GREATER ROCHESTER HEALTH FOUNDATION 2021 ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS

From Crisis to Recovery
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Dear Partners,

We began 2021 emerging from the challenges and tragedy of 2020 with newfound hope. Lifesaving vaccines and treatments for COVID-19 became widely available along with a renewed sense of possibility and urgency to work toward an equitable recovery by dismantling racial and other inequities across our region. We were determined to do our part.

As the year progressed, a multitude of opportunities emerged for us to further lean into and operationalize our mission and values. We spent the year refining our efforts to be a trusted and effective resource, continued to build and strengthen relationships with our partners, and made efforts to expand our reach into communities by engaging new partners and trusted community leaders.

2021 was the first year we fully realized the breadth and depth of our new grant programs across the foundation. We are proud to share what we have learned and achieved with the community over the course of the year:

- In partnership with communities, we supported 77 projects across nine counties, committing more than $17 million to a variety of health-related efforts addressing mental health needs, maternal/paternal health, racial equity, public health interventions, and child/youth development.

- Aligning with our organizational values related to equitable and trust-based grantmaking, we have substantially increased the proportion of operating and unrestricted grants relative to traditional projects grants, providing grantees with additional flexibility to execute their mission or project objectives and advance our shared goals.

- We’ve centered racial equity across our work resulting in approximately 75% of our grants primarily serving or benefiting Black/African American and Latinx people.

We celebrate that with support from Greater Rochester Health Foundation, our grantee partners directly reached more than 55,000 individuals residing in our communities.
2021 By the Numbers

AWARDED:

66 Grants

AWARDED:

11 Contracts

TOTAL FUNDS AWARDED:

$17,376,677

NEW GRANTEE ORGANIZATIONS:

9

NUMBER DIRECTLY SERVED BY OUR GRANTEE PARTNERS:

55,000+ People*

PERCENTAGE OF MULTI-YEAR GRANTS:

75%

PERCENTAGE OF UNRESTRICTED OR GENERAL OPERATING GRANTS:

44%

* This is a conservative estimate that does not include indirect reach (e.g., impact on patients through training of health care providers, population impacts of grassroots and policy advocacy, etc.)

GEOGRAPHIC REACH

Map shows the reach of all grants and contracts awarded in 2021 (many projects serve multiple counties).
**Area of Health**

Percentage of Grant Dollars Awarded

- Mental: 28%
- Physical: 31%
- Social: 41%

Chart shows the proportion of total grant dollars awarded in 2021 focused in each broad area of health. “Social” encompasses social determinants of health as well as social well-being.

**Field/Issue Area**

- Recreation/Sports: 1
- Racial Equity/Social Justice: 13
- Medical Care: 1
- Maternal/Paternal and Perinatal Health: 4
- Mental/Behavioral Health: 15
- Public Health/Prevention: 7
- Human Services/Basic Needs: 11
- Food Access: 1
- Education: 8
- Community and Economic Development: 5
- Community Organizing/Civic Engagement: 4
- Child/Youth Development: 7

Chart shows the number of awards focused primarily on each field/issue area.

*Courtesy: Yoga 4 A Good Hood*
RACE/ETHNICITY OF POPULATION SERVED

Chart shows the primary (not exclusive) population served or intended to benefit, as a percentage of all awards.

35% Latinx/Latino
40% Black/African American
19% Not Specified
1% White
2% Native American/Indigenous
3% Asian/Asian American

OTHER POPULATIONS SERVED

- Parents, caregivers, and families: 19
- Persons with chronic diseases: 2
- Persons managing addiction/substance use: 5
- Persons who have experienced trauma: 14
- Persons involved with the carceral system: 3
- Persons who are New Americans or migrant workers: 6
- Persons living in poverty or with low income: 24
- Persons with physical disabilities: 1
- Persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities: 1
- Persons identifying as LGBTQIA+: 4

Chart shows the number of awards serving specific populations.
Our Mission

To pursue and invest in solutions that build a healthier region where all people can thrive.

Greater Rochester Health Foundation was created in 2006 when the not-for-profits MVP Health Plan and HMO Preferred Care merged, creating a foundation established to encourage the improvement of the quality of care and health status of the Greater Rochester community.

