Dr. Emil Coman will continue to support the Data Resource Core (RC2) as a data methods and analysis content expert. The RC2 core has been actively providing assistance to ongoing faculty projects, before the grant was funded. HDI has worked with the Aging Center on previous P30 Pepper Center grant submissions as well.
BMOC Multisector Alliance
MEMBER LIST

Reverend Robyn Anderson
Director of the Ministers Health Fellowship Advocacy Coalition
reverendanderson@gmail.com

Dr. Rocio Chang-Angulo
Assistant Professor of Psychiatry
UConn Health
chang@uchc.edu

Joseph W. Bumpers III
Director of Youth Services
Boys & Girls Club of Hartford
jbumpers@bgchartford.org

Christopher R. Cloud
Partner
Camilliere, Cloud & Kennedy
cloud2464@gmail.com

Alejandro Melendez-Cooper
Founder of the Hispanic Alliance of Southeastern CT
alejandro@hispanicalliancesect.org

David Hopkins
President & CEO
Urban League of Greater Hartford
Dhopkins@ulgh.org

Dean Jones
Director
COMPASS Peacebuilders
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Armando Jimenez
Head of School
Covenant Preparatory School
ajimenez@covenantprep.org

Alex Johnson
President & CEO
Capital Workforce Partners
AJohnson@capitalworkforce.org
State Senator Douglas McCrory  
State of Connecticut Legislative  
douglas.mccrory@cga.ct.gov

Tony Judkins  
Program Manager of  
Connecticut Department of Social Services  
Anthony.Judkins@ct.gov

Reverend Andre L. McGuire  
Pastor & Founder  
ALM’s Ministries International, Inc.  
pastorandreimcguire@gmail.com

Daniel Menihan, Jr.  
Tribal Councilor of Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Council  
dmenihan@mptn-nsn.gov

Howard Phengsomphone  
Executive Director  
Laotian American National Alliance Message  
lpbhoward@gmail.com

Merrill “Marvin” Reels  
Tribal Councilor of Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Council  
mmreels@mptn-nsn.gov

Ann R. Smith  
Executive Director  
African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities, Inc. (AFCAMP)  
asmith@afcamp.org

Bernard Thomas  
Executive Director  
Hartford Knights  
thomas@hartfordknights.org

Quyên Trương  
Associate Attorney  
Wiggin and Dana LLP  
QTruong@wiggin.com

Andrew Woods  
Executive Director  
Hartford Communities That Care  
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HDI Affiliate Program

In fall 2021, HDI will launch its Affiliate Program. The UConn HDI Affiliate Program provides resources, services, and opportunities for professional/leadership development to HDI partners, including UConn/UConn Health faculty and physicians, community-based organizations, public health and healthcare organizations, policy-makers, and others to work collaboratively to eliminate health disparities and advance health equity among medically underserved communities. Affiliates will bring a wide range of professional research experience and provide input to help shape the future direction of health equity. They will have access to HDI-licensed software, community partners, and opportunities to translate research evidence into meaningful action.

The goal of the Affiliate Program is to build an environment and opportunity for stakeholders in CT and beyond to work together and foster innovative and ground-breaking research, programs, and policies.

Eligibility Criteria

Any individual interested in collaborating with HDI and its network is eligible.

- UConn Health or UConn Faculty members who have a demonstrated interest in advancing health equity through research, education, clinical, art, or policy activities.
- Community members currently working in health, policy, education, art, and research aim to eliminate health disparities and advance health equity.

As part of the Affiliate Program, HDI is working with UConn IT Project Management Office on building a searchable database that will house all affiliate members, their area of interest(s), location, etc. The UConn HDI Community Core will vet, approve, and manage all members of the program and the database.
Appendix 1 Awards, Publications, Speaking Engagements & Media Coverage

Awards

Dr. Wizdom Powell was selected as the 2020 recipient of the Connecticut Psychological Association (CPA) Distinguished Contribution to the Science of Psychology Award. This award is in recognition of the important community-based research Dr. Powell is conducting on the role of modern racism and gender norms on African American male health outcomes. CPA recognizes Dr. Powell's research and writing on gendered health inequities among vulnerable males is making an impact here in Connecticut and throughout the world.

Publications


*Dr. Rocio Chang and Dr. Kristen Cooksey Stowers are HDI faculty.*

### Under Review

**Coman, E. N.,** Delamater, P. L., Steinbach, S., & Cao, G. Spatial Perspectives in Family Health Research. (under 2nd review) *Family Practice*.

