

Riverside County Health Coalition Meeting | October 18, 2023

Meeting Notes

Present: Salomeh Wagaw, Mary Obideyi and 200+ other attendees (in-person & virtual)

Next meeting: January 17, 2024, from 10:00 am – 12:00pm

Scribes: James Jo, RUHS-PH; Genesis Ordonez, RUHS-PH

Welcoming Remarks and Introduction:

Mary Obideyi, RUHS-Public Health, Program Coordinator II

Daisy Ramirez Bell, RUHS-Public Health, Program Coordinator II

- Mary and Daisy welcomed everyone.
- Mary emphasized the importance of community involvement in our coalition and a need for providing residents with equitable resources for them to thrive.
- She reminded all members that the coalition is community driven.
- Mary thanked the Moreno Valley Recreation & Conference Center for providing the space.

Land Acknowledgement/Housekeeping/Agenda:

Mary Obideyi, RUHS-Public Health, Program Coordinator II

Daisy Ramirez Bell, RUHS-Public Health, Program Coordinator II

- Daisy gave a Land Acknowledgement, acknowledging the ancestral land on which the meeting was taking place. On Monday, October 9, 2023, it was Indigenous People Day and Riverside County celebrated and acknowledged the native lands in Riverside County. She stated how Riverside County practices reciprocity and would like to build relationships with the indigenous people. In addition, she acknowledged past injustices. A link was shared (<https://native/land.ca>) with more information on being aware of the land we are using and to teach us more about the history and resilience. Daisy welcomed all members, including the speakers.
- Daisy provided housekeeping rules in both English and Spanish for participants. A record-breaking attendance of 100 in-person and about 200+ were present online. Daisy reminded participants to sign-in or to add their information in the chat for a follow-up, which will include a recording that will be shared after the coalition meeting. Also, directions to the restrooms and a lactation room were given. Closed captions in English and Spanish, along with interpreters, were available.
- An overview of the agenda was given. Handouts consisted of the agenda and Resolution No. 2020-179 that were provided to participants. Each presentation would be followed-up with a Q & A. Partner updates would also be shared towards the end to those who attended.
- An introductory icebreaker poll was conducted. Mary recognized each sector represented at the coalition to ensure that we were inclusive, and she thanked everyone for participating. These sectors consisted of

students, academia, government, healthcare/public health, housing, law enforcement/first responder, social services, and others. Over 200 participants registered for the meeting.

- Mary asked the question, “Why are we here?” and encouraged attendants to think of the reasons that they were at the gathering. The reasons included ensuring that people have resources and tools to thrive and do well in the community.
- Mary gave a brief introduction on the history of racism in Riverside County. Mary shared more information on [Resolution No. 2020-179](#): A Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Riverside Declaring Racism and Inequity as a Public Health Crisis. In 2020, racism was declared as a public health crisis. Racism, systemic racism, and inequity were defined and shared with the group. The Board of Supervisors agreed to create an inclusive and well-informed governmental organization that is conscious of injustice and unfairness through robust trainings and continuing education. For more details, this document can be found on Link Tree, and was provided with the agenda for attendees in person. Mary stated that it was important for us to know the resolution so that community-driven places can bridge the gaps. Mary defined key terms and identified the “why” and the importance of how these terms impact health. We know that our system, policies, and norms play a vital role in systemic racism because other groups are being denied the same privileges. She encouraged us all to know more about the terms and their impact.
- Mary shared a video created by the CDC called “Racism and Health.” This video shed light on the growing body of research that showed that centuries of racism in the United States has had a profound and negative impact on communities of color and prevented some racial and ethnic minority groups from achieving optimal health.
- Mary introduced the speaker, Mr. Barry Knight, and his background. Barry is Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Officer for the County of Riverside.

Presentation from the County Executive Office:

Barry E. Knight, RUHS, Riverside County DEI Officer

- Barry began the presentation with defining terms on racism and equity.
- He highlighted brief accomplishments made on racial equity since the resolution was passed in 2020.
- John Powell’s Targeted Universalism was discussed and why it is important to address equity/racism from this perspective. In addressing equity, we need to picture what success looks like for all individuals. Different groups/population may have different levels of self-sufficiency and treating everyone equally may not bring the best results because everyone may have different responses. Data, broken down by subsets, is important in helping to define issues that are challenging for the population. We must look at the data, analyze the data, and have diverse groups of people who look at the data.
- He explained why diversity is not an outcome, but a strategy(ies), which leads to better decision making and better outcomes. As an illustration, he described the importance of having diverse perspectives from both men and women to develop a better product (in this case, he used Spanx as an example). He stated that it is important to define who we are serving rather than solely focusing on how many widgets we

produce for profit making. Knowing who the audience is and hiring a diverse workforce to get different perspectives is crucial.

