



New Hampshire Health & Equity Partnership

September 2017 Newsletter

Director's Message: Partnership Update

Dear Partners,

During the last two months members of our communities worked hard to plan and host multiple cultural events in our beautiful state of New Hampshire. From the [Mahrajan Middle Eastern Festival at Our Lady of Cedars Church](#) to the various September 15-24 [Welcoming Week](#) celebrations, we were offered numerous ways to reconnect to our roots or connect to other cultures.



Our partners enjoyed sharing space together at the "We are One" Festival. From left to right: Victoria Adewumi, Maria Rodriguez, Nathalie Ahyi-Amendah and Alex Ogle.

These celebrations are unique opportunities for the NH Health & Equity Partnership (H&EP) to reach out to community members with our message that “**Everyone in New Hampshire has a fair opportunity to live a long, healthy life**” .

The H&EP Communication Committee focuses on supporting the Partnership's capacity to build knowledge of and action to address the root causes of health inequities through advancing leadership, enhancing understanding, and fostering networking and collaboration. This year, we participated a bit differently in the [“We Are One” Festival](#) by sharing space with four great partner organizations: Manchester Health Department, Victory Women of Vision, Welcoming Manchester, and Maintaining Independence Adult Day Services. They all took advantage of this opportunity to provide information to the community, administer surveys, or invite elders to join knitting groups. It was a fun mutually reinforcing activity. The Partnership was pleased to be able to participate as a sponsor and help support the success of the “We Are One” Festival.

Consider joining the H&EP Communication Committee with your fresh perspective - especially if you have communications expertise. Please contact me at nahyi@healthynh.com if you, or someone you know, might be interested. We also welcome ideas about other ways to collaborate with old or new partners.

Yours in partnership as we seek a fair opportunity to live a long, healthy life,

-Nathalie

[Nathalie Ahyi-Amendah](#)

Director, NH Health & Equity Partnership

www.equitynh.org or www.facebook.com/equitynh

(be sure to “like” us while you are there)

Weaving Community One Conversation at a Time: Welcoming Manchester Hosts Conversation Cafés



Conversation Café, First Congregational Church, Manchester March 15, 2017. Photographer Cheryl Senter, courtesy of NH Charitable Foundation

Welcoming Manchester is a local ***Welcoming NH*** effort, and part of the ***Endowment for Health*** supported ***Immigrant integration Initiative***, which aims to “encourage mutual understanding, a spirit of welcome, and a common purpose among all members of the Manchester community.”

Welcoming Manchester has been hosting ***Conversation Cafés*** to bring together new immigrants and members of the "receiving community" in a casual, friendly environment. Members of the receiving community are generally native US born, but sometimes they are immigrants themselves who have learned the ropes of this community and are in a position to help receive newcomers.

Many people say they want to get to know immigrants but don't have a way to do that – Conversation Cafés provide that space and also give new immigrants a way to find out more about the community they are settling in.

Participants appreciate learning about other countries and cultures by listening to people's personal stories. Those new to the community appreciate the opportunity to practice English and to gain information about jobs, educational programs, and other resources in the community. There are usually 60-75 people at a Conversation Café and there is usually a good mix of new immigrants and people who have lived in the community longer.

Conversation Cafés begin with a large group activity, or ice breaker, that gets everyone up and moving and interacting with each other. Then people break into groups of 4-6 people and begin conversations that are guided by a set of questions. The questions are designed to be answered by both receivers and newcomers so that there is a shared back and forth dialogue. Questions might be generic (If you could save only one thing from your house, what would it be? What is the best thing about the place, or one of the places, where you grew up? What are 3 words that you would use to describe yourself?). Sometimes questions center on a theme such as school experiences (What was your favorite subject in school? What was your very first day of school like?), or health care (What remedies do you try at home before going to a doctor or clinic? How far did you have to travel to get medical care in the place where you grew up?). Two Francophone Conversation Cafés included French-speaking descendants of Manchester's early immigrants who welcomed new immigrants from Haiti, Congo, Morocco, Algeria and other French-speaking countries. Although conversations are guided by preset questions, many conversations take off in different directions and have a "life of their own"!



Aziza Abdullayi Ali, and Zinah AlShukri, Conversation Café, First Congregational Church, Manchester, March 15, 2017.