Jiang, Q., Tovar, A., **Cooksey Stowers, K.** Schwartz, M., Risica, P., Lombardi, C. Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Screen Time-Related Attitudes and Perceived Barriers of Family Childcare Providers and Differences by Ethnicity. (revise and resubmit)

Boehm, R., **Cooksey Stowers, K.,** Schneider, G., Schwartz, M. Food Environment Moderates Adolescent Sugar Sweetened Beverage Consumption During a Five-Year Community Campaign. (under review)

### Published Conference Proceedings


### Op-Eds

Our team has published a total of four op-eds and articles focused on the COVID-19 pandemic and health equity.

**Powell, W.** Men, self-care is not emasculating. Protect your mental health to protect your family. USA Today, August 22, 2021


**Powell, W.** It’s time to speak unapologetically to Black America’s emotional wounds, Medical News Today, July 4, 2020.

### Presentations/Webinars

**Powell, W.,** Songs in the Keys of Life: Behavioral health equity and the makings of Earl Simmons, Behavioral Health Ignite-Style Talk, State of Health Equity among Boys and Men of Color Summit, June 8, 2021, virtual.

**Powell, W.,** Speak to the Wounds: (Re)coding Behavioral Health Equity & Advancing Radical Healing among Black Males, Keynote Address, UConn Center for mHealth and Social Media 5th Annual Conference, May 14, 2021, virtual.

**Powell, W.,** Climate Change and Public Health, Panelist, Hosted by UConn Reads, April 22, 2021, virtual.

**Powell, W.,** Path to Health Equity, Health Equity Week Launch Event, Panelist, Hosted by Health Equity Solutions, April 5, 2021, virtual.

**Powell, W.,** When we see them: Arts-based strategies for improving health promotion among boys and men of color, APA Division 51 Society for the Psychological Study of Men and Masculinities Midwinter Conference, March 13, 2021, virtual.


**Powell, W.,** Keynote Address, 42nd Annual Minority Health Conference, University of North Carolina Gillings School of Public Health Minority Student Caucus, February 26, 2021, virtual.

**Powell, W.,** Virtual Legislative Town Hall, Panelist, Ministerial Health Fellowship Advocacy Coalition, February 24, 2021, virtual.

**Powell, W.,** Public Health, Forecasting & Infection Control, Panelist, UConn Foundation and UConn School of Medicine, February 23, 2021, virtual.


Powell, W., Speak to the Wounds: What We Need to Know about Racial Trauma and Radical Healing During Uncertain Times, UConn Department of Pediatrics Grand Rounds, December 8, 2020, virtual.

Powell, W., Keynote Address, Annual Meeting of the American Psychosomatic Society, December 4, 2020, virtual.

Powell, W., Fatherhood Summit speaker, National Healthy Start Association, November 19, 2020, virtual.


Powell, W., J Oslyn, A., Pitter, T., Chang, R., Epstein, N., When we see them: Arts-based strategies for improving health promotion among boys and men of color, American Public Health Association Annual Meeting & Expo, October 27, 2020, virtual.

Powell, W., Mass Mentoring Partnership Forum on Mentoring Relationships: Trauma, Healing, & Equity, Keynote Address, October 22, 2020, virtual.

Powell, W., Vaccinations in the Black Community Facebook Live Conversation, Panelist, Hosted by CT State Senator Douglas McCrory, October 19, 2020, virtual.

Powell, W., Mental Health, Racial Trauma, and Health Inequities Confronting Boys and Men of Color, National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN), October 15, 2020, virtual.

Powell, W., Parenting During Periods of Uncertainty and Unrest, Moderator, UConn HDI and APA D51, October 1, 2020, virtual.

Powell, W., #ThisisAmerica: Social Disparities Facing Marginalized Communities, Panelist, UConn Foundation, September 24, 2020, virtual.


Powell, W., Let’s Talk About Healing Strategies: Public Health Crisis, COVID-19, & Racism Conversation Starter, CT Office of the Governor, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, and Department of Children and Families, September 10, 2020, virtual.

Powell, W., Breath, Eyes, Memory: Transforming health systems, restoring trust, and advancing an agenda for radical healing, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, COVID-19 Community Response Advisory Council, September 3, 2020, virtual.

Powell, W., UConn HDI COVID-19 Response, #EquityFlattenstheCurve Virtual Check-In, American Psychological Association, August 13, 2020, virtual.

Powell, W., It’s time for radical healing, TedX Santa Barbara, July 29, 2020, virtual.

Powell, W., A Hidden Pandemic: Mental Health, Trauma, and Racial Healing, Panelist, Community-Campus Partnerships for Health COVID-19 webinar series, July 8, 2020, virtual.