We view health as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being — powerfully shaped by social, economic, and environmental factors that are distributed unevenly and unjustly — creating pervasive health inequities by race, income, geography, disability, and other identities. Structural racism has resulted in a public health crisis combining and intersecting with other forms of discrimination, generational poverty, neighborhood disinvestment, rural access barriers, and other social inequities that prevent far too many residents of our region from reaching their full health potential.

Yet, we believe that potential is vast. The people, neighborhoods, and organizations closest to the issues have the expertise to create solutions that harness strengths and assets that are often underappreciated. Guided by the voice and participation of the community, we invest resources to help implement these solutions. We operate with a sense of urgency while engaging in the relationship building and co-creation needed for enduring change — recognizing that we will go farther together.

At the Greater Rochester Health Foundation, we understand that health equity is a matter of both justice and impact. As the largest driver of adverse health outcomes, eliminating inequities is essential to improving the overall health of our region and requires directing resources to communities most impacted. We are committed to doing our part in changing systems, policies, and practices to be more just and equitable, contributing to a healthier region where all people can thrive.

Our Values

EQUITY To achieve justice and fairness in health resources and outcomes we seek to disrupt the conditions that result in racial and other health inequities in our nine-county region.

STEWARDSHIP To support our work we must have responsible oversight and management of the Foundation’s resources.

PARTNERSHIP We are committed to listening to and collaborating with people across communities, across sectors, and across differences in recognition that we accomplish more together to assure relevant strategies and solutions.

INNOVATION We strive to catalyze innovative solutions to complex community health challenges.

INTEGRITY We act in an honest, accountable, ethical, and transparent manner and foster a culture of trust and respect in our interactions with people, organizations, and communities.

Our Priorities

Rooted in our mission and values, we seek to be responsive to critical issues and emerging solutions across our region, to develop partnerships that leverage collective resources and expertise, and to invest for deeper impact on racial and health equity issues prioritized by communities.

A Note on Language: We are learning and working to be antiracist and equitable in our actions and language, which continues to evolve. We strive to use language that is as inclusive as possible — believing that language is a form of “seeing” and valuing the richly diverse and intersecting communities we serve. We are committed to recognizing, inviting, and listening to different perspectives and preferences.
How We Invest in Our Community

Through our three general program areas — Responsive, Targeted, and Partnership — we look to balance openness to new ideas, community priorities, and emerging health issues with sustained investment in specific areas of focus as well as our contribution to collective impact and other collaborative community efforts.

Responsive

2021 Investment: $6,936,045

The goal of our Responsive work is to invite ideas from a broad array of organizations and communities to address their priority needs and respond to pressing health equity issues in our region.

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT: BLUEPRINT GENEVA

Healthy communities that thrive are built on many factors, one of which is access to healthy food. Geneva, New York has been identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as a designated Food Scarcity Zone. Like too many of our communities, the limited number of grocery stores and the subsequent closing of small chain markets during the pandemic left many community members without access to a full range of healthy food options.

Yet, when communities collaborate, abundance can be created. BluePrint Geneva, Inc. began its journey as a nonprofit in 2016 with the goal of capitalizing on the bountiful agricultural enterprise in the area to increase food access and affordability for under-resourced neighborhoods and community members within the City of Geneva.

In 2020, they began to partner with local farmers such as Schrader’s, a woman-owned butchery, to establish a meat co-operative that would improve the community’s access to high-quality, affordable meat and other products. Through this innovative co-op, BluePrint Geneva successfully launched the Healthy Food Direct project in March of 2021. Within nine months, the project had served more than 130 unique households and completed hundreds of deliveries. The collaborating partners continue to grow, as do the types of fresh and reduced-price foods they provide to the community.

The Greater Rochester Health Foundation’s grant was awarded to support core project components and startup needs. It is often the basics, such as EBT access technology and cold storage unit purchases that impede grassroots organizations from furthering their critical work. Supported by the Health Foundation’s investment and fueled by deep knowledge of the community, BluePrint staff and volunteers, farmers, and other partners are working to expand the food options and reach of the co-op to increase healthy and affordable food access in Geneva.
The latest U.S. Census data estimates the foreign-born population in Monroe County at around 67,000. That’s nearly one in 10 county residents, with around two-thirds being U.S. citizens and two-thirds having been in the country for more than 10 years. People born outside the U.S. make up a vital part of the fabric of our communities, heavily contributing to the number of essential workers and those whose jobs support critical food and supply chains throughout the entire Finger Lakes Region. Whether documented or not — this community is more likely to suffer adverse health outcomes linked with inequities.