Photographer Cheryl Senter, courtesy of NH Charitable Foundation

These Conversation Cafés have usually been held at First Congregational Church where ***English for New Americans*** holds classes for adult English language learners. Catholic Charities hosted one of the Francophone Conversation Cafés, and Brookside Church hosted a Conversation Café that was held in partnership with the International Institute of New England for newly resettled refugees in Manchester.

Please join Conversation Cafés of the 2017-2018 "season" (the school year):

- October 4th from 6-8PM at First Congregational Church on Union Street in Manchester. Conversations will focus on 3 themes: the spending and saving of money (financial

literacy with help from St Mary's Bank), preparing for weather disasters (with help from the Red Cross), and civic engagement (with help from an alderman, a school board member and an active citizen).

- November 9th from 6-8PM at the Currier Museum of Art will feature a tour of the Toulouse-Lautrec exhibit and a group art project.
- December's event will be a Francophone Conversation Café at the Manchester Public Library.

All are welcome to any and all of these events! Check ***Welcoming Manchester*** for more information and announcements.

Partner Profile: Tika Acharya and BCNH – Expanding Opportunity for Community Success!



Tika Acharya, Executive Director of Building Community in New Hampshire. Photo credit: Becky Field, FieldWork Photos. Tika Acharya came to Manchester in January of 2009 with 4 generations of his family – the 11th Bhutanese family to arrive in Manchester. Refugees do not have a choice of where to go and some Bhutanese families had been assigned to NH, with refugees resettled here beginning in March 2008. There are now 163 Bhutanese families in Manchester (as well as 148 families in Concord and 10 in Laconia).

Tika's first impression was being surprised by the city's size which was smaller than the refugee camp he had come from. His curiosity was also piqued by how technologically driven everything was. While Tika was excited about settling into a new community, he also faced many challenges. Despite knowing English, he had some difficulty communicating. His family, friends, and neighbors often sought him out for help, to read letters, to communicate at the hospital and to accompany them to appointments. He found he was always learning and always busy.

Driven by the community's need for help on a day to day basis he asked "How can we work as a team, so we could offer the same support to families in Laconia and Concord?" With his background of organizing people, he and others decided to create a non-profit organization in mid-2009 with the assistance of many people. **Bhutanese Community of NH (BCNH)** started formally helping Bhutanese families in May of 2010 – and the 36 people involved nominated Tika to lead the organization to the next level. BCNH now has a caseload of over 400 families, and also serves Burmese, Africans, and middle-eastern folks, with a staff of 16 employees. BCNH provides: case-management, employment assistance, health insurance enrollment, citizenship preparation, youth guidance/engagement, education for women and family members on nutrition and obesity reduction, cultural education to young school-age children, and school/academic support. Additionally, working closely with school liaisons and guidance counselors, they make sure high school students don't fall through the cracks and are given proper direction to go to college.

BCNH has also engaged other ethnic organizations in successfully addressing shared needs. In 2013, BCNH led a collaborative partnership of ethnic organizations in successfully securing NH state funding to implement health insurance enrollment efforts, which then evolved to federal Navigator funding for the collaborative in 2015. At the same time BCNH has been able to share their experience and knowledge with Bhutanese groups in other states that have had similar changes– and helped two other organizations design and implement programs and become ethnic self-help grantees. As with many non-profit organizations, sustainability is a challenge, and BCNH has introduced alternative mechanisms for generating revenue such as a fee-for-service interpretation service.

Evolving as a non-profit through different challenges, BCNH has expanded its vision to serve a multi-ethnic population of new Americans. In June of 2017, they formed a new board which is more diverse, and changed their name to **Building Community in New Hampshire** – still BCNH for short. The mission, by-laws, and articles of incorporation have all changed, with the intention of offering services to all new Americans and to partner more formally with other ethnic community based organizations across NH.

The needs of newcomers remain the same: after resettlement, the goal is economic security and integration, and within 5-6 years people would like to buy homes and start businesses. BCNH has added services to help them achieve these goals in America, including entrepreneurship, workforce development, and accessing emerging industries (such as helping youth get into Information Technology, healthcare, or financial services). BCNH's goal is to become a one stop shop for all new Americans in NH so it will be easier for newcomers and the mainstream community to locate and identify resources and communicate with various leaders.

