



UConn
HEALTH

HEALTH DISPARITIES
INSTITUTE

FISCAL YEAR 2021

JULY 2020
–
JUNE 2021

ANNUAL REPORT

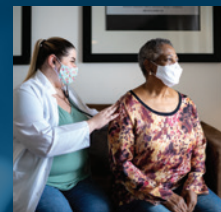


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Letter from the Director

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wisdom Powell".

Wisdom 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:

► Over the past year, the mission and legislative mandate of the UConn Health Disparities Institute (HDI) to eliminate health disparities and advance health equity have continued as a national priority during the unrelenting COVID-19 pandemic and movement for racial justice.

- 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.



THE STATE OF HEALTH EQUITY AMONG BOYS & MEN OF COLOR

VIRTUAL SUMMIT AND IDEAS LAB

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.](#)

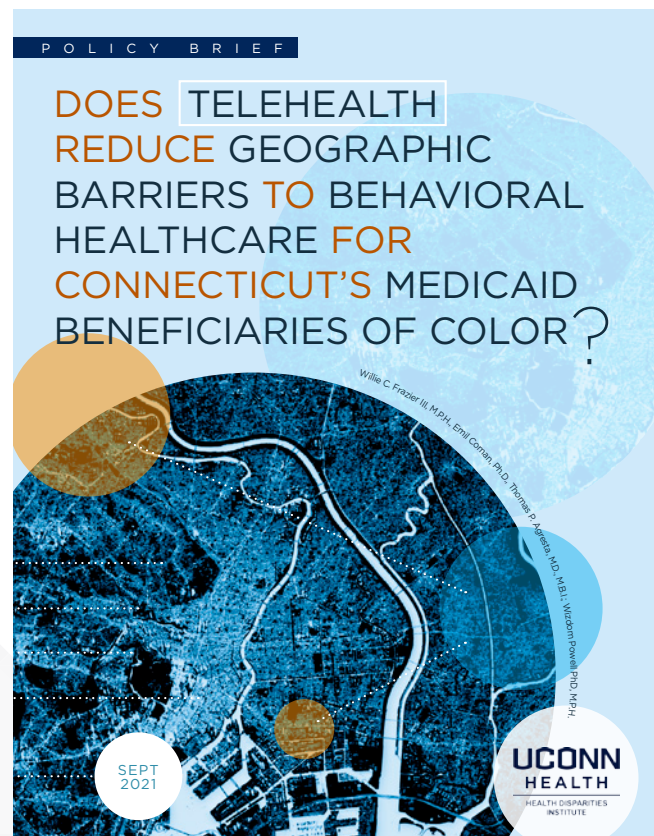
Behavioral Health and Telehealth Services Utilization Among CT's Black Medicaid Recipients

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 beneficiaries, 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 beneficiaries' 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 beneficiaries 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

(CHCACT). 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.

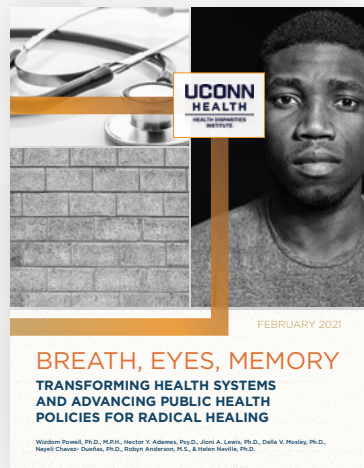
HDI will continue its partnership with the Center for Quantitative Medicine through funding from the Office of Healthcare Strategy, to develop user-interface requirements for patient and provider facing medical reconciliation applications (an extension of Dr. Agresta's existing work on Medication Reconciliation 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. Wisdom 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. Wisdom 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 D51 Brain 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 new found 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](#).

Health Insurance Advance

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 refine [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 re-introduce 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



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

statistician, joined the Hartford roundtable at Charter Oak Health Center, pictured here.

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.

