

2025 IMPACT REPORT

UC San Diego
CENTER FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We extend our deepest gratitude to the community-based partners, researchers, educators, and students without whom this work would not be possible, and who have co-led and guided many of our efforts.

We are grateful for ACTRI's ongoing institutional support and shared commitment to advancing community-engaged research, implementation, and education. Through ACTRI's collaborative environment and infrastructure, CCH is able to strengthen partnerships that translate community priorities into research, practice, policy, and improved health outcomes.



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This work is only possible because of the deep trust and shared leadership we hold with community partners across San Diego and throughout California. Our role at the Center for Community Health is to build infrastructure to support community priorities, move resources where they are most needed, and advance solutions co-designed and sustained together. We are grateful to the many community-based organizations, residents, students, farmers, researchers, and public agencies who continue to shape and lead this work with us.

- Blanca Meléndrez, Executive Director, Center for Community Health



INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1995 at University of California San Diego (UC San Diego) and currently housed within the Altman Clinical and Translational Research Institute (ACTRI), Center for Community Health (CCH) has over three decades of experience partnering with diverse communities to tackle complex health disparities at multiple levels.

Guided by 10 Community-Led Transformation Principles co-designed with those most impacted by health inequities to advance healthy communities where everyone has an equitable opportunity to thrive.



CCH MISSION

Advance health equity through community partnerships by transforming public health practice, research, and education.

CCH VISION

Healthy communities where everyone has equitable opportunities to thrive.

COMMUNITY-LED TRANSFORMATION PRINCIPLES

Community-led 	Co-designed 	Partnership-based and trust-driven 	Cultural humility 	Healing-centered
Strengths-based 	Adaptive and responsive 	Collaboratively funded 	Sustainable 	Community ownership

Central to CCH's work is a focus on centering community through ongoing co-development and implementation with community members, community-based organizations (CBOs), and multi-sector partners, researchers, and other stakeholders locally and across the state. This includes a commitment to storytelling that honors co-leadership and community voice. Key strategies focus on transforming public health practice, research, partnerships, education, systems change, and dissemination to achieve improvements in core focus areas of food access and equity; refugee and immigrant health; and child and family health.



CCH KEY STRATEGIES



Practice

Co-design, implement, and evaluate community health programs, curricula, and assessments.



Research

Facilitate community-centered research.



Partnerships

Developing and support community engagement and collaboration.



Education

Providing capacity building, training, and resources to support community priorities.



Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) Change

Supporting lasting community change locally, regionally, and nationally.



Dissemination

Share key findings and best practices for replication and sustainability.

CCH FOCUS AREAS



Food Access and Equity

Improve equitable access to good food.



Refugee and Immigrant Health

Provide culturally relevant health and social services.



Child and Family Health

Reduce and prevent childhood obesity and chronic diseases.

CCH IMPACT OVERVIEW

CCH's community-led transformation approach ensures programs and research happen with and not on communities. We aim to collaboratively drive the translation of community-rooted science into best practices, policy, and education.

To date, CCH has achieved substantial impact and improvements in community, clinical, economic, and policy benefits, aligned with the Translational Sciences Benefits Model (TSBM) framework for measuring and demonstrating impact.

This report highlights CCH's key achievements and impacts in 2025. It includes annual outputs and a snapshot of projects illustrating equity-centered outcomes at individual, household, organizational, and systems-levels. Outcomes across projects demonstrate high alignment of community-led, culturally affirming programs with community priorities along with improved resource access, community health and well-being, and economic stability for the communities we serve.

CCH Alignment with TSBM

✓ **Community Benefits**

CCH programs aim to increase access to health services and resources for underserved populations; improve community health/well-being and social determinants of health; and reduce health disparities and inequities.

✓ **Clinical Benefits**

CCH programming and research strives to increase generalizable knowledge on evidence-based, innovative, client-centered health strategies, expanding access to culturally responsive healthcare and other services for underserved populations including immigrants and refugees.

✓ **Economic Benefits**

CCH produces economic benefits through its regranting and community health investment strategies.

✓ **Policy Benefits**

CCH efforts contribute to dissemination and advancement of successful models, programs, and best practices, including scalable policy models that influence local, state, and national public health systems.



CCH Investment in Communities and Community Partners

Projects active in 2025 were funded at more than **\$69M** across **26** programs and research studies to support communities locally and throughout the state, including **\$11 million** re-granted to more than **90** community-based organizations.