BCNH's success has been recognized. They received the 2016 MLK Coalition Special Award for "BCNH's continued efforts in offering unflagging support to new Americans in their resettlement needs and in their integration process". The organization was also

highlighted in the *White House Task Force on New Americans Report* for the work BCNH did in producing new citizens in 2016 after President Obama formed a Task Force on immigrant integration. Tika was recognized as a “40 Under 40 Leader” in 2013 and since then, each year at least one Bhutanese leader has received this recognition. Tika is interested in supporting and developing other immigrant leaders. “Building leaders and building team – my contribution is that I train other people and share the expertise and leadership skills so they come onboard and contribute significantly so they are recognized... all the way it’s a transition in leadership – so others can step up to lead when I leave.”

Tika and his wife feel blessed to have two children now, and are proud to have their grandparents living with them in a multigenerational household, where everyone takes care of each other. Tika has celebrated many personal and community successes: he has been able to build this community organization and cultivate job opportunities; he is the co-founder of two successful small businesses; he bought a home in 2012; and now 85 fellow community members have purchased homes as well. He says “I consider I am successful. Success can happen in the US. We can make success in our life. Like us, every new American family is blessed and happy to be in NH and have the opportunity to work hard and raise NH leaders in this developed country. We are lucky to come to the US... At some point in time we lost our energy and belongings/everything – we came to US with just hope... We got citizenship back – United States is OUR country now. We came with hunger to work hard and build the community and contribute back to the community here.” Many immigrants and refugees share this perspective, and feel that the United States offers opportunities that were unavailable to them in their country of origin. At the same time, despite working hard, many families still struggle to achieve economic stability and mobility. By serving new Americans and helping them navigate and succeed in complex institutions in the United States, BCNH and its partners expand opportunity for families so that individual success becomes community success.



Receiving the MLK Award, from left to right, Tika Acharya, Chandra Rai, Honore Murenzi, Bishnu Khadka, Bhagirath Khatiwada, Bishnu Koirala, Nandi Koirala, Chuda Acharya, Kharga Thapa, and Anpi Poudyel.

ACLU Update on the Rights of Eligible Voters in the Granite State

As a member of the *NH Campaign for Voting Rights*, *ACLU-NH* is working with a coalition of state and national advocacy organizations, voters, attorneys, and watchdog organizations to ensure and preserve the right to vote for every eligible New Hampshire voter.

Together, multiple ally organizations designed, promoted, collected, and delivered nearly 3,000 petition signatures urging Governor Chris Sununu to support voting modernization and security by vetoing Senate Bill 3. Yet SB 3 narrowly passed the New Hampshire House on June 1, with a 191-162 vote and Governor Chris Sununu signed SB 3 into law July 10, 2017. This creates an unfunded mandate for cities and towns, and very possibly ensures long lines for same-day registration.

SB 3 severely tightens qualifications for voting in New Hampshire and potentially criminalizes legitimate same-day registration voters who cannot provide proof that they have performed a so-called “verifiable act,” such as buying a home or entering a formal lease — thereby effectively disenfranchising elderly, low income, and other vulnerable citizens, especially those who move in the months before an election and are unable to obtain sufficient proof. Under SB3, a voter who fails to provide evidence of domicile within 10 days faces a fine up to \$5,000. However, *on September 12, a Superior Court Judge blocked the state from enforcing the penalties.*

Democracy is best when everyone participates. It shouldn't matter if you are a lifelong Granite Stater or recently settled in our great state – what matters is that we have an engaged, civically-minded community. Please stay attuned to the evolving implementation of this important and controversial law. For further information contact *Christina Gibson*, at the ACLU of NH.

Upcoming Events

October 5, 2017

Greater Nashua Public Health 2017 Annual Meeting & Integrated Behavioral Health Conference

Event Center at the Courtyard Marriott
Nashua, NH
8:00am-5:00pm
[Registration](#)

The Greater Nashua Public Health Network and Nashua Integrated Delivery Network partners come together on October 5th to learn about programs, services, and initiatives that are contributing to improving the health of our communities!

[Click here for further information and registration](#), or contact [Patty Crooker](#) Public Health Network Services Coordinator or call (603)589-4507.