Health Equity Leadership Initiative & Mentoring

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:



GRADUATE STUDENTS

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

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Student Name	Major	Project(s)	Semester(s)	Preceptor(s)
Ajshe Zulf	Economics/ Healthcare Management	Student research – medical debt	Summer 2020	Dr. Victor Villagra
Avolyn Nieves	Allied Health Sciences	APA D51, Holding Space for Boys and Men of Color podcast	Summer 2020	Allison Joslyn/ Dr. Wizdom Powell
Sayaka Awao	Psychology	Visualizing Health Equity	Summer 2020– Spring 2021	Dr. Rocio Chang

GRADUATE STUDENTS (CONTINUED)

Student Name	Major	Project(s)	Semester(s)	Preceptor(s)
Mariya Bilyk	Psychological Sciences	Visualizing Health Equity, Radical Healing	Fall 2020–Spring 2021	Dr. Rocio Chang
Ester Vynar	Psychological Sciences	Visualizing Health Equity, Radical Healing	Fall 2020	Dr. Rocio Chang
Jordan Holmes	Sociology	Report Cards, David Makes Man, Youth Planning Council for BMOC Summit	Fall 2020–Spring 2021	Allison Joslyn
Heidi Ngov	Physiology & Neurobiology	Report Cards, Health Equity Week, Youth Planning Council for BMOC Summit	Fall 2020–Spring 2021	Allison Joslyn
Chloe Francis	Allied Health Sciences	BMOC Summit planning and arts components	Fall 2020–Spring 2021	Valen Diaz
Grace Salamon	Psychological Sciences	BMOC Summit Toolkit, Visualizing Health Equity, Radical Healing	Spring 2021–Summer 2021	Trisha Pitter / Dr. Rocio Chang
Hannah Farrell	Allied Health Sciences	BMOC Summit Toolkit, Visualizing Health Equity Curriculum	Summer 2021	Trisha Pitter
Brianna Phillips	Psychology	BMOC Summit, Radical Healing	Summer 2021	Dr. Rocio Chang
Shadae Hayle	Psychological Sciences	BMOC Summit, Radical Healing	Summer 2021	Dr. Rocio Chang

STUDENT & TRAINEE MENTORING

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.

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)

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.

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

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.

EXISTING

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

NEWLY FUNDED IN FY'21

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

NEWLY FUNDED FOR FY'22

NIH NIDA	Dr. Wizdom Powell	Project BrEAtHe (Brothers, Reclaiming, Emotional, Awareness, Tranquility, Healing & Ex-istence): Disrupting Racism-related Stress, Trauma, & Problematic Substance Use in Young Adult Black Men	\$763,484	9/1/21 – 7/31/24	In pre-award, pending IRB approval
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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.

Funder	HDI Team Member Role	Project Title	PI	Awarded Funding	Project Period	Status
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EXISTING

SAMHSA	Dr. Wizdom Powell, Co-Investigator	The Center for the Treatment of Developmental Trauma Disorders	Dr. Julian Ford	\$448,489	9/30/16 – 9/29/21	Concluded
NIH NIAAA	Dr. Emil Coman, Analyst	Individualized Assessment and Treatment for Alcoholism: Treatment Mechanisms	Dr. Mark Litt	\$351,288	8/1/16 – 7/31/21	Concluded
NIH NIMH	Dr. Emil Coman, Analyst	Aging Inmates Suicidal Ideation and Depression (Aging INSIDE) Study	Dr. Lisa Barry	\$250,000	6/1/16 – 3/31/22	In NCE period

NEWLY FUNDED IN FY'21

Community Health Center Association of CT / HRSA	Dr. Wizdom Powell, Co-Investigator Dr. Emil Coman, Biostatistician Willie Frazier, Research Associate	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 Dr. Emil Coman, Biostatistician Willie Frazier, Research Associate	Medication Reconciliation	Dr. Tom Agresta	\$49,977	10/1/20 – 9/30/21	Concluded

NEWLY FUNDED FOR FY'22

NIH NIA	Dr. Wizdom Powell, Co-Investigator, Co- Lead of Recruitment and Outreach Core	Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Centers (P30 Clinical Trial Optional)	Drs. Kuchel and Fortinsky	\$939,201	7/1/21 – 6/30/26	In pre- award
	Dr. Emil Coman, Biostatistician					
	Allison Joslyn, Research Assistant II					