Key activities for 2025 included formalizing the co-designed Community-Led Transformation Principles (CLT) which ground CCH's work, including development of a CLT toolkit with co-designed guidelines for community and academic researchers to engage in community-driven research.

New Funding in 2025



Food Access and Equity

Food is Medicine:

- \$4M U.S. Department of Agriculture grant to expand the ¡Más Fresco! More Fresh model, establishing the Southern California Nutrition Incentive Program
- \$36M to expand CalFresh Fruit and Vegetable EBT Pilot Program
- \$250,000 San Diego Foundation Unity Fund award to expand the ¡Más Fresco! More Fresh Plus

Urban Food Equity

- \$94,273 from California Department of Food and Agriculture' Office of Farm to Fork – Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
- \$20,000 from San Diego Foundation to support Growing Equity Fund for urban farmers



Refugee and Immigrant Health

- \$19.7M to implement the Refugee School Impact and Youth Mentoring program, supporting 5 regional coalitions across California, with 60+ direct service organizations receiving re-granted dollars
- \$340,000 secured from the California Endowment to provide backbone support and technical assistance for Ethnic-Led Community Based Organizations
- \$60,000 secured from local donors to support RIH operations



Child and Family Health

- \$150,000 secured from Kaiser Permanente to support the Community Connections Program



CCH IMPACT BY STRATEGY

2025 HIGHLIGHTS



Practice

CCH works collaboratively with partners and community to co-design and implement programs, curricula, and assessments that are culturally responsive, decrease disparities and increase community health, well-being and economic stability in alignment with evolving community priorities.

- 16 active non-research programs/projects reached over 6,500 individuals
- 2 community assessments conducted engaged over 80 community members
- 2 new technologies implemented



Research

CCH partners with researchers and community members to increase diverse and inclusive participatory community-centered research to address health disparities.

- 10 active research studies engaged nearly 80,000 participants
- 25 researchers partnered with
- Consultations with researchers on more than 25 projects, providing technical assistance, community connections and grant development
- 6 community organizations, 4 of whom are existing partners, funded to implement their own community-driven research projects



Partnerships

CCH supports collaborative multi-sector community coalitions and/or workgroups to increase community partnerships and collective impact outcomes.

- 1,300 community and multi-sector partners engaged
- 30 coalitions/workgroups received backbone support from CCH
- 350 meetings or events facilitated with over 3,000 community members and multi-sector partners



Education

CCH facilitates capacity building training and/or creates resources for researchers and community members to increase knowledge and skills related to emerging and culturally relevant best practices to advance health and well-being.

- 25 curricula, resources, and toolkits developed
- 120 technical assistance, training or consultation sessions facilitated reaching close to 1,000 attendees
- 70 student interns mentored
- 70 youth engaged in Youth Advisory Council



Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change

CCH supports policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) changes in partnership with community members and stakeholders to increase awareness of local needs statewide and nationally.

- 25 PSE efforts supported
- Over 10,000 community members engaged in PSE efforts statewide
- 15 residents engaged as part of Community Council co-leading PSE efforts with the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative (COI)
- Provided backbone support for San Diego Refugee Communities Coalition (SDRCC) Policy Council



Dissemination

CCH produces varied dissemination products such as reports and publications, sharing successful approaches and best practices to drive the sustainability and replication of successful projects, innovations, and outcomes.

56 dissemination products including:

- 6 academic journal articles
- 7 professional reports
- 8 conference posters or presentations
- 2 media features

FOOD ACCESS AND EQUITY

Food is Medicine

The Food is Medicine (FIM) team within the Food Access and Equity unit is dedicated to improving health outcomes by developing evidence-based nutrition incentive, produce prescription and medically-tailored meal programs, and research initiatives that improve healthy food access and food security. Through cross-sector partnerships with food system, health system, and community-based organizations, we advance health equity and generate economic impact. We envision a future where food is recognized as a fundamental component of healthcare, ensuring everyone has access to nutritious foods for their health and well-being.

