

Riverside County Health Coalition Meeting | October 16, 2024
Meeting Notes

Present:	Wendy Hetherington, Salomeh Wagaw, Alicia Junker, Daisy Ramirez-Bell, Luis Garcia and 100+ other attendees (in-person & virtual)
Next meeting:	October 16, 2024, from 10:00 am – 12:00pm
Location:	Crestmore Manor & Virtual

Scribe: Lupita Valencia, RUHS-PH, Research Analyst

Welcoming Remarks and Introduction

Alicia Junker, RUHS-Public Health, HEA II

Luis Garcia, RUHS-Public Health, HEA II

- Alicia gives recognition to all veterans in person and online
- Alicia and Luis welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to the coalition meeting.
- Alicia provided an overview of the meeting agenda and shared the housekeeping rules for the meeting.
- ASL, Spanish translations, and closed captioning were available for attendees.
- Luis gave a Land acknowledgement for the indigenous Native tribes.
- Alicia shared the mission and goals of the RCHC. She shared the reasons why we are here together as a coalition and displayed a recap video of July’s RCHC. RCHC website has been updated to include new videos and resources.
- Alicia gave a shoutout to individuals who are here for the first time. Logos of organizations and tribal affiliations was showcased to indicate our vast collaborations and representation.
- Luis gave action group updates, which includes housing and mental health/behavioral health. Alicia followed up with an action group meeting summary and encouraged attendance of upcoming meetings.

CHA and CHIP Presentation

Marina Carbajal, RUHS-Public Health, Program and Accreditation Coordinator II

Wendy Hetherington, EPE Branch Chief,

- Insights on the CHA and CHIP in relation to the upcoming work groups. She discussed how together they guide decision making, allocate resources effectively and track progress on community health.
- Marina went over the CHA process and highlighted the areas the received community feedback that then determined the priority areas of the CHIP. Introduced work group co-leads 1) Mental and Behavioral Health 2) Housing
- Marina introduced Wendy Hetherington, EPE Branch Chief, who presented a third work group and its objectives 3) Access to Equitable and Just Care and Resources. It is meant to maintain the dignity of all human beings.

- Alicia shared QR code for those interested in joining the work groups

Team Red White and Blue Presentation

Alicia Junker, RUHS-Public Health, HEA II

Jodie Merkle, California State Coordinator

- Alicia introduced Jodie Merkle, California State Coordinator, who is a part of the Red White and Blue Team. Team Red, White & Blue (RWB) is a national organization that exists to focus on providing resources to build healthier lifestyles for the veteran community
- She gave some of her personal background and connection to the veteran space. Personal testimonies from Team RWB members were presented. She also shared how the veteran community stays connected via the Team RWB app.

Networking Session

- Alicia allocated time for networking and a virtual activity was included for those online. She encouraged attendees to meet new faces and to remember their names for a chance to enter a gift card opportunity.

Veterans Statistics in Riverside County Presentation

Luis Garcia, RUHS-Public Health, HEA II

Janak Gaur, RUHS-Public Health, EPE CAL-EIS Fellow

- Luis introduced Janak Gaur, who presented on Veterans' health in the county.
- She went over veteran population size and prediction of future decline due to the aging veteran community.
- Janak discussed leading causes of death, which include coronary heart disease, COVID-19, Alzheimer's disease, etc. These also vary by age group. Riverside County Veteran mortality rates by sex was also shared.
- Jenn shared the challenges faced by the Veteran community, which include suicide, homelessness, and unemployment.

Life Before, During and After Service

Alicia Junker, RUHS-Public Health, HEA II

Jan SFC Farron Dozier, Retired US Army

- He began by sharing who he is without all the titles and his journey.
- Joined the military at age 19, motivated by his uncle who was in the air force

- Because of a sickle cell trait gene, he entered into medical retirement. As a result, he lost a sense of identity and explained his journey navigating that.
- He shared his experience with Coffee and Conversations with Black American Veterans
- Farron also touched on subjects related to health advocacy, belonging, mutual support, etc.

Q & A session

- Q: What specifically could we do in our organization to build more inclusive environments?

A: He advised to have representatives in one's organization. To have Veterans present that can speak to the heart of other Veterans and give them the opportunity to listen.

- Q: What's the biggest complication you're seeing right now? How do we incorporate a liaison for job opportunities?

A: Farron pointed out that the Veteran has to be able to tell the truth to themselves first. If organizations make space for that, it could be enough. Emphasized the importance of belonging. This is distinct for each veteran.

- Q: How do we create a welcoming space for Native American Veterans?

A: Farron said it's more than one's military status, but also one's own personal experience and upbringing. It's a difficult conversation because everyone has a different experience. Stressed the importance of hiring more veterans.

- Q: How can we give our veterans a good paying job? (Gave an example)

A: Shared his TV and broadcasting experience that helped him. Reiterated knowing the "what's next?" A layer of conversations has to be had so one can discover that next step. Farron discussed the difference between surviving and finding fulfillment in one's life.

Survey/Activity

Alicia Junker, RUHS-Public Health, HEA II

- QR code for the coalition survey was shared with attendees.
- Attendees were asked to email RivcoHealthEquity@ruhealth.org. In the subject line add, "October RCHC Meeting- Networking Session Activity" and include: 1) name of person you met 2) the organization they represent 3) one service/resource their organization offers and its **relevance to mental health, suicide prevention, veteran health, or housing within the Riverside County community**
- The first 6 people (virtual or in-person) will win a \$25 gift card.

Partner Updates - Healthy Cities Network

Miguel Vazquez, RUHS-Public Health, Urban/Regional Planner

Adriana Jovanov, Chair for the Healthy Cities Network Arts Culture and Building Healthy Communities

- Miguel gave an update for the health and arts work group. The goal is to integrate arts and health as a means to improve community development, healing, belonging and community improvement.
- There's been two meetings with the working group. In one of them, they were able to secure A volunteer to chair the working group.
update includes securing an individual to lead a new work
- Miguel introduced Adriana Jovanov, Chair of the arts and health working group.
- Adriana Jovanov explained how their goal is to create a platform bridging arts, culture and health support the community and well being. Importance of addressing health inequities.
- One of the long terms goals is to create an art and health link in Riverside County.
- A plan they'd like to implement is using National Public Health Week. She mentioned redesigning that as "Arts and Health Week" and looking at all the health inequities while bringing an arts and culture perspective to better engage the diverse community.
- Adriana ended by showcasing her enthusiasm for future collaborations

Health Equity Working Group Updates

Alicia Junker, RUHS-Public Health, HEA II

Dorothy Delphin, Program Corrdinator II

Greg Mercado, RUHS- Public Health Marketing, Media and Communications Coordinatoranak

- Alicia mentioned that there are days available for the RUHS Public Health and United Way Non-profit Academy and the data dive session. QR code was presented.
- Dorothy shared how the team is working on content for the third season of the EquiTEA podcast
- Podcast Highlight Clip - "Centering Lived Experiences: The Heart of Harm Reduction"

Wrap Up

Alicia Junker, RUHS-Public Health, HEA II

Luis Garcia, RUHS-Public Health, HEA II

- Winners of the gift cards were announced
- Alicia thanked everyone for attending and gave a reminder to complete the survey. Upcoming coalition was announced which will take place on January 25, 2025.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 am