- Equity was explained from an illustration of escalators and elevators within a building. Understanding the unique needs of a specific population (e.g., people with disabilities) is important in promoting success for all people. We need to find out where to build the “escalators” and “elevators” within our communities. When equity is addressed properly, it benefits everyone. To provide equity for everyone, we need to map out (create dashboards) where people are currently. The most important data to collect is the voices of people we serve. He challenged the coalition by asking how often we invite people that we serve to the table.
- Barry described the terms “Inclusion” and “Access” as breaking down the barriers which exist to advance equity. As an example, he asked if there are any barriers to getting different student populations into a specific vocation, e.g., engineering. One way to remove the barriers would be to provide resources (e.g., education, awareness, funding) to specific under-privileged student groups so they could enter the career path.
- He touched upon diversity, equity, inclusion, and access (DEIA specifically). He emphasized the importance of creating equity, access, and opportunity and that these three (3) words must be present in our discussions. He stated that DEIA is “the lens that helps us pay attention to what we are looking at”.
- In conclusion, Barry covered some highlights of past accomplishments: 1) the DEIA advisory committee was created; 2) an internal team on equity was built; 3) on-going data collection has been and continues to be collected; 4) his team is collaborating with Public Health to develop the Health Equity Strategic Plan; 5) currently, a DEIA questionnaire is being developed and a research specialist to analyze data is being hired; and 6) a data checklist is being gathered. He emphasized that data is not numbers, but it is people. Data needs to be living experiences, so we can better understand how to serve our communities.
- A key take away is: “Data are not numbers. They are people. They are voices and experiences.”
- Barry Knight’s email: bknight@rivco.org

Q and A:

- Miguel Vasquez mentioned staff reports, which go to the Board of Supervisors and stated how it would be good to include implications on equity.
- Kaniko Williams from the VA: Federal agencies are beginning to recognize the importance of equity within the veteran’s community. Some challenges are that we can’t quantify the issue because people are saying it is not an issue. Any recommendations?
- Barry: the challenge is getting the data, but it can serve as an opportunity to talk about collecting data. Consider starting with collecting lived stories of veterans as a starting point.
- Mayor Pro-Tem, City of Banning: Banning is the first city to adopt the resolution on systemic racism. How can I bring in more people to talk about the issues on racism?
- Barry: We feel defeated as there are so many things to do. Think about what we have done and go from there.
- Online question: Will you be able to provide the data you have by cities?

- Barry: The website is www.RIVCO.org. Go to the Executive Office and you see a tab that says diversity and equity.
- Carol Coyne: Are you incorporating youth in your voices/table?
- Barry: Yes, youth that can utilize better support in terms of improvement opportunities and getting to the next level. There's a lot of talk and a lot of action happening around communicating to our youth, such as Harmony Haven or the Welcome Center that is opened in Beaumont.
- Unidentified attendee: How can I be trained to also collect data when it comes to probation, parole, criminal justice system?
- Barry: Connect with HWS, Heidi Marshall. Baseline data is the first step.
- Barry also just released his first book called "The gift called leadership". Thegiftcalledleadership.com.

Break

Presentation from Prevention Institute:

Katie Miller, Prevention Institute, Associate Program Director

- Daisy welcomed the presenter, Katie Miller.
- Before the presentation, Katie shared her background and professional experience of more than nine years with Prevention Institute. The purpose of the presentation was to share the process, what will be in the preliminary draft, and the preliminary recommendations from the County of Riverside. She shared that her headquarters are with a national non-profit that has three locations. In addition, she gave an overview of their mission.
- Katie described the difference between two terms: strategic pathway vs. strategic plan. Strategic pathway refers to the process of already doing something today. Katie elaborated on the definitions of health equity and racial justice. She expanded on the definition of health equity by stating the definition is not only about how everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to obtain their full health potential. Katie elaborated on the health equity definition by stating that the term also refers to the shift in power of systems and removing obstacles to health. The first part of the health equity definition is about removing obstacles and policy changes. The second part of the health equity definition is a half action-oriented definition referring to closing the gaps, engaging in processes for justice in fairness, and redistribution of power and resources.
- Katie shared the Prevention Institute's five strategies with the attendees.
- An overview of the Plan Development process was also shared. It started in March of 2022 when Prevention Institute was working with Riverside County agencies. Agencies were already exploring public health crises; however, there was not a standardized process and improvements were needed. Katie shared more about what the Plan Development process was, stating that it is about engaging leadership and staff rather than creating a document. She said that not much effort was made since the declaration by jurisdictions. The next step is to engage county workgroups and community advisor groups vital in the dissemination of the plan. The document has been reviewed

and feedback has been obtained. In September, they updated the plan, and it will be presented by the end of 2023.