FIM Key Accomplishments: 2025

- ✓ Awarded a 4-year \$4M USDA grant to expand the ¡Más Fresco! More Fresh model, establishing the Southern California Nutrition Incentive Program
- ✓ Supported 16,000 Más Fresco More Fresh participants in earning \$700,000+ in incentives at Northgate Gonzalez Markets
- ✓ Secured \$36M to expand the CalFresh Fruit and Vegetable EBT Pilot Program
- ✓ Enrolled 400 participants in the fifth Más Fresco Plus Produce Prescription cohort
- ✓ Delivered 3,000+ produce boxes to 400+ patients through the Community-Centered Approach to Produce Delivery Program
- ✓ Secured \$250,000 Unity Fund award from San Diego Foundation to expand Más Fresco Plus
- ✓ Supported 200+ patients at Rady Children's Hospital (with UC San Diego Department of Pediatrics) in redeeming \$70,000+ in incentives
- ✓ Provided regional and national Food is Medicine leadership, presenting at 7th Annual Food is Medicine Summit



CalFresh Fruit and Vegetable EBT Pilot Project

Since 2022, CCH has received funding from the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to develop and implement the CalFresh Fruit and Vegetable EBT Pilot Project. A key goal of this grant was to demonstrate nutrition incentives can effectively be earned and redeemed directly from a CalFresh recipient's CalFresh EBT account, without requiring the coupons, vouchers, receipts or loyalty card. This work also aimed to demonstrate earned nutrition incentives could be redeemed at any SNAP authorized retail outlet. In 2025, building on initial successes and with support from over 10,000 program advocates statewide including the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative Community Council, the program secured an additional \$36 million in funding to expand reach more households.

Key Outcomes

Working in collaboration with over 80 Mother's Nutritional Center (MNC) stores across Southern California, this highly successful program:

- ✓ Enabled nearly 100,000 CalFresh households who shop at any MNC location to earn over \$20 million in nutrition incentives
- ✓ Achieved a high redemption rate of approximately 98% of incentives earned
- ✓ Increased access to and purchasing of fresh fruits and vegetables amongst participants
- ✓ Achieved high satisfaction amongst participants and MNC retail staff
- ✓ Developed point-of-sale technologies and systems now being replicated in Washington, Rhode Island, Colorado, and Louisiana

CCH Strategies Employed



Practice



Partnerships



Education

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Clinical, Economic, Policy

A Community-Centered Approach to Produce Delivery Program and Food is Medicine

In 2025, CCH and Family Health Centers of San Diego (FHCS) were awarded a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) GusNIP Produce Prescription Grant to launch the Community-Centered Approach to Produce Delivery Program. A key goal of this program is to leverage USDA produce prescription resources along with CalAIM Food is Medicine resources to create a more sustainable program to address the needs of underserved community members experiencing food insecurity and diet-related chronic disease. Community members who enroll in this program benefit from receiving 12-months of home delivered farm-fresh produce boxes, to be followed by 6-months of CalAIM Medically Tailored Meals.

Key Outcomes

As of the end of 2025 and in collaboration with FHCS:

- ✓ Developed and launched program services with qualifying FHCS patients
- ✓ Delivered over 3,000 farm fresh produce boxes to over 400 patients experiencing food insecurity and hypertension and/or diabetes

CCH Strategies Employed



Research



Partnerships

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Clinical, Economic, Policy

Key Outcomes

In collaboration with local farms/food sector partners (Foodshed Cooperative, Yasukochi Family Farms, Foodsmart), community-based organizations (SBCS, Comité Organizador Latino de City Heights-COLCH, Union of Pan Asian Communities), and health clinics (Alliance Health Clinic, Vista Community Clinic) across San Diego County, as of the end of 2025 ¡Más Fresco! Plus:

- ✓ Enrolled 3,500 community members experiencing nutrition insecurity and diet-related chronic disease, including 71% from County zip codes designated as having limited access to resources, and 60% with at least one chronic condition
- ✓ Delivered more than \$2 million in nutrition incentives to participants, including the home delivery of over 68,000 farm-fresh produce boxes.
- ✓ Increased fruit and vegetable access and healthy eating behaviors including fruit and vegetable consumption amongst participants
- ✓ Supported improved social/emotional health and chronic disease management for participants
- ✓ Increased CBO capacity and partnerships and re-granted over \$88,000 to local CBOs/health clinics
- ✓ Generated an economic impact of more than \$3.8 million in food sector support including over \$3.3 million for local farms

¡Más Fresco! Plus

Since 2022, CCH has received funding from the San Diego County Board of Supervisors to expand its successful ¡Más Fresco! Plus nutrition incentive program beyond CalFresh recipients to underserved community members experiencing health disparities, including food insecurity and diet-related chronic disease. A key goal of this project was to effectively leverage key food system and health system resources to improve healthy food access, food security and nutrition and health status of participating households. In 2025, building on initial successes and with support from the American Heart Association and community partners including the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative Community Council, the program received additional funding from San Diego County and San Diego Foundation Unity Fund to expand the program for additional community members experiencing food insecurity and chronic disease.