New Americans often contend with the burden of xenophobia as well as racial and economic bias. These multiple layers of oppression can increase their social, emotional, and physical health vulnerabilities — making immigration status itself a social determinant of health. While much work is needed to dismantle the systems and social constructs that fuel this discrimination, the Immigrants’ Rights Program, created by Just Cause (formerly Volunteer Legal Services of Monroe, Inc.), seeks to interrupt the cycles that perpetuate these inequities while ensuring the safety, health, and civil rights of children and families who have immigrated to the U.S.

Access to legal supports, linkages to supportive services, and preventive medical care can reduce the impact of isolation, challenge illegal workforce practices, and facilitate integration with the larger community. The program addresses multiple social determinants of health around housing, domestic violence protections, and health care services for a population that can be greatly marginalized by language barriers, transportation barriers, and fear regarding status.

The Greater Rochester Health Foundation’s investment in this program supports key components such as: staffing, supplies, and court fees to ensure that attorneys, staff, and volunteers have what they need to provide these important services. Through the Immigrants’ Rights Program, more than 1,000 individuals, families, and children benefited from legal education, direct legal representation, or legal counseling in 2021. The Health Foundation is proud to support these critical efforts.
How We Invest in Our Community

Targeted

2021 Investment:

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Healthy and Equitable Futures</td>
<td>$6,215,704</td>
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<tr>
<td>Racial Health Equity</td>
<td>$2,543,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Health Status Improvement</td>
<td>$854,900</td>
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The goal of our Targeted work is to make focused, long-term investments addressing specific areas of racial and health inequities identified in collaboration with community. Current initiatives include Healthy and Equitable Futures; Racial Health Equity; and Neighborhood Health Status Improvement.

CORE ELEMENTS

- Center families and community members as experts and leaders in decision making
- Deepen relationships, coordination, and collective advocacy needed for systemic change
- Contribute to more equitable policies and practices within organizations, systems and fields

RACIAL HEALTH EQUITY

Our work in Racial Health Equity began in July of 2020 as we recognized the need for the Health Foundation to do more to address and respond to the public health crisis of structural racism that perpetuates social and health inequities affecting communities of color. It had also become clear that the twin pandemics of racism and COVID were heavily intertwined and had resulted in disproportionate impacts of COVID on Black and Latinx people in our region.

Three focus areas emerged from a co-created effort with input, ideas, and insights from Black and Latinx communities:

- **Capacity Building Support for BIPOC-Led Grassroots Organizations**: Equip these critical organizations and leaders with the funding and support to implement ideas and services rooted in knowledge and trust of community.

- **Leadership Development Pipeline**: Build pipelines and increase opportunities that prepare and support more Black and Latinx people to serve in leadership positions and provider roles in health fields, organizations and community.

- **Advocacy**: Support community members and organizations to identify priorities, build skills and share knowledge to effectively engage in advocacy to dismantle and reimagine racially inequitable systems.

The goal of our Racial Health Equity work is to strengthen and expand an ecosystem of culturally relevant health services, resources and supports that center the voice, assets and needs of Black and Latinx people and communities, contributing to racial equity in health outcomes.
How We Invest in Our Community

Targeted

Countering the intentional exclusion and disinvestment that has maintained inequities – we are making an intentional, multi-year investment in the talent, skills, capacity, ideas and relationships of Black and Latinx people and organizations, so that strategies and solutions are derived from and designed by community. This includes focused work responding to the crises of gun violence as well as mental health conditions made worse by the pandemic.

EARLY LEARNINGS INCLUDE:

- A deeper examination and exploration of what capacity building support looks like for BIPOC-led, grassroots organizations is necessary to strengthen, fortify, prepare, position, and set these organizations up for success.

- Trust and relationships are key in Black and Latinx communities through the identification of credible community messengers, partners, and providers.

- An understanding that there is no straight line to accomplishing Racial Health Equity work; It is complex and demands deep commitment and steady investment.

- Unrestricted funding provides grassroots grantees and other partners the ability to adapt and be responsive to community priorities.

- Intentional, deliberate, investment in the Black and Latinx communities coupled with advocacy is the bridge to systems change.