Grants & Contracts Submissions

Led by HDI

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

Funder	PI	Project Title	Requested Funding	Submission Date	Outcome
Commonwealth Fund	Dr. Wizdom Powell	Exploring the Impacts of COVID-19 on Behavioral Health among Black Adult Male Medicaid Recipients	\$120,000	Jul & Sep 2020	Funded
Commonwealth Fund	Dr. Victor Villagra	Eliminating Barriers to Improve Health Insurance Literacy in Connecticut	\$131,442	Aug 2020	Not funded
American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation/ The Hastings Center	Dr. Victor Villagra	Surprise medical billing project	\$8,000	Sep 2020	Funded
NIH NIDA K25	Dr. Emil Coman	Reducing substance abuse and racial/ethnic disparities among males through a closer integration of behavioral research and medical practice with advanced analytic methods	\$809,058	Oct 2020	Reviewed and scored (48 th percentile), not funded Will resubmit Oct 2021

Funder	PI	Project Title	Requested Funding	Submission Date	Outcome
NIH NIDA R34	Dr. Wizdom Powell	Project BrEAtHe (Brothers, Reclaiming, Emotional, Awareness, Tranquility, Healing & Ex-istence): Disrupting Racism-related Stress, Trauma, & Problematic Substance Use in Young Adult Black Men	\$763,484	Oct 2020	Funded
UConn CLAS Funding Opportunity in Big Data	Dr. Wizdom Powell	Supplement to Commonwealth Fund - Exploring the Impacts of COVID-19 on Behavioral Health among Black Adult Male Medicaid Recipients	\$120,000	Oct 2020	Not funded
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Data for Action	Dr. Emil Coman	Investigating causal mechanisms of health disparities in medical debt using spatial structural equation modeling	\$99,895	Dec 2020 & Apr 2021	Invited to submit full proposal, not funded
Harvard Pilgrim Foundation	Dr. Wizdom Powell	Healthy Youth, Healthy Community: BIPOC Youth-Led Ideas Lab Team - BMOC Summit	\$20,000	Feb 2021	Not funded
CT Health Foundation	Dr. Wizdom Powell	COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy Survey contract	\$84,888	Mar 2021	Not funded
CT Health Foundation	Dr. Wizdom Powell	Exploring the Impacts of COVID-19 on Behavioral Health among Black Adult Male Medicaid Recipients	\$50,000	Mar 2021	Funded
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving (via UConn Foundation)	Dr. Wizdom Powell	Ideas Lab - State of Health Equity among Boys and Men of Color Summit	\$20,000	Apr 2021	Funded
CT Health Foundation (via UConn Foundation)	Dr. Wizdom Powell	Ideas Lab - State of Health Equity among Boys and Men of Color Summit	\$20,000	Apr 2021	Funded
UConn InCHIP	Dr. Emil Coman	Modern uses of spatial analytics to investigate causes of health disparities in CT	\$15,000	Apr 2021	Not funded

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.

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

Funder	HDI Team Member Role	Project Title	PI	Requested Funding	Submission Date	Outcome
CCMC / American Heart Association	Dr. Wizdom Powell, Co-Training Director	Touching the Lives of Cancer Survivors by Advancing Pediatric Cardio-oncology Care through a Lens of Racial Equity	Dr. Olga Toro-Salazar (CCMC)	\$84,720	Mar 2021	Not funded
UConn Storrs / USDA NIFA	Dr. Emil Coman, co-PI	Assessing the Impact of Rural Broadband on Economic Activities, Educational Achievement, and Health Outcomes	Dr. Sandro Steinbach (UConn Storrs)	\$51,873	Jun 2021	Not funded
CT Office of Health Strategy	Dr. Wizdom Powell, Co-Investigator Dr. Emil Coman, Biostatistician Willie Frazier, Research Associate	Medication Reconciliation	Dr. Tom Agresta	\$49,977	Jul 2021	Funded

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.