CCH Strategies Employed



Practice



Education



Partnerships

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community
Clinical
Economic
Policy

“

Healthy eating has always been difficult, mainly because of the hype that healthy means organic and organic means expensive. I have high blood pressure, high cholesterol and arthritis. I had been building up my courage to make better choices about my diet...I am truly grateful to [the ¡Más Fresco! Plus] program because my last two cholesterol tests have shown improvement, my blood pressure is not fluctuating as it had been. I find myself going to stores between deliveries and buying more!”

- ¡Más Fresco! Plus Program Participant



New Project: \$4M USDA grant for MNC

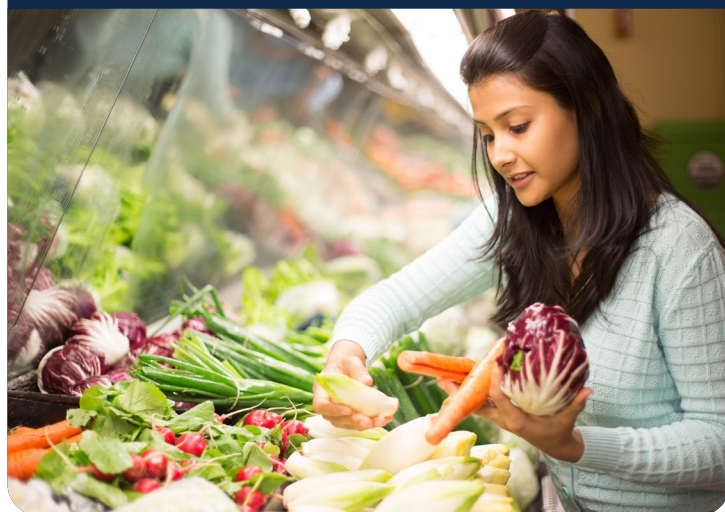
In 2025, CCH received a four-year, \$4 million USDA grant to develop and implement the Southern California Nutrition Incentive Expansion Program, expanding the successful ¡Más Fresco! More Fresh retail-based nutrition incentive program beyond the existing 42 Northgate Gonzalez Markets to an additional 82 Mother's Nutritional Center (MNC) stores, for a total of 125 stores statewide offering nutrition incentives to CalFresh participants for increased fruit and vegetable consumption. Through the program, approximately 4,000 CalFresh recipients shopping at any MNC store location will be able to earn and redeem up to \$40 a month in nutrition incentives upon the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables with their CalFresh benefits.

In collaboration with MNC, this program aims to substantially expand the geographic reach and impact of nutrition incentives for diverse and underserved communities experiencing food insecurity across Southern California. Amongst participating CalFresh recipients, we hypothesize this program will result in increased fruit and vegetable access/purchasing and consumption; decreased food insecurity; improved self-reported health; and high satisfaction. The program also aims to achieve organizational-level outcomes including high staff engagement and satisfaction, informing future replication and sustainability of the program model.

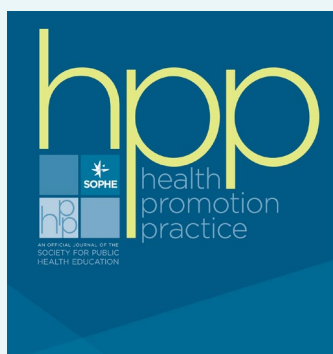
“

Mother's Nutritional Center is honored to partner with the UC San Diego Center for Community Health on the CalFresh Fruit & Vegetable EBT Pilot Project. This program directly supports the families we serve in our stores every day by helping them stretch their CalFresh benefits and bring home more fresh, healthy foods. We also welcome the opportunity to collaborate with UC San Diego on additional Food is Medicine initiatives to further enhance the health and well-being of the communities we collectively serve.”

