

The Center for Health Organizing: *Building a Movement for Health*

Areas of Focus

- Expanding Coverage and Care - *Ensuring everyone in America has access to quality, affordable health coverage*
- Transforming Delivery Systems - *Ensuring everyone in America has fair and equitable access to our health care system*
- Building Healthy Communities - *Ensuring everyone in America has the opportunity to live a full, productive, prosperous life*

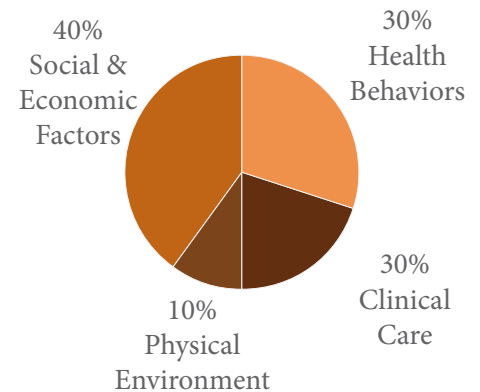
Our Work

- **Develop and deliver trainings** for community organizers, leaders, and health professionals
- **Strategize** with and support state and local federations to increase their impact
- **Convene learning communities** to share and refine cutting-edge methodology
- Develop and **test model policy** initiatives that transcend issue and identity silos
- **Create tools** that provide a joint racial equity and health analysis
- **Provide strategic communications** infrastructure and analysis to local organizations

Americans experience unhealthier lives and die sooner than our global peers – despite the fact that the United States far outspends them on health care. In order to reverse this systemic health crisis, we must expand the scope of the conversation around health to include the myriad socio-economic and environmental factors affecting an individual's and a community's health every day. Building a healthy American requires that every person have access to a quality education, living wage jobs, reliable transportation, nutritious food, affordable housing, safe streets, green spaces, democratic governance, and many other everyday requirements. We are committed to addressing the myriad factors that contribute to healthy communities.

The PICO Center for Health Organizing was created to develop a long-term, strategic vision that connects access to health care and building healthy communities into one movement intent on building a culture, economy and democracy that serves peoples fundamental requirements for health.

Factors Influencing Our Health



A project of the PICO National Network, the Center works with community organizers across the country to build a constituency and a demand for health. Our decades of experience in community organizing tell us that communities, even the most excluded, can come together and act powerfully to make the changes they need to create healthy lives. Developing the resilience of low-income neighborhoods and communities of color equips people to advocate for the resources they need to build healthy places to live, work, play, and participate.



“It’s powerlessness that’s making us sick.”

DR. TONY ITON; THE CALIFORNIA ENDOWMENT



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Expanding Coverage & Care

PICO federations engaged nearly 94,000 uninsured or likely uninsured people in their communities through more than 200 events since October 2013. From Baptists in Florida to Catholics in California, faith leaders across the country are uniting with PICO National Network to bring the full promise of healthcare home to communities. We have mobilized our networks to make sure people without insurance get the information and support they need to enroll in the new insurance marketplaces. We are also working to expand Medicaid in states that have rejected federal funds. More than 5.4 million lower-income Americans were excluded from the potential

benefits of the Affordable Care Act. Now, PICO federations and allied organizations are gearing up campaigns to expand Medicaid in their states.



Inclusion & Racial Equity

Health disparities are the worst and most persistent in communities of color. The solution will require policies that target communities of color, and also work to strengthen peoples' ability to advocate for their own needs. We have multiple goals to create an inclusive movement for health. First, we are working to provoke a deeper, more sustained public conversation about race, a conversation that leads to a renewed commitment to eliminate racial disparities that persist throughout our society. We are convinced that progress on our specific policy goals and the larger task of building a new multi-racial coalition for social justice requires that we move toward, not away from, a frank reckoning with racial privilege. Second, we work with organizers and community leaders across the country to develop their own leadership and draw in others from their community. There is not one policy solution that will reduce racial disparities in health, but instead a focus on strengthening community power and launching a deep public conversation will open up new possibilities for healing.

Breaking Down Silos & Getting to Scale

Health is deeply dependent on a set of prerequisites as diverse as housing, criminal justice and education. Yet, for all the research proving this, attempts to influence population health have been isolated and disconnected from related work happening throughout professional sectors and in communities. We know it is simply impossible to make positive health impact without working broadly across a range of fields. The Center ensures that the network's many issue and policy campaigns connect with each other collaboratively. For example, in the Fall of 2013, we convened over 100 public health professionals and community organizers from Midwestern states to look at building power together in local and state campaigns. Each state cohort left committed to developing a strategy for a state campaign in 2014 that would align the field of public health with community organizing.

Movement Story from the Field: *Building a Healthy Economy*

We know we must work across sectors and draw connections between issues, in order to build a powerful movement for health. Yet, despite the prolific literature connecting income and health, there are few examples of health departments, experts, and academics wading working in public partnership with grassroots organizations to champion policies. In Minnesota, ISIAAH, a faith-based organization representing more than 100 congregations, partnered with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to create a public conversation around the role of wages in building a healthy Minnesota. Their joint effort produced a report finding that low-wage

workers in MN die eight years earlier than their middle income peers. Their coordinated release of the findings strategically developed a conversation with policy makers, advocates, media personalities and community members that elevated raising the minimum wage in MN to not only being an urgent economic justice issue, but a critical public health concern. The campaign to raise the minimum wage in MN was a national success raising the wage from one of the lowest in the country to one of the highest! ISIAAH, MDH and allies have proven what it can look like to invest in ongoing prosperity and health of their state.