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT: LATINO MIGRANT MINISTRY (WAYNE AND LIVINGSTON COUNTIES)

The community of migrant workers in Wayne and Livingston Counties faces numerous threats to health and well-being, such as discrimination, language barriers, poverty, labor exploitation, housing and food insecurities, and anxieties over family separation or other stressors related to immigration status.

Additionally, many migrant workers are at an elevated risk for adverse COVID outcomes due to status as essential workers, higher density living conditions, barriers to accessing public health information, testing and healthcare, as well as social services or COVID relief resources. These adversities contribute to disproportionate experiences of trauma, mental health concerns, and public health needs. Despite the many challenges, this community finds remarkable resilience in their rich cultural heritage and social and religious ties.

The Latino Migrant Ministry operating through Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and in partnership with Nazareth College, seeks to support, sustain, and grow the quality of the essential services and supports provided for the members of these marginalized, often isolated communities of farm workers and their families.

The Latino Migrant Ministry provides a safe, trusted space and respite opportunities for farm workers and their families to engage in restorative cultural empowerment, educational opportunities, and well-being activities and retreats. Specific programs foster youth activities, community engagement, support for women, and English language classes, among others. With the Health Foundation's support, the Latino Migrant Ministry has been able to engage more members of this community and enhance the quantity and quality of healthy foods offered during activities. In 2021, the Ministry served more than 100 families, adults, children, and youth.
Targeted

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT:
PLAYER 1 ACADEMY/WE ARE 1

Out of a desire to teach kids real-world life skills and provide tools to propel them to success, a new, Rochester-based non-profit is using video games, mentoring, education, and sports to help ensure that each child in their program will become a productive citizen who will make an enduring impact on their community.

We Are 1 is a strategic, “action-only movement” specifically designed to empower Black men, women, and children. Having adopted a universal code of unity, the organization’s efforts are “void of manipulation, jealousy, envy, anger, disgust, harm, and fear of one another.” We Are 1 engages in a structured, comprehensive series of approaches that allow Black people — as a whole — to gain control of their community by simultaneously supporting all areas of community members’ lives and well-being, as opposed to providing siloed services.

We Are 1’s face-to-face community engagement method brings an individual’s or a family’s resource needs directly to their doorstep. This approach has proven to be an effective tool for building genuine relationships with the community and fostering trust. Participating youth are trained to connect with residents in their neighborhood and collect information to help identify needs. In turn, this information informs the coordination and linkage to critical services including housing, food assistance, home maintenance, health care and other basic needs.

We Are 1 leverages a range of partnerships in the community, including: Rochester Housing Charities; Macy’s Department Store; Skate Luvers Roller Palace; Toastmasters International; and a behavioral health specialist from Monroe County.

The Health Foundation’s investment in the work of We Are 1 has proven to be imperative and impactful in 2021 as they reached nearly 2,000 community members — serving hot meals and distributing food to hundreds more through their Grill and Chill Community Cookouts and Lunch Da Block activities. In addition, more than 120 youth took part in boot camp and mentoring programs and benefitted from in-school supports and services in several local schools.

NEW RACIAL HEALTH EQUITY PARTNERS IN 2021

Baden Street Settlement of Rochester • Barakah Center/Barakah Muslim Charity • Black Women’s Leadership Forum • BluSky Church of Life Ministries • Common Ground Health/Health Coalitions • Community Lutheran Ministry • Fatherhood Connection Flower City Noire Collective • Free the People ROC • Healers Village • Interdenominational Health Ministry Coalition James Cooper • Latino Migrant Ministry • Mentors Inspiring Boys and Girls (MIB&G) • MLW Consulting • Player 1 Academy Rochester A.B.O.V.E. • Rochester Black Nurses Association • Rochester Institute of Technology Rochester Museum and Science Center • Sweet Ida Mae Pantry • The Public Policy and Education Fund of New York The Reentry and Community Development Center • United Way of Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes Wayne County Youth Advocate Programs
How We Invest in Our Community

Targeted

NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH STATUS IMPROVEMENT

The neighborhoods we live in affect our health in countless ways. We are far more likely to live healthy lives if we can feel safe walking or playing outside, rely on neighbors, feel connected to our community, access green space for recreation and physical activity, find places to purchase affordable healthy food, obtain living wage jobs, and take part in high-quality educational opportunities.