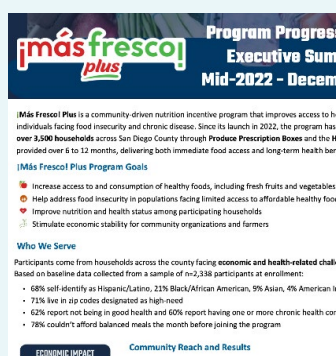
- Richard Flores, MNC President



Selected Dissemination Products, 2025: Food is Medicine



Professional Report:
The CalFresh Fruit and Vegetable EBT Pilot Project: A Model for Direct Nutrition Incentive Integration for SNAP Participants in the Retail Grocery Store Setting



Professional Report:
¡Más Fresco! More Fresh Plus Program Progress Report Executive Summary, through December 2025

Urban Food Equity

The Urban Food Equity (UFE) team within the Food Access and Equity unit works collaboratively with farmers, community-based organizations, and students to pollinate and sustain food justice and climate resilient solutions that address food inequities in urban spaces. We do this by building technical capacity, education, resource development, and systems change on critical food issues prioritized by communities most affected by disparities. We envision thriving urban food environments where farmers can grow, students can learn, and communities can enjoy good health.



UFE Key Accomplishments: 2025

- ✓ Awarded \$270,000 to urban farm businesses, non-profits, and Tribal organizations with Growing Equity, to build health equity, climate resilience, and community food sovereignty
- ✓ Completed study on student food security. Increased CalFresh applications by 18% and enrollment by 32%, adding \$5.1M in food benefits for UC San Diego students
- ✓ Supported 50 farmers at 19 certified farmers' markets to improve accessibility and economic impact of WIC Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
- ✓ Convened 50 agriculture, food, and health leaders to celebrate urban farmers in San Diego County
- ✓ Mentored 2 UC Reiss Leading on Climate Sustainable Agriculture and Food Fellows
- ✓ Funded 5 summer internships for students to gain experiential learning on food justice
- ✓ Contributed to food justice curricula development for new public health postdoctoral training program and undergraduate urban studies and planning courses
- ✓ Received 2025 UC San Diego Inclusive Excellence Award for CalFresh Communications Campaign

“

Thanks again for all your help and connecting me with these amazing people and orgs! I really couldn't have done this without your support and mentorship!”

- Rain Lins, UC Reiss Leading on Climate Fellow



Growing Equity

Growing Equity is a funding and technical assistance program for urban farmers in San Diego County. The program aims to build community food sovereignty, health equity, and climate resilience by increasing equitable access to public funding for local urban agriculture. Growing Equity invests in California Climate Priority Population communities and organizes and amplifies urban farmers as agents of change, land stewards, and community leaders.

Key Outcomes

During 2025, the program:

- ✓ Designed and released first of its kind equity-centered urban agriculture public funding program in San Diego County
- ✓ Provided application assistance to 90 individuals, through 38 outreach and technical assistance sessions
- ✓ Awarded \$270,000 to 8 urban farm businesses, 1 flower aggregator/retailer, 3 agricultural non-profit organizations, 2 Tribal organizations, and 1 community college campus
- ✓ Completed pre-award baseline evaluation to understand strengths, needs, and priorities of urban farmers
- ✓ Partnered with 2 researchers and 7 advisory committee members
- ✓ Hosted 6 outreach events, celebrations, and urban farmer cohort meetings
- ✓ Produced 5 student-made videos highlighting urban farmer stories and priorities
- ✓ Mentored 2 UC Reiss Leading on Climate Fellows

CCH Strategies Employed



Partnerships



Education



PSE Change

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Economic, Policy

Testing Student-Driven Solutions to Improve Food Security at UC San Diego

51% of UC San Diego undergraduates experience food insecurity. In partnership with Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science, Hub Basic Needs Center, and student organizations; we tested a series of interventions to improve awareness and use of CalFresh and other campus food assistance resources. We also identified and trained key student leaders to build a peer support network on food security.

Key Outcomes

During 2025, the project:

- ✓ Engaged 3,000+ students
- ✓ 18% increase in CalFresh applications and 32% increase in CalFresh enrollment among UC San Diego students
- ✓ Significant increase in CalFresh awareness across all communications channels
- ✓ Increased awareness and use of other campus food assistance resources for students ineligible for CalFresh
- ✓ 84 academic programs approved for LPIE, increasing CalFresh eligibility by 16,124 students
- ✓ Partnered with 4 researchers and 25 campus groups
- ✓ Doubled Hub Basic Needs Center social media engagement on food security
- ✓ Trained 41 student leaders on food security peer support
- ✓ 3 campus-wide media stories
- ✓ Hosted 2 workshops and 4 campus food security events, engaging 970 students, staff, and faculty
- ✓ Mentored 4 undergraduate and graduate student research assistants

CCH Strategies Employed



Practice



Partnerships



Research



Education



PSE Change

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Economic, Policy



“

The Growing Equity award gave me breathing room to think strategically on how to grow my business in a way that betters my family and works in cooperation with the land and other farmers.”