Chang, R.*, Webinar: Developmental Trauma Disorder: Identifying Critical Moments and Healing Complex Trauma, Season 3: Session 10: Racial Trauma and the Pandemic: 1 (Interviewee). Center for the Treatment of Developmental Trauma Disorders/National Center for Child Traumatic Stress, September 17, 2020 (250 attendees).

Chang, R.*, Webinar: Developmental Trauma Disorder Case Conference Series, Season 2 Session 3. (Commentator). Center for the Treatment of Developmental Trauma Disorders and National Center for Child Traumatic Stress, August 11, 2020 (35 attendees).

Chang, R.*, Invited Presentation, University of Connecticut Health of School of Medicine, Suicide the Silence Crisis, 2020 (33 attendees).

Chang, R.*, Invited Presentation, Town Hall of South Windsor, CT. Racial Trauma and Community Impact, 2020 (57 attendees).

Chang, R.*, Invited Presentation, UCONN SNMA Chapter's Regional Conference on reducing mental health and trauma by understanding the culture in the Latinx community, 2020 (34 attendees).


Chang, R.*, Webinar, Think Trauma and Latinos During the Nation’s Pandemic Emergency, Northeast and Caribbean ATTC, 2020 (Attendees 390).

Chang, R.*, Invited Presentation, Trauma complejo y experiencias adversas en la niñez en padres y madres. Lo presentamos a la asociación de psicologia de Puerto Rico (APPR), 2020.

Chang, R.*, NCTSN Spotlight, Deputy Director’s corner, 2020.


Media Interviews and Coverage

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

Connecticut doctors say telehealth is here to stay, but will remote care help or hurt inequities in access to care?, Hartford Courant, June 13, 2021

Summit Organizers to Inspire Attendees to Support Health Equity Among Boys and Men of Color, CT News Junkie, June 7, 2021

*Dr. Rocio Chang and Dr. Kristen Cooksey Stowers are HDI faculty members.
93.7 radio interview on State of Health Equity among Boys and Men of Color Summit with DJ Bigg Mann on Voices, June 6, 2021

Interview on State of Health Equity among Boys and Men of Color Summit, For the People, WPLR radio, 2nd segment starting at 16:26, May 30, 2021

Mental Health Awareness Month: Mental Health Among Black Communities, Especially Black Men, Inside the Room with CT Representative Brandon McGee, Episode 19, May 27, 2021

The Untreated Syphilis Study, And One Black Family’s Work To Rebuild Trust In Medicine, WNPR, May 16, 2021

UConn Health Disparities Institute to Host State of Health Equity Among Boys and Men of Color Summit, Newsbreak, May 14, 2021

UConn Health Disparities Institute to Host State of Health Equity Among Boys and Men of Color Summit, MetroHartford Alliance, May 2021

State of Health Equity among Boys and Men of Color Summit, WTNH Community Calendar & State of Health Equity among Boys and Men of Color Summit, West Hartford Chamber of Commerce, May 2021

Live television interview on combatting stress at work and at home amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic in honor of Mental Health Awareness Month, ABC News Live, May 3, 2021

Live television interview on mental health impact of George Floyd’s death, ABC News Live, April 21, 2021

Live television interview with Gayle King on the impact of the Derek Chauvin trial on mental health among Black Americans, CBS This Morning, April 20, 2021

Live television interview on Derek Chauvin trial and the impact of George Floyd’s killing on the mental health of Black Americans, ABC News Live, April 14, 2021

Governor, State ‘Talking Over’ People Of Color As They Message Vaccine Hesitancy, WNPR, February 18, 2021

COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Interview (starts at 13:00), News on Overdrive Podcast: Episode 1, February 10, 2021

Michigan, Connecticut leaders join forces to discuss increasing equity in the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine, Hartford Courant, January 12, 2021

Lt. Governor Gilchrist hosts panel on COVID-19 Vaccine and communities of color, ABC 12 News, January 12, 2021

Mental Health During COVID-19 (starting at 40:00), Cutline with Diane Orson, Connecticut Public Television, November 19, 2020

Policy makers and medical professionals say they are ready to address COVID-19 vaccine racial disparities, Hartford Courant, October 19, 2020

State leaders join virtual discussion on vaccination distribution in under-served communities, WTNH, October 19, 2020

State’s Black leaders and pastors react with dismay to suggestion by Connecticut governor that Black churches should help lead support for COVID-19 vaccine, Hartford Courant, September 13, 2020

The federal government will pay COVID-19 bills for Connecticut’s uninsured, but do they know that?, CT Mirror, July 9, 2020

Families & Children: Getting through the Pandemic, Mental Health, Wellness and Recovery, Interview on North Haven Public Television, 2020

Covid 19 y recomendaciones a la comunidad Latina, Interview on Radio Viva, 2020