Launched in 2008, the Neighborhood Health Status Improvement initiative is grounded in an approach called Asset-Based Community Development which emphasizes grassroots action to build on community strengths and opportunities. This initiative is grounded in an approach called Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD), which emphasizes grassroots action to build on community strengths and opportunities. NHSI grantees in both urban and rural areas have worked to improve physical, social, and economic environments and promote new opportunities for healthy living. They have built coalitions of neighborhood residents, completed asset-based assessments of their communities, and created numerous successful health promotion projects.

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT: PROJECT SOAR - STRENGTHENING OUR AREA RESIDENTS

According to the CDC, 15% of the U.S. population lives in rural areas as defined by the Census Bureau. Rural residents are a population group that experiences significant health disparities such as geographic isolation, lower socioeconomic status, higher rates of health risk behaviors, limited access to healthcare, and transportation barriers. These disparities are intensified as rural residents are less likely to have employer-provided health insurance coverage; and if they are poor, they are often not covered by Medicaid. As part of the Neighborhood Health Status Improvement initiative, there are two groups tackling these issues in some of our rural communities.

Project SOAR, Strengthening Our Area Residents, focuses on the Towns of Galen and Savannah, and the Village of Clyde in Wayne County. Administered by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Wayne County, SOAR is committed to resident-driven and capacity-building work, acting as a catalyst in the community connecting businesses, municipalities, schools, and residents. In 2021, they continued their amazing work by expanding community engagement, seeing residents new to SOAR at nearly every monthly check-in and across the many activities and events.

Their expansive partnerships with the Montezuma Audubon Center, Trail Works, the Savannah Chamber of Commerce, and local schools, businesses, and governments helped shape successful events in the community such as First Day Hikes, Canal Clean Sweep and Trail Clean Up Days, a Spring Extravaganza, a bike rodeo giving away 240 helmets, Montezuma Adventure Dog program, Cycle the Erie, and a community baby shower to name a few. Focusing on economic health, SOAR assisted more than five new businesses opening in the community in 2021, filling previously vacant storefronts. Creative Endeavors is one of these businesses, an arts and craft store housing more than 30 local vendors goods.

The Savannah Chamber of Commerce was on the path to going dormant. Through intentional recruitment and support from SOAR, there are now 46 members of the Chamber and growing. Pictured below is the Chamber’s annual meeting and picnic in 2021 – as you can tell, the event was a huge success!

Leveraging the work of Project SOAR, the community was awarded a USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) grant of nearly $100,000 to continue building upon their resident-led, asset-based community development.
GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT: STEPS - SENeca TOWNS ENGAGING PEOPLE FOR SOLUTIONS

STEPS, Seneca Towns Engaging People for Solutions, a project of Pivital Public Health partnership (previously known as S2AY Rural Health Network), is a resident-driven community health initiative focusing on the Towns of Covert, Ovid, Lodi, and Romulus in South Seneca County. They continue to encourage and support community members to work together to improve community health while empowering residents. Similar to SOAR, STEPS works with residents, local entities, and other community stakeholders to build sustainability across a variety of sectors and contexts.

2021 brought the community together through activities and events that weren't able to take place during the height of the pandemic. The community gardens flourished with help from the Girl Scouts, and a senior celebration was held recognizing the isolation the pandemic brought. The Ovid Farmer’s Market leveraged a grant to include music every Friday. Local farmers, like Good Life Farm, donated food to area food pantries. A playground in Ovid was installed and youth made repairs to book boxes. In addition, nine businesses committed to working with student interns and 50 saplings and shrubs arrived in the spring, being fostered by residents until ready for planting. The excitement and energy around togetherness was felt across the STEPS communities and stakeholders across sectors were ready and willing to participate and show up.

Resident Health Promotion Projects remained a popular area of resident engagement in 2021. These mini grants provide an opportunity for neighborhood-based small scale community improvement projects that often lead residents to get involved in the larger work of STEPS. Among the many successes of 2021, the Communiversity (resident-led classes showcasing their skills and teaching others) continues to be a highlight.

In 2021, STEPS partnered with Common Ground Health’s COVID-19 Rural Empathy Initiative which interviewed individuals about their experiences with COVID. Not only was this beneficial in growing the partnership between Common Ground Health and the Project STEPS team, the interviews also led to additional residents becoming involved in the work of STEPS.

