

# Health Equity Scholars Program @ Waterbury



## Program Overview

The Health Equity Scholars Program @ Waterbury is a free four-week summer mentorship and health-equity research-driven initiative in partnership with Waterbury Bridges to Success, UConn Waterbury, and the Connecticut Area Health Education Center Network (AHEC) to train and empower rising 9th graders, known as Health Equity Scholars, to become health service action leaders.

## Program Highlights

**Health Equity Training:** Engaging workshops on health, equity, disparities, and social determinants of health.

**Hands-On Learning:** Scholars use photography and storytelling to examine health issues in Waterbury.

**Community Action:** Scholars work together to develop and co-present plans to tackle public health issues in Waterbury's neighborhoods.

**Career Exploration:** Guest speakers from traditional and non-traditional health professions share their career journeys with scholars, helping them prepare for success in high school, college, and future careers.

**Final Presentation:** Scholars present their research findings at a community town hall event or research symposium.



## The YPAR Approach

Using a Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) approach, the Health Equity Scholars collaborate to explore how social factors impact health, YPAR empowers youth to lead research, advocate for change, and promote social justice and community well-being.

**Project Period:** Ongoing

**HDI Staff on the Project:**

Trisha Pitter, M.S.

Peter Zapata, M.P.H., CHES

Linda Sprague Martinez, PhD

Rocio Chang, M.A., Psy.D.

**Program Partners:**