DATA ANALYTICS SUPPORT FOR UCONN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

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.

Budget & Finances

Our FY'21 budget and spending for operational expenses is outlined below. For FY'21, our overall operating expenses were approximately \$1.1 million.

Description (SOM Funds 101011, 201122, & 201133)	FY'21 Budget	FY'21 Spending
Regular Earnings	\$501,340	\$516,842
Fringe Expenses	\$376,151	\$400,341
Internal Contract Support	\$3,860	\$2,878
Purchased Services	\$307,481	\$202,110
Supplies	\$56,563	\$4,075
Equipment	\$22,117	\$2,378
Total	\$1,267,512	\$1,128,623

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.

Core	FY'22 Budget (Approved by SOM on Fund 201122)
Community • Sponsorships and community engagement	\$7,500
Data • PolicyMap • Data analysis software and trainings	\$25,484
Policy & Communications • Health Equity Week • Policy briefs • Promotion and communications	\$3,240
Research • Student internship stipends	\$6,000
Systems • Rent of 241 Main St suite • Graphic design services • Project management and e-learning software • Dues and memberships • UCHC institutional expenses	\$103,320
Cores Total*	\$145,544

**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



Brothers Reclaiming Emotional Awareness
Tranquility Healing & Ex-istence

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.

P30 Pepper Center

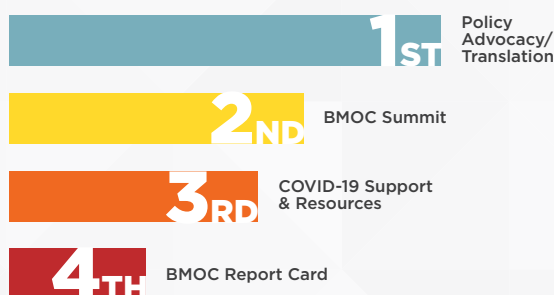
The Aging Center and HDI are building on their existing partnership for the newly funded P30 Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Center aimed at improving health and independence in older adults through a collective multidisciplinary focus on scientific approaches emphasizing Precision Gerontology. 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

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?



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.

BMOC Multisector Alliance MEMBER LIST



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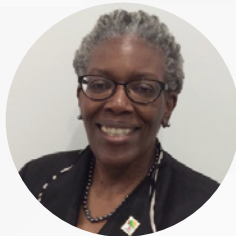
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HDI Affiliate Program

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.

Looking to expand your network of health equity stakeholders?

Join the UConn HDI Affiliate Program's growing membership of stakeholders in CT and beyond who are working on innovative and ground-breaking research, programs, and policies.

Visit the [UConn HDI website](#) to learn more.



Appendix 1. Awards, Publications, Speaking Engagements & Media Coverage

Awards

Dr. Wisdom 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

Perez, A., Manning, K. J., **Powell, W.**, & Barry, L. C. (2021). [Cognitive impairment in older incarcerated males: Education and race considerations](#). *The American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*.

Adams, L. B., Baxter, S. L., Lightfoot, A. F., Gottfredson, N., Golin, C., Jackson, L. C., ... & **Powell, W.** (2021). [Refining Black men's depression measurement using participatory approaches: a concept mapping study](#). *BMC Public Health*, 21(1), 1-10.

Rogers, C. R., Rogers, T. N., Matthews, P., Le Duc, N., Zickmund, S., **Powell, W.**, ... & Griffith, D. M. (2020). [Psychosocial determinants of colorectal cancer screening uptake among African-American men: understanding the role of masculine role norms, medical mistrust, and normative support](#). *Ethnicity & Health*, 1-20.

Robison, J., **Powell, W.**, & Kenyon-Pesce, L. (2020). [Practical Guidance for Recruiting Older Adults in Clinical Research: Building on Principles of Social Justice and Equity](#). *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, 68: 2757-2758.

Douglas, M., **Coman, E.**, Eden, A. R., Abiola, S., & Grumbach, K. (2021). [Lower Likelihood of Burnout Among Family Physicians From Underrepresented Racial-Ethnic Groups](#). *The Annals of Family Medicine*, 19(4), 342. doi:10.1370/afm.2696.