- Jose Alcaraz, La Chispa Farm

“

Having [the student food security study] has been essential... holding the space for the data portion allowed us to really focus on the administrative side to get help to students.”

- Hub Basic Needs Center staff member

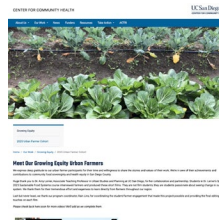
Selected Dissemination Products, 2025: Urban Food Equity

These stories demonstrate urban farmers' growing knowledge and community trust in urban agriculture spaces in San Diego County, but more sustained investment for staffing, land, and infrastructure for long-term success.



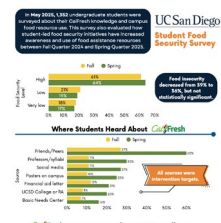
Report:

**Growing Equity 2025-2026
Baseline Evaluation Report,
Sept 2025**



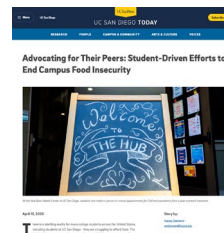
Resource:

**Growing Equity 2025-2026
Urban Farmer Cohort Short
Films**



Infographic:

**Student Food Security at
UC San Diego 2024-2025
Infographic**



Practitioner's Resource:

**Advocating for Their Peers:
Student-Driven Efforts to End
Campus Food Insecurity**

REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT HEALTH

Launched within CCH in 2017, the **Refugee and Immigrant Health (RIH) Unit** works to co-create culturally responsive approaches that promote health equity and well-being in refugee and immigrant communities. Our vision is healthy and prosperous refugee and immigrant communities that are supported by equitable and inclusive systems. We serve as an institutional and community-centered resource hub to deploy evidence-based health practices, technical assistance and training, capacity-building, and research in support of refugee and immigrant communities in San Diego County and across California. We prioritize inclusive collaboration and coalition-building through community-led programs that address social determinants of health. Our strategic priorities are fostering collaborative and inclusive systems, promoting culturally responsive and affirming partnerships, and driving community-centered research and communication.

RIH Key Accomplishments: 2025

- ✓ Engaged 50 CBOs in 4 regional coalitions statewide to provide culturally responsive, healing-centered services to 6,000 newly arrived Afghan refugee youth and families
- ✓ Secured \$19.7M CDSS contract to implement the statewide Refugee School Impact (RSI) and Youth Mentoring (YM) Programs
- ✓ Hosted more than 25 workshops for 188 participants under the Newcomer Education for Wellness project
- ✓ Facilitated Youth Advisory Council (YAC) for 70+ youth ages 14-19 years
- ✓ Recruited 9 participants for the 2nd cohort of the UC San Diego Community Doula Program
- ✓ Engaged 38 participants representing 19 languages to connect with refugee serving organizations for the Community Engaged Learning Research Project
- ✓ Provided community-driven research and evaluation support for youth programs facilitated by the San Diego Refugee Communities Coalition



Afghan Refugee School Impact and Afghan Youth Mentoring Program

The Afghan Refugee School Impact (ARSI) and Afghan Youth Mentoring (AYM) Program are statewide programs funded by the Afghanistan Supplemental Appropriations Act allocated by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to provide support services to newly arrived youth and families from Afghanistan. CCH, in collaboration with community-based organizations designated as Regional Leads, supports the co-design and implementation of the programs across four regions – Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Francisco, and San Diego. The program goals are to: 1) engage and connect Afghan youth and families with available resources, providing them the support they need to succeed academically and socially while integrating into their communities, and 2) to build CBO capacity through backbone support, including Community of Practice (CoP) training opportunities.