- The following is an outline of the Health Equity Strategic Plan (HESP) and the content:
 - The different sections include: The strategic imperative for health equity and racial justice, inclusive community engagement and partnership, organizational change, and priority setting for the SDOHs (Social Determinants of Health) which includes 5 sections: evaluation, accountability, and sustainability, next steps, and appendix/resources.
- Examples of specific strategies were shared, including cultural humility and ongoing evaluations.
- Katie gave an overview of the feedback they received. It was focused on narrative considerations, providing definitions for historically excluded populations and community groups, and the importance of community power building. Katie gave recommendations for building relationships with community groups. She also suggested that the County should consider which strategies should be highlighted, what needs to be done to create new goals, and to develop tactics.
- Katie concluded her presentation by stating that the overall goal of equity in action is for it to be a continuous improvement process and requires community engagement through conversation. Making space for those difficult conversations is an important part of the process.

Q and A:

- Miguel Vazquez: To what extent are you considering including targeted universalism as it was explained earlier by Barry E. Knight? To what extent are you addressing historical trauma with Native American communities?
- Katie: Some of those questions are more for Riverside County and the agency department leaders and how they see implementation. I would not say that we have had an extensive conversation throughout this planning process about targeted universalism. Our approach to health equity and racial justice is about identifying the most vulnerable groups and the policies and practices focusing on those that cause harm or that can prevent harm. It could look a little different depending on who you serve in that department. For some of the departments that are service-oriented vs broader public health departments, for example, it can look very different. It is up to each department to determine that, and it is important to have some level of consistency. That is why transparency and accountability are so important in the goals we develop.
- Miguel Vazquez: I think that at some point down the road when your plan is completed, it will be good to see other department strategic plans to determine consistency.
- Chinyelu Ugwuanyi: Have you had any political challenges and if so, how have you overcome them?
- Katie: As an intermediary organization, we personally don't encounter political challenges; however, mostly the folks we support do. That would be a question more for Barry E. Knight and Public Health. We are doing a similar project in Houston, Texas. Houston is an interesting jurisdiction. It is a blue city and a very red state. They have been holding a lot of conversations on critical race theory, what it means, what the barriers are, and various members' feelings about it.

Those are conversations we have helped to facilitate. This has not come up for this process, however, it may have come up to some extent for our colleagues in Riverside County.

Partner Updates:

Daisy Ramirez Bell, RUHS-Public Health, Program Coordinator

- Daisy encouraged all participants to fill out the collation survey; the link and QR code were provided.
- Orlando mentioned that the annual Day of the Dead will be on Saturday from 12:00 to 8:00 pm at Jurupa Ranch Park.
- Marina Lopez: 11/20- Day of Giving event at the University Health Center. Holiday Smiles Event- at MV Family care center on 12/13 and University Health Center 12/19.
- Jennifer from Gateway High School: Please share any flyers regarding community events for students.
- Aqua Motion Mobility Association is holding an Aqua Fit event on 11/9 for seniors.
- Shanah from the Riverside Community Health Foundation: We are looking for community members, leaders, members, and/or agency leaders who would like to help us in formatting and developing the process for the community needs assessment. The first one is on November 15th, at 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. The other one is on November 17th, from 9:00 a.m. to 11 a.m.
- VA Loma Linda will be holding a BIPOC awareness symposium for mental health in July 2024. It will be to focus on the minority veteran population.
- Anne Susan, Riverside San Bernardino Indian Health Clinics Inc.: Looking for vendors to reach out to Riverside and San Bernardino County residents on behavioral health issues.
- Online announcements – ACP Turkey giveaway on 11/18. RYPA – Youth suicide prevention survey is available online.
- Debra Williams, Building Resilient Communities: This Saturday, The Health and Safety Health fair will be held at the James O. Jesse Center in Palm Springs. The Ark of Safety Summit will be on 11/15 at Highland Catholic Diocese, to address barriers that are keeping people from resiliency.

Health Equity Program Updates:

Mary Obideyi, RUHS-PH, Program Coordinator

- Mary thanked everyone for their participation. She encouraged coalition members to follow us on social media and to publicize any organizations in the community.
- Gregory Mercado shared information about our EquiTEA podcast and its mission/goals. He shared a short snippet of a previous podcast on the rights of mothers to have lactation rooms, storage for supplies, and getting breaks. The next episode will be with executive director Luis from TODEC regarding the medical expansion to agricultural workers.
- Mary shared RCHC Link Tree access of our community resources and events. She encouraged all partners to share any events and resources with the coalition.

- Share your thoughts at RivcoHealthEquity.org.

Wrap Up:

Mary Obideyi, RUHS-PH, Program Coordinator

- Mary adjourned the meeting at 12:00 P.M. The next meeting is on January 17, 2024.