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Strengthening Our Democracy

An individual's ability to participate in democracy – from voting to meeting with an elected official to influencing policy – has a direct impact on their personal and their community's health. A truly health and strong democracy is only possibly when everyday people are actively engaged in making decisions about their lives and the future of our nation. We organize on a large scale to strengthen people's connection to their elected representatives and empower communities to shape decision-making. In the 2013 mid-term election cycle PICO's civic engagement program contacted more than half a million voters; trained more than 7,000 people to engage their friends, neighbors and congregations in voting; and, developed more than 9,717 grassroots leaders who



organized events and prayer vigils attended by 52,542 people. Our effort was one of the largest volunteer-led voter engagement programs in the country and our state-level affiliates mobilized tens of thousands of people across the country

to meaningfully participate in our democracy.

Movement Story from the Field:

Building a Healthy Democracy

Building a movement for health requires activating an ever-expanding base of people to take collective action in our democracy. San Diego Organizing Project (SDOP) clergy, leaders and organizers did just that when they turned the Affordable Care Act (ACA) into an organizing opportunity that strengthened their 2012 civic engagement campaign. Beginning in March 2012, San Diego County received ACA money to begin early enrollment for Medicaid expansion and SDOP quickly developed a plan with their member congregations to identify community members now eligible for affordable coverage. Their goal was two-part: first, bring the hard-won benefits of the ACA to their congregations; and, second, identify and register voters for an upcoming ballot initiative that would raise revenue in California to fully fund health and other safety net programs. Through this effort, SDOP developed and turned out more than 2,000 self-identified health voters, making a significant local contribution to the statewide victory for a California and showing what it means to build a healthy democracy.

Transforming Delivery Systems

Large portions of our public dollars are currently moving through private health care systems that not only inadequately serve those most in need, but also create private profit in lieu of further public investment. Our innovative Health Hot Spots campaign works in communities with the highest rates of chronic disease and hospital utilization, and engages stakeholders to reorganize systems of care so that patients are better served, health outcomes are improved and money is saved. Our organizing develops mechanisms to reinvest those savings in building ever-healthier communities. This campaign, developed and run in deep partnership with MacArthur Genius Award recipient Dr. Jeffrey Brenner, is being implemented in San Diego, CA; Aurora, CO; Kansas City, MO; Camden, NJ; and Allentown, PA.

Building Healthy Communities

We are investing resources in the upstream factors that support a culture of health, including access to affordable food, expanding the social safety net, early childhood investment, improving wages and work, and advocating for treatment over prisons. For example, in 2013 we launched childhood obesity campaigns in six states to address the affordability and access of healthy food. We also undertook a partnership with the Centers for Disease Control, the National Association of City and County Health Officials, and the Association of Maternal and Child Health to release the documentary *Raising of America*, which focuses on the importance of investing in early childhood.

“We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny.”

REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Examples of the Center's Work:



CALIFORNIA

- HOT SPOTS PILOT PROJECT
- BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
- ACA ENROLLMENT



MINNESOTA

- CHILDHOOD OBESITY CAMPAIGNS
- BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
- CHILDREN'S HEALTH
- HEALTHY HEARTLANDS



MICHIGAN

- ALIGNING PUBLIC HEALTH WITH COMMUNITY ORGANIZING BUILDING



OHIO

- CHILDHOOD OBESITY CAMPAIGNS
- BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
- CHILDREN'S HEALTH
- HEALTHY HEARTLANDS



NEW JERSEY

- HOT SPOTS PILOT PROJECT
- ACA ENROLLMENT
- MASS INCARCERATION CAMPAIGN



LOUISIANA

- CHILDHOOD OBESITY CAMPAIGNS
- BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
- CHILDREN'S HEALTH



PENNSYLVANIA

- HOT SPOTS PILOT PROJECT
- ACA ENROLLMENT



FLORIDA

- CHILDHOOD OBESITY CAMPAIGNS
- MEDICAID EXPANSION
- ACA ENROLLMENT



MISSOURI

- HOT SPOTS PILOT PROJECT
- MEDICAID EXPANSION
- CHILDHOOD OBESITY
- HEALTHY HEARTLANDS



COLORADO

- HOT SPOTS PILOT PROJECT
- ACA ENROLLMENT

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Sue Budd, *Office Manager*

Sue brings a decade of corporate experience in operational efficiency to our national office. She also works as an advocate for marginalized children struggling to succeed in school and has shaped state level initiatives for racial equity in education.

sbudd@piconetwork.org | 952.250.1927

Elianne Farhat, *Coverage & Care*

Elianne has led many successful campaigns over her six years of community, labor, and electoral organizing. Raised in a racially and geographically diverse family, she is deeply committed to building powerful alliances for justice.

efarhat@piconetwork.org | 612.250.8087

Hannah Gravett, *Transforming Delivery*

Hannah has worked as a professional community organizer for six years leading many successful local initiatives. Prior to becoming an organizer, she worked as a social worker both in the public sector and for a non-profit organization.

hgravette@piconetwork.org | 619.840.4769

Kate Hess Pace, *Building Healthy Communities*

Kate has led campaigns focused on transit, housing, and financial justice on the local and state level. She comes to the work with a background in public policy as well as programs working with at-risk youth.

khesspace@piconetwork.org | 612.655.0203

Paul Marincel, *Director*

Paul's community organizing career spans 35 years of local, state and national infrastructure building. During that time he led the team of organizers and clergy who launched ISAIAH and worked with organizers and public health officials to establish the Healthy Heartlands Initiative.

pmarincel@piconetwork.org | 612.802.1542

Contact the PICO Center for Health Organizing:

Phone: 651.789.8806

Email: pcho@piconetwork.org