GREATER NASHUA PUBLIC HEALTH 2017 ANNUAL MEETING & INTEGRATED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

In Partnership with the Nashua Integrated Delivery Network

Thursday, October 5, 2017

8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Event Center at the Courtyard Marriott
Nashua, NH



October 10, 2017

Live Webcast Discrimination in America: African American Experiences

Noon - 1pm ET

The Forum at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health — a live webcasting series — hopes to provide decision-makers with a global platform to discuss policy choices and scientific controversies, allowing participants to leverage their collective knowledge.

Discrimination in America: African American Experiences, presented in collaboration with The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and NPR, will stream live on

October 10, Noon-1pm ET. [Check for updates.](#)

October 13, 2017

Building Healthy Connections Together Symposium

This event is free and lunch will be provided

Rivier University
8:30-3:30pm
[Registration](#)

The [Gate City Immigrant Initiative](#), Cultural Connections Subcommittee is pleased to present the **Building Healthy Connections Together Symposium** on Friday, October 13 from 8:30am-3:30pm at Rivier University's Dion Center.

The program includes an explanation of the refugee resettlement process, keynote speakers who are experts in refugee trauma and resilience, and afternoon breakout sessions on education, employment and socialization.

[Click here for additional information and to register](#)



Cultural
Connections
Committee



Nashua
NEW HAMPSHIRE'S GATE CITY



The Black New England Conference, now in its 11th year, is a regularly occurring 2-day gathering to share insights and scholarly work on Black experiences, past and present, in New England.

The Conference is both an academic conference and a celebration of Black life and history.

October 20-21, 2017

Black New England Conference

[THE SCIENCE & ENGINEERING OF RACE:
Living Through the Archives](#)

Huddleston Hall
University of New Hampshire

Panelists and speakers will demonstrate ways that African-American intellectuals, activists, artists, and social scientists have grappled with the complexities of “race science” and its contemporary iterations in popular culture.

[Click here for more information and to register](#)

The conference will uncover past and present applications of scientific fictions that have codified racial hierarchies and sustained pervasive beliefs with public policies that continue to shape all areas of American life.

October 23, 2017

Black Minds Matter 8-Part Webinar Series

Black Minds Matter is a public course taught by Professor J. Luke Wood from San Diego State University. The course connects themes from the Black Lives Matter movement to issues facing Black boys and men in educational settings.

The course will include eight hour-long sessions as well as other free content. Each week, guest speakers will share their insights, perspectives, and research on the Black male educational experience.



Click on the image above for a description of the course on YouTube. The course begins October 23, 2017. [Learn more and register](#) .



November 4, 2017

AAMC Minority Student Medical Career Fair

Boston Marriott Copley Place Boston, MA

College and high school students, parents, pre-health advisors, school administrations, and other interested individuals are invited to learn first-hand about the journey to become a future physician or scientist.

[Free Registration Now Open!](#)

November 15, 2017

NHPHA Annual Fall Forum

Team Up, Take Action: Partnering for Health Equity

The Hanover Inn, Hanover, NH

This year's NH Public Health Association fall conference, being held in partnership with the Vermont Public Health Association and Dartmouth Hitchcock on November 15th at the Hanover Inn, in Hanover NH, promises to be both exciting and informative. The event will be headlined by Dr. Camara Jones, Immediate Past President of the American Public Health Association, and Dr. Jim Weinstein, former CEO and President of Dartmouth-Hitchcock, as the keynote speakers.

[Learn more conference information and register.](#) For any additional questions please contact [Rebecca Sky](#).

Save the Date!

November 15, 2017

Annual Fall Forum

The Hanover Inn, Hanover, NH

Co-hosted by:

The New Hampshire Public Health Association,
The Vermont Public Health Association, and
Dartmouth-Hitchcock



November 16, 2017

H&EP Learning Forum for Organization Decision- Makers on the Culturally Effective Organizations Framework

The H&EP Culturally Effective Organizations Priority Work Group is pleased to present a learning forum for **leaders of organizations** from health, healthcare, human, social service, people-serving, education, and non-profit organizations. Culturally effective organizations enable, cultivate, and support the delivery of high-quality care and services for all people.

Decision makers from your leadership team are invited to attend this half-day learning forum on November 16th in Manchester to learn the roadmap for providing high quality services for all. Registration information

coming soon. For questions please contact [Isabelle Valmont](#) .