Al Fahim, M. A., Khan, M. M. H., Jensen, T., Albayram, Y., **Coman, E.**, & Buck, R. (2021). [The Mediating Effect of Emotions on Trust in the Context of Automated System Usage](#). *IEEE Transactions on Affective Computing*. doi: 10.1109/TAFFC.2021.3094883.

Miller, A. B., Hahn, E., Norona, C. R., Treves, S., St. Jean, N., Gassen Templet, L., McConnell, S., **Chang, R.***, Abdi, S. M., and Ford-Paz, R. (2019). [A Socio-Culturally, Linguistically-Responsive, and Trauma-Informed Approach to Mental Health Interpretation](#). Los Angeles, CA, and Durham, NC: National Center for Child Traumatic Stress.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: [The Opioid Crisis and the Hispanic/Latino Population: An Urgent Issue](#). Publication No. PEP20-05-02-002. Office of Behavioral Health Equity. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2020. **Chang, Rocio.***, report contributor.

Cooksey Stowers, Kristen*, Marfo, Nana, Gurganus, Eminet, Gans, Kim, Kumanyika, Shiriki, & Schwartz, Marlene (2020). [The hunger-obesity paradox: Exploring food banking system characteristics and obesity inequities among food-insecure pantry clients](#). *PloS one*, 15(10), e0239778

Cohen, Juliana FW , **Cooksey Stowers, Kristen***, Rohmann, Marlaine , LaPierre, Nicole , Rimm, Eric 2, Cash, Sean , Davison, Kirsten, McInnis, Kyle, & Economos, Christina (2021). [Marketing to Children inside of Quick-Service Restaurants: Differences by Community Race/Ethnicity and Income Assessed Using a Validated Environmental Assessment Tool -EAT](#). *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, 61(1):96-104.

Tovar, Alison, Risica, Patricia M., Ramirez, Andrea, Mena, Noereem, Lofgren, Ingrid E., **Cooksey Stowers, Kristen***, & Gans, Kim M. (2020). [Exploring the provider-level socio-demographic determinants of diet quality of preschool-aged children attending family childcare homes](#). *Nutrients*, 12(5), 1368.

Palmer, Anne, Atoloye, Abiodun, Bassarab, Karen, Calancie, Larissa, Santo, Raychel, **Cooksey Stowers, Kristen***. (2020). [COVID-19 responses: Food policy councils are “stepping in, stepping up, and stepping back.”](#) *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 10(1), 1-4.

*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

Fahim, M. A. A., Khan, M. M. H., Jensen, T., Albayram, Y., & **Coman, E.** (2021, June). Do Integral Emotions Affect Trust? The Mediating Effect of Emotions on Trust in the Context of Human-Agent Interaction. In *Designing Interactive Systems Conference 2021* (pp. 1492-1503).

Albayram, Y., Jensen, T., Khan, M. M. H., Fahim, M. A. A., Buck, R., & **Coman, E.** (2020, November). Investigating the Effects of (Empty) Promises on Human-Automation Interaction and Trust Repair. In *Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Human-Agent Interaction* (pp. 6-14).

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. [Bones in our basements: Addressing COVID-19 and incarceration,](#) Medical News Today, September 7, 2020.

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.

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., Social Justice: Racism as a Public Health Emergency, Panelist, State of Black Health Biennial Conference, March 3, 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., Intersectional Feminisms and Masculinisms: the role of intersectionality in the lives of people on the gender continuum, Panelist, APA Division 35 Society for the Psychology of Women, February 12, 2021, virtual.

Powell, W., Dismantling Habits of White Dominant Culture in Research Settings, Co-Presenter, RELEVANT: Action Research Symposium, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, January 13, 2021, virtual.

Powell, W., [Addressing racial equity in COVID-19 vaccine distribution](#), Panelist, Hosted by CT Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz and Michigan Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist, January 12, 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., Race in America: The Way Forward, Presidential Fellows Retreat, November 12, 2020, virtual.