The work of the Neighborhood Health Status Improvement initiative is grounded in the idea that place matters and emphasizes the need for community residents and other stakeholders to identify, mobilize, and leverage local assets toward improving community health. In the coming years both Project SOAR and Project STEPS will continue efforts to facilitate change across social, physical, and economic factors to improve the health and well-being in their communities and look towards long-term sustainability.

PARTNERS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH STATUS IMPROVEMENT IN 2021

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Wayne County (Project SOAR) • Pivital Public Health Partnership (previously known as S2AY Rural Health Network – Project STEPS) • Deborah Puntenney Consulting • Community Development Advisors
HEALTHY AND EQUITABLE FUTURES

Healthy and Equitable Futures launched in 2021 after a strategic revision of Healthy Futures in 2019 in which provider and community stakeholder feedback led to a focus on racial equity, approved by the board in 2020. Community feedback was central to grounding the work in the understanding that health and education inequities for Black and Latinx children ages zero to 8 in Monroe County are rooted in structural racism and that parents should be at the center of decision making whenever decisions are being made about and for children and families.

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT: LEARNING COLLABORATIVE (MULTIPLE PARTNERS)

Fundamental to this work is the value of sharing, ceding, and leveraging power. Recognizing the importance of shifting power to families, the Health Foundation partnered with the National Parent Leadership Training Institute to build upon and leverage previous work to create a stakeholder learning collaborative and serve as a backbone for parent leadership and facilitation. A monthly Learning Collaborative launched virtually in 2021 during the COVID pandemic, is supported by more than 100 strategy partners, half of which are parents, including parents on 12 child-serving organization teams. With the support of 15 Parent Leader Facilitators and Soulstainable Living as DEI (diversity, equity, inclusion) consultant, stakeholders work to build and advance capacity in family leadership; racial diversity, equity, and inclusion; and social-emotional supports and connection so that Black and Latinx children ages zero to 8 in Monroe County are safe, supported, and thriving.

The Learning Collaborative serves as a mechanism to support organization and systems change efforts, and to address power inequities and advance racial justice. Organizations are working to leverage their strengths and their learnings to make policy and practice changes. The early learnings from this work have elevated the importance of parent voice in systems change, developing relationships within organizational teams so parents can meaningfully contribute, and creating space in the Learning Collaborative to discuss equity in systems change.

The Health Foundation remains on an intentional and humble journey with Parent Leaders and stakeholders to build relationships and infuse parent voice and decision making across the Healthy and Equitable Futures work, in support of trust-building and accountability.

PARTNERS FOR HEALTHY & EQUITABLE FUTURES FOR 2021

Center for Youth  •  Healthy Baby Network  •  Parent Leadership Training Institute  •  YMCA Racial Equity Center
Ibero-American Action League  •  Roc the Future  •  Society for the Protection & Care of Children  •  Fatherhood Connection
Common Ground Health/Healthi Kids  •  The Children’s Institute/Whole Child Connection  •  Villa of Hope
University of Rochester, Behavioral Health and Wellness  •  National Parent Leadership Institute  •  Soulstainable Living
Dr. Christine Brown Richards  •  Aria Strategies  •  Funders for Family Leadership
2021 Investment:

Collaborative: $826,278

The goal of our Partnership work is to further support our values in recognition that we accomplish more together through collaboration between the Health Foundation and area partners. Efforts supported within this work involve Health Foundation staff in their development and planning and/or leverage other funding supports. Sponsorship of fundraising and other events through our Community Event Fund is another way we partner with organizations in this work.

CORE ELEMENTS

• Expand collaboration with new and existing partners
• Participate in the development of community efforts and initiatives
• Leverage collective funding and expertise to increase impact on critical issues impacting health
PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: EQUITABLE VACCINE DISTRIBUTION – FINGER LAKES VACCINATION PROGRAM

When the much-anticipated COVID vaccine arrived in the United States in early 2021, along with a renewed sense of optimism, the Governor promptly tasked the Finger Lakes Region with vaccinating 1.2 million people. In response, the Finger Lakes COVID-19 Vaccine Hub was formed to implement a comprehensive vaccination plan for the region.