November 15-16, 2017

New England Rural Health Conference

[The New England Rural Health Roundtable](#) is partnering with the [NH Oral Health Coalition](#) to address the needs of New England's rural communities (consisting of over 2.8 million residents who require a healthcare environment that is responsive to individual and community based needs), and to provide updates on national healthcare policy initiatives, as well as opportunities to learn from and network with peers at this year's [New England Rural Health Conference](#) focusing on Transitions in Healthcare.

In addition to a keynote address, opening reception and other plenary sessions, the event will feature over 35 breakout sessions led by community based groups and organizations, rural clinicians, health systems, researchers, and community development leaders. Presentations will highlight important updates on healthcare policy and community initiatives that can be replicated across the New England region.



Transitions in Healthcare

Attitash Grand Summit | Bartlett, NH | Nov. 15+16

Specialized Tracks

- ORAL HEALTH
- Community-Based Initiatives
- Telehealth
- Workforce Development
- Behavioral Health
- Public Health
- Healthcare throughout The Lifespan
- Hospital & Healthcare Systems
- Primary Care

Sessions will focus on discipline specific (oral health, primary care, behavioral health, and public health) topics, as well as ensuring equitable access to quality healthcare for all, improving affordability, and the value of healthcare and building healthy communities.

[Click here for more information and to register](#)



November 30 - December 2

[RootSkills Conference](#)

Radisson Hotel
Manchester, NH

Hosted by the [Grassroots Fund](#), the conference theme is *Building Resilient Communities* and aims to serve as both a networking and skill-building opportunity for both social justice and environmental justice organizers from throughout New England.

Scholarships and exhibitor space are still available. [Learn more and register](#) or contact [Nakia Navarro](#) for more information.

Resources / Opportunities

Funding & Training from the New England Grassroots Environment Fund



The New England Grassroots

Environment Fund is an environmental justice funder with the mission of building a just and sustainable New England. The Grassroots Fund aspires to do this by working alongside neighborhood focused groups that have hope and vision to improve their communities from the ground up.

Over 60% of their grants are given to groups that do not have 501c3 status and may or may not have a fiscal sponsor. For many grantees a Grassroots Fund grant is often the first funding they've received and helps to secure additional financial support or resources.

[Read more...](#)

The Grassroots Fund invests in projects within the following issue areas: Climate & Energy, Environmental Health, Food & Agriculture, Land & Water, and New Economy. Grants range from \$250-\$7500.

[Please review details about the available Grant Programs including instructions on how to apply.](#)

What is Health Equity? And What Difference Does a Definition Make?

Although the term health equity is used widely, a common understanding of what it means is lacking. This new RWJF [report](#) defines health equity and identifies crucial elements to guide effective action to reduce disparities in health status.

Simply put, "health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be healthier. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care."

Also included on page four of the full [report](#) are alternative definitions of health equity for different audiences that may have varying backgrounds and perspectives, and examples of specific terms that often arise in discussions around the concept.

Why we need to stop asking "What do you do?"

This relevant post from [Nonprofit And Friends](#) discusses our "To-Do" culture and how it differs from other cultures which the author describes as "To-Be" cultures, where you are defined less by what you do, and more from who you are.

"The To-Do philosophy has had an oversized influence on our sector and our overall culture. It can be argued that the overemphasis on actions and not relationships is one of biggest

barriers to diversifying our teams, our boards, our donor base, our collaborations, our grantees. It may also be preventing us from solving many of society's challenges.”

**I WANT TO
ACT**

You can make
a difference.
Get Involved.
Make your
voice heard.

[Learn More](#)

**I'D LIKE TO
LEARN**

Resource materials on
health & equity, the social
determinants of health,
and other related topics.

[Learn More](#)

About Us

The New Hampshire Health and Equity Partnership is a public-private collaborative effort of philanthropic organizations, public health agencies, community based organizations, advocates and others concerned with health equity. The Partnership is guided in its work by the Plan to Address Health Disparities and Promote Health Equity in New Hampshire. The goal of the plan is to define statewide priorities and prepare recommendations to advance health equity for NH's racial, ethnic, and linguistic minority communities.

The New Hampshire Health and Equity Partnership is an initiative of the [Foundation for Healthy Communities](#).

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