Powell, W., Racism as a Social Determinant of Health and Population Health, Interdisciplinary Research Leaders Cohort 5, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, November 6, 2020, virtual.

Powell, W., Joslyn, 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., 6th Annual Dads Matter Too Conference on Reshaping Fatherhood with a Racial Justice Lens: Striving for Health Equity, Keynote Address, September 18, 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.

Briggs-King, E., **Chang, R.***, Pane-Seifert, H., Goods-Jaeger, B., & Tunno, A. The Inconvenient Truth: A Panel on Race and Trauma. International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ISTSS), November 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 (111 attendees).

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

Chang, R.*, Invited Presentation, Chadwick Conference, San Diego, California. The Power of Partnering with Youth: Lessons Learned from the NCTSN Youth Task Force, 2020 (34 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.*, Invited Presentation, Conectando para la prevention: Hispanos desarrollando la resiliencia ante el Coronavirus, The Governor's Prevention Partnership, Wethersfield, CT, 2020 (attendees 132).

Chang, R.*, Guest Speaker, Parental Support During Distance Learning: How Can we Help? State Education Resource Center, Stamford, CT, 2020.

Chang, R.*, Panel Discussion, Guest Speaker, Reapertura Escolar y Su Salud Durante COVID-19, State Education Resource Center, 2020.

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 psicología de Puerto Rico (APPR), 2020.

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

Fuller, A., Gomez, M., Cuella, R., McDaniel, S., **Chang, R.**, Pauter, S. The Power of Partnering with Youth: Lessons Learned from the NCTSN Youth Task Force. 35th Annual San Diego International Conference on Child and Family Maltreatment, January 2020, San Diego, CA.

Cooksey Stowers, K.*, Atoloye, A., Gans, K., Page, M., Damio, G. [Developing a Valid and Reliable Food Swamp Environments Audit \(FS-EAT\) Tool: Spatial Patterns & Implications for Land Use Zoning Policies](#). Presentation at Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM) 42nd Annual Fall Research Conference. November 2020, virtual.

Cooksey Stowers, K.*, Atoloye, A., Mancini, S., Karls, A., Skipper Nelson, L., Ralston Aoki, J. [The Relationship Between Local-level Healthy Food Access Policy Strength & Population Demographics](#). Poster presentation at the 38th Annual Meeting of The Obesity Society. November 2020, virtual.

Cooksey Stowers, K.*, Mistler, C., Ajayi, O., Atoloye, A., Jiang, Q., Mancini, S., Skipper Nelson, L. [Food Policies & Diet related Health Inequities: A Systematic Review of Current Evidence](#). Oral presentation at the 38th Annual Meeting of The Obesity Society. November 2020, virtual.

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

Trainings and Teachings

Coman, E., 2021. Health disparities and the effect of place in health equity module, Clinical Home for medical students taught by Dr. Kirsten Ek.

Coman, E., 2020. Instrument Development in CLTR 5359 (Core III) taught by Dr. Helen Wu.

Coman, E., 2020. Measurement of health disparities in AH 5095 Advancing Health Equity taught by Dr. Kristen Cooksey Stowers.

Chang, R.*, 2020. Asian Studies, Telling our stories, UConn undergraduate, 1 hour.

Chang, R.*, 2020. Visualize Health Art Curriculum, Hartford High Schools, CT, 8 hours.

Chang, R.*, 2020. Video Gaming, psychiatry resident workshop, UConn Health, Department of Psychiatry, 2 hours.

Chang, R.*, 2020. Resiliency and Medical School, UConn School of Medicine, 1.5 hours.

Chang, R.*, 2020. How to deliver bad news, UConn School of Medicine, 1.5 hours.

Chang, R.*, 2020. Culture Counts, University of New England, College of Osteopathic Medicine, 1 hour.

Chang, R.*, 2020. Think Trauma Curriculum, Carlos Albizu University – Puerto Rico, 16 hours.

Chang, R.*, 2020. Positive Psychology and Covid 19, Beacon Health Options, CT, 2 hours.

**Dr. Rocio Chang is a HDI faculty member.*

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

[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



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