



NJ ACTS Announces the 2019 Partnership and Innovation Accelerator Pilot Grant Program Awardees

The New Jersey Alliance for Clinical and Translational Science (NJ ACTS) Community Engagement Core is excited to announce the selection of 2 Partnership and Innovation Accelerator Pilot Grant Program (PIAP) grant awardees for 2019. PIAP grants are one-year competitive awards to facilitate collaborations between academic researchers from Rutgers University, Princeton University, and/or New Jersey Institute of Technology with community organizations so they can work together on health research that benefits our communities. The awarded projects appear below:



Usha Ramachandran, MD



Helmut Zarbl, PhD

Diabetes Prevention Program in South Asians

Principle Investigator: Usha Ramachandran, MD - Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

Community Partner: Sai Datta Peetham Temple, Plainfield, NJ

The Diabetes Prevention Program in South seeks to establish a partnership between the South Asian Total Health Initiative (SATHI) at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (RWJMS) and the Sai Datta Peetham (Sai temple) in South Plainfield, NJ to address the high risk of diabetes and its complications in the SA community. The goal of this project is to adapt the CDC Diabetes Prevention Program's lifestyle change curriculum to make it culturally relevant and acceptable to the SAs, and to study the feasibility of implementing the program in the setting of a SA place of worship.



The DPP and its lifestyle change curriculum are evidence-based, and participants have been shown to reduce their risk of developing type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM). Community involvement and input will be incorporated in modifying the curriculum for SAs and in planning for implementation.



Healthy Air and Healthy Eating: Encouraging a Culture of Health in Elizabeth, NJ

Principle Investigator: Helmut Zarbl, PhD - Rutgers Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute

Community Partner: Groundwork Elizabeth

Asthma is a major public health problem with greater incidence and severity in low-income, racially, and ethnically diverse communities such as Elizabeth, New Jersey. Members of the Elizabeth community, including Groundwork Elizabeth (GE), have previously partnered with scientists at the Rutgers Center for Environmental Exposure and Disease (RU CEED) to address community concerns regarding the prevalence of asthma and air pollution from diesel trucks in Elizabeth's neighborhoods. The proposed project will strengthen our partnership by piloting an innovative integration of GE's highly successful community gardening program with a program to assess and communicate about local air quality and its potential effects on asthma.



The NJACTS initiative is the first NIH-funded program of its kind in New Jersey. It is part of a nationally supported network of more than 50 programs at medical research institutions that collaborate to speed the translation of research discoveries into improved patient care.

For questions about the Partnership and Innovation Accelerator Pilot Grant Program, you may contact: njactscommunity@rwjms.rutgers.edu or visit us on the web at njacts.rbhs.rutgers.edu/community.