

KANSAS COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER COALITION



SPOTLIGHT AMERICORPS VISTA

This month we want to highlight a program that you may have heard of or worked with as CHWs: the [AmeriCorps VISTA](#) (Volunteers in Service to America) program. Since 1965, VISTA volunteers have served in nonprofits and alongside their communities to fight poverty. Rather than working directly with clients or the population their organization serves, they build capacity and sustainability of nonprofits, government agencies, and other organizations helping those in poverty.

There are a number of ways that your organization or others in your community participate in the VISTAs program and benefit from their work to support your CHW programs. Does your organization need support sustaining its CHW program? Want to build a volunteer-based CHW program, but need the people power to make it happen? A VISTA can help! VISTAs build new programs or sustain existing ones through volunteer recruitment, fundraising, project development and coordination, research, marketing/social media, and much more!

Our partners at the Community Engagement Institute manage the [Wichita State VISTA Fellows](#) project, which helps recruit VISTAs to nonprofits and organizations across Kansas.

Organizations whose scope of work includes anti-poverty can apply to [partner with WSU and VISTA](#) to become a VISTA site and receive the benefits of support, VISTA training, and more from WSU. There is a site support fee to participate in the program. It is \$6,000 the first year, in addition the cost of office supplies like a computer and desk phone, mileage and time to supervise and mentor a VISTA. VISTAs serve full-time for a year and earn a modest living allowance of \$13,400 plus a \$6,000 education award or cash stipend of \$1,800 – which is all covered by the grant.

If you have questions or are interested in the VISTA program, contact Angela Gaughan, VISTA Project Specialist, to learn more: angela.gaughan@wichita.edu or 316-570-1309. Another resource to learn more about becoming an AmeriCorps VISTA member or becoming a VISTA site is [VISTA Campus](#).



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Angela Gaughan, *Community Engagement Institute (CEI)*

Olivia Borland, *CEI*

Sam Bradfield, *CEI*

We are collecting Community Health Worker success stories and want to know yours! Please [click here](#) and take a moment to share so that we can raise awareness of CHWs in Kansas.

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kschw.org
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NIH Funds CHW Training Development

COVID-19 has demonstrated the critical role community health workers play in bridging the gap between medical care and marginalized communities. In respect to the work carried out by community health workers, National Institute of Health (NIH) has funded research to develop best practices for future community health worker trainings.

The grant project has several goals. Primarily, the grant intends to provide training and education to individuals seeking to work as a CHW. These trainings will aim to be culturally relevant for the community the CHWs will serve. Additionally, the trainings are intended to increase accessibility to becoming a CHW. The NIH hopes to empower CHWs to become "champions" and serve as mentors to incoming CHWs. To learn more about the NIH grant and the role of community health workers, read the article [here](#).

CHWs Provide Important Support to Pregnant People with COVID-19

Latina mothers have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19, making up almost half of all coronavirus cases in pregnant women. While risks of COVID-19 and pregnancy are still being researched, an early CDC report found that pregnant women may be more likely to need intensive care than nonpregnant women.

CHWs who serve as doulas always play an important role in the women and families they serve through education, support, and trust. During COVID-19, this relationship and role have taken on a new level of importance. The story of Tersita Carrasquillo's work serving Indigenous Latina women as a CHW doula in New Jersey is one example. She often works with Indigenous Latina women who speak Mam, K'iche', and Q'anjob'al - Guatemalan Mayan languages. Despite Carraquillo's primary language being Spanish, she works to overcome the language barrier. COVID-19 adds another layer of difficulty - including not being allowed to exit and reenter the delivery room, which means she spent 18 hours with her client during labor. To learn more about other CHWs who serve as doulas, breastfeeding counselors, and support systems for pregnant women during COVID-19, read the article [here](#).

CHWs and Social Determinants of Health

Community health workers are fundamental in addressing social determinants of health - especially in the midst of COVID-19. The pandemic has highlighted the disparities in sources of care for people from different ethnic and socioeconomic statuses. CHWs provide a critical connection between vulnerable populations and systems of care to best mitigate social barriers. For example, CHWs in New York City have been addressing food availability and housing issues during the pandemic. More information about the ways CHWs address social determinants of health can be found [here](#).

COMMITTEE UPDATES

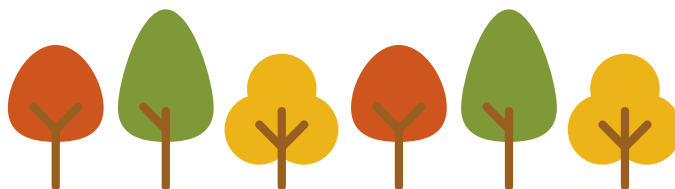
The **Advocacy Committee** meeting this month was postponed until next month. The next regularly scheduled meeting is
Tuesday, October 13 at 11:00 AM

The **Education Committee** postponed their meeting until October. The next meeting is on
Tuesday, October 20 at 3:00 PM

The **Executive Committee** discussed a proposal for a CHW mentorship program for student who want to be CHWs, current CHWs, and those who would want to be mentors. The group also provided updates on the train-the-trainer program and an initiative to create a COVID-19 digital literacy workshop/module. They will meet again on
Wednesday, October 7 at 1:00 PM

The **Sustainability Committee** discussed key indicators to display the value of CHWs. Their next meeting is
Tuesday, November 24 at 2:00 PM

The **Symposium Committee's** next virtual workshop is October 6 at 11 AM on early detection warnings. They did some planning around potential topics, speakers, and dates of the 2021 Symposium. Their next meeting is
Monday, October 19 at 11:00 AM



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You are receiving this email because you expressed interest in the Kansas
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