The Finger Lakes COVID-19 Vaccine Hub collaborated with health departments, health care providers, community partners in Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Orleans, Ontario, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates Counties, with Common Ground Health, the region’s health research and planning organization, and with an advisory task force of 80 regional leaders. Hub partners collaborated to develop the Finger Lakes Vaccination Program, with a mission of ensuring the equitable, transparent, and efficient immunization of at least 70% of the adult residents of the Finger Lakes Region. Organized by the United Way of Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes, in a matter of weeks the program secured nearly $1M in philanthropic funds from partners at Paychex, ESL Charitable Foundation, the Konar Foundation, Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation and Greater Rochester Health Foundation.

This unprecedented collaboration of public and private organizations has enabled large gains in vaccination rates in our region. When the work began, 31.5% of the population had received at least one dose of the vaccination, while today, more than 70% of the population has received a complete vaccine series. Through efforts coordinated by the Finger Lakes Vaccination Program and supported by philanthropic funds, 362 clinics were operated between April and September 2021, resulting in vaccination of over 33,000 individuals. With a central charge of equity in vaccine distribution, the program contributed to large increases in vaccination rates within the zip codes and populations most impacted by COVID and with least access to the vaccine.

To achieve these outcomes there were many obstacles that needed to be surmounted including the barrage of misinformation about COVID vaccines, mistrust resulting from histories of racism in
medical institutions, as well as transportation, language and other access barriers disproportionately impacting lower-income urban as well as rural areas in our region. The Finger Lakes Vaccination Program developed and executed numerous strategies to address these barriers, including engaging in outreach and trust building in underserved communities, providing locally and culturally-tailored information and communications, and supporting vaccine administration within accessible, trusted community settings. Highlights of these activities include:

- Training diverse professionals and leaders to deliver key messaging and providing virtual and in-person vaccine forums focusing on target audiences
- Conducting empathy interviews and focus groups to build understanding and trust with urban and rural residents, Black and Latinx and unvaccinated individuals
- Hiring and deploying COVID Ambassadors who provide education and outreach and vaccination event recruitment in underserved areas
- Providing operational support to 2-1-1, enabling 24/7 telephone-based access to vaccine-related information and appointment scheduling
- Providing equipment, PPE (personal protective equipment) and other support for vaccine administration in over 50 neighborhood-based settings such as rec centers, churches, libraries in Rochester
- Creating a website (flvaccinehub.org) providing regional vaccination data, up-to-date information, and a vaccination site directory to help individuals locate appointments
- Developing education campaigns to address misinformation and vaccine hesitancy, delivered through print, TV, radio, website, and social media
- Translation of required clinic documents into Spanish, Somali, Farsi, Urdu, Nepali and Arabic, and to ASL for deaf-community clinical sites

Through these extensive and multi-faceted efforts, our region has made great strides toward equity in vaccination: While some disparities persist, there have been substantial gains in vaccination rates among Black residents, and the rate for Latino/Hispanic residents increased from just 3% in April 2021 to over 80% in 2022. All zip codes in the City of Rochester that engaged in targeted equitable distribution activities had a 200% increase in vaccination rates over the course of six months.

The Health Foundation is proud to have supported this monumental undertaking and extremely grateful to the many partners whose dedicated and tireless efforts contributed to the comprehensive and a more equitable vaccination distribution in our region.
Greater Rochester Health Foundation

Our People

STAFF

Anita Black
Program Officer

Monica Brown
Senior Program Officer

Danette Campbell-Bell
Senior Program Officer

Ari J. Elliot, PhD
Research & Evaluation Associate

Chiara Smith
Program Officer

Mimi Enadeghe
Finance & Communications Administrative Assistant

Kristine K. Feeney
Program Administrative Assistant

Matthew A. Kuhlenbeck, PhD
President & CEO

Justin Rand
VP & Chief Financial Officer

Hannah Stark
Associate Program Officer

Tiana Flynn Stephens
Communications Officer

Kristin Verbanic
Finance & Grants Manager
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Hezekiah Simmons
CFO & Vice President of Administrative Services, Monroe Community College

Christine Wagner, SSJ
Special Advisor, St. Joseph’s Neighborhood Center
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<th>ORGANIZATION NAME</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bivona Child Advocacy Center</td>
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<td>Christine Richards, EdD</td>
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<td>The Center for Youth Services, Inc.</td>
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*Denotes long standing Healthy Futures partner, prior to the move to Healthy Equitable Futures
## 2021 Investments

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<td>Cornell Cooperative Extension of Wayne County</td>
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<td>Yoga 4 A Good Hood, Inc.</td>
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