CCH Strategies Employed



Practice



Partnerships



Education

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Policy

Key Outcomes

Through the end of 2025:

- ✓ In alignment with community-identified priorities, 5,857 families were supported with direct services provided by 45 CBOs across California
- ✓ Nine CoPs were held with participating CBO partners in 2025, covering topics including Positive Youth Development, Cultural Humility, Early Childhood, and Sustainability Through Partnerships
- ✓ Participating youth and families self-report improved resource access, social/community connections, coping skills, family relationships, and English language skills, and youth report increased school and career readiness
- ✓ CBO participants report increased organizational capacity and partnerships/collaboration

“

[The RIH] offers a rare blend of academic excellence with deeply rooted community connections. I have always been impressed with the levels of commitment and integrity that seem institutionalized within [RIH], with all members of their team going the extra mile to amplify community voices and ensure their work aligns with the needs and priorities of San Diego's diverse refugee populations.”

- RIH Community Partner



Community Doula Training Program

The Community Doula Training Program, developed in collaboration with UC San Diego Health's Volunteer Doula Program and the UC San Diego Obstetrical Refugee/Asylee Care Navigation Program, trains community doulas to deliver inclusive, trauma informed labor and birth support. The program prepares a new generation of doulas to deliver compassionate, culturally responsive, and linguistically appropriate care to pregnant and birthing individuals. This initiative addresses health equity gaps by equipping doulas with the skills to support diverse families during childbirth.

CCH Strategies Employed



Practice



Research



Partnerships



Education

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Policy, Clinical

Key Outcomes

Through the end of 2025, the project has:

- ✓ Engaged 18 Community Doulas across two cohorts
- ✓ Provided 16 hours of combined classroom and hands-on training for Community Doulas, with training components including: Anatomy of pregnancy, labor, and birth; Physical and emotional support techniques; Cesarean birth support and lactation guidance
- ✓ Mentored clinical birth experiences for Community Doula trainees (under doula mentor supervision)
- ✓ Provided culturally responsive, trauma-informed Community Doula labor and birth support for 56 diverse patients, in partnership with UCSD provider care

“

Working with the [RIH team] has been amazing. They are doing incredible work and have a great network of partners, including residents. The work the [RIH] does is an example of policy, systems, and environmental change that is transformational and leads to better health outcomes for all.”

- RIH Community Partner

Key Outcomes

Through the end of 2025:

- ✓ Engaged 70+ youth ages 14-19 years in programming
- ✓ 8 youth partnered with 1 researcher at Ohio State University Substance Use and Neurocognition Equity Lab
- ✓ Hosted 8 youth trainings, reaching 80 participants
- ✓ Mentored 4 graduate and undergraduate students

Youth Advisory Council

Launched in 2015, the Youth Advisory Council (YAC) brings together young leaders to advocate for healthy initiatives in communities that have experienced historical and systemic health inequities. YAC promotes and fosters culturally competent youth leadership. YAC's work is made possible through generous gifts from the Peace Makers Fund.

CCH Strategies Employed



Partnerships



Education

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community

Selected Projects and Outcomes in Action, 2025: Refugee and Immigrant Health

New Project: Refugee School Impact and Youth Mentoring Programs

The Refugee School Impact (RSI) and Youth Mentoring (YM) Programs are statewide programs with funding allocated by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to provide support services to ORR-eligible newly arrived youth and families. The RSI and YM programs are modeled on and expand the reach of the ARSI and AYM programs, which exclusively served Afghan newcomers. CCH, in collaboration with community-based organizations designated as Regional Leads, supports the co-design and implementation of the programs across five regions – Los Angeles, Sacramento, Central Valley, San Francisco, and San Diego, with a goal of engaging over 60 community-based organizations and school districts across the state in providing program services for eligible families. The goals of the RSI program are to: (1) provide specialized services to support the integration of eligible children and their families, and (2) strengthen organizational systems and capacity of local schools, community-based organizations, and partners to collaboratively deliver culturally responsive and healing-centered services in alignment with community needs and priorities. The goals of the YM program are to promote positive civic and social engagement and support individual educational and vocational advancement for ORR-eligible youth.

Key Outcomes

During 2025, the project:

- ✓ Engaged 5 Regional Lead organizations and 11 School Districts to implement RSI and YM programs across California
- ✓ Developed and implemented selection process for service providers, to work under Regional Lead organizations

CCH Strategies Employed



Practice



Partnerships



Education

TSBM Aligned Impact

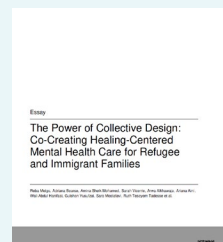
Community, Policy

Selected Dissemination Products, 2025: Refugee and Immigrant Health



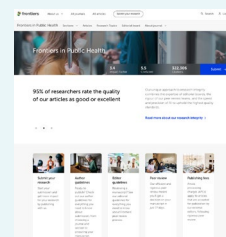
Article:

BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth: Barriers to Postpartum Health



Article:

The Power of Collective Design: Co-Creating Healing-Centered Mental Health Care for Refugee and Immigrant Families



Article:

Integrating Qualitative Insights with Large Secondary Data: A Protocol for a Community-Engaged Mixed-Methods Study on Adolescent Substance Use



Practitioner's Resource:

ARSI AYM Interim Evaluation and Impact Report

CHILD AND FAMILY HEALTH

The **Child Family and Health (CFH)** unit works to enhance the health of people, places, and communities. Serving as a hub for policy, systems, and environmental change, we focus on place-based initiatives that integrate access to healthy foods, safe spaces for active living, maternal and child health, and public health programs across sectors.

CFH Key Accomplishments: 2025

- ✓ Successfully completed Centering Community Voice in Collective Action to Address Structural Racism and Promote Health Equity, a \$1.05M OMH-funded initiative
- ✓ Awarded \$40,000 to seven COI mini-grantees
- ✓ Hosted COI in Action: Park and Walk Audit, convening 40+ partners and community leaders to identify walking and bicycling barriers in Logan Heights
- ✓ Co-launched the Community Incubator Network (KIN)
- ✓ Formed the Next of KIN subcommittee within the COI Community Council, including two community PIs, to co-design and lead KIN grant development and implementation
- ✓ Trained two postdoctoral fellows to support KIN methodology and grantees
- ✓ Launched “Creating Safe Sleep and Breastfeeding-Friendly Environments in Childcare Settings” training
- ✓ Established a community advisory board to guide a culturally grounded community lactation needs assessment survey



San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative

The San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative (COI), funded by the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, is a public-private coalition with over 400 multi-sector partners dedicated to reducing and preventing childhood obesity through policy, systems, and environmental change using a collective impact model, with backbone support provided by CCH. The COI coordinates county-wide efforts, fosters partnerships, provides education and advocacy, and tracks progress toward shared goals. With active workgroups, volunteer leaders, and broad community engagement, COI leverages diverse resources and perspectives to maximize its impact. COI is implemented by CCH in support of the Live Well San Diego vision for healthy, safe, and thriving communities.

For more information, visit LiveWellSD.org.

CCH Strategies Employed



Partnerships



PSE Change

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Policy, Economic

Key Outcomes

During 2025, the project:

- ✓ Hosted 55 partner meetings and events, including workgroup meetings, leadership council meetings, and strategic planning, engaging 825 people
- ✓ Developed 2 training resources, including Safe Sleep Training and a Park Audit Training
- ✓ Mentored 3 undergraduate interns through College Corps and UC San Diego School of Public Health
- ✓ Supported 30 individuals engaging on 7 PSE efforts
- ✓ Awarded \$40,000 to 7 mini-grant recipients to support healthy eating, lactation support, and physical activity projects



COI Community Council: Centering Community Voice in Collective Action to Address Structural Racism and Promote Health Equity

Funded in part through the Office of Minority Health, COI's Community Council of 15 local residents as co-leaders with a goal to fundamentally shift decision making authority within COI to ensure community voice is central to policy prioritization and development in alignment with local priorities.

CCH Strategies Employed



Partnerships



PSE Change

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Policy

Key Outcomes

During 2025, the project:

- ✓ Engaged 22 community partners
- ✓ Completed 6 trainings for 45 participants, including a Park and Walk Audit and Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Focus Group
- ✓ Continued shifting power and decision-making authority within multi-sector partnerships to center community members and residents

Key Outcomes

During 2025, the project:

- ✓ Awarded \$150,000 grant from the Kaiser Hospital Foundation to support:
 - Development of a Community Advisory Board that informed all project objectives and key outcomes
 - Implementation of a community needs assessment
 - In collaboration with the San Diego County Breastfeeding Coalition, supported the development of an online lactation support resource directory
 - Disseminated \$30,000 to support lactation focused mini-grants

San Diego Human Milk Access Network

The San Diego Human Milk Access Network (SDHuMAN), a collaboration between CCH and the Human Milk Institute (HMI) was established in 2024 and envisions a thriving community where every child and family has access to the benefits of human milk, supported by an inclusive environment that fosters awareness and acceptance of breastfeeding through collective impact.

CCH Strategies Employed



Practice



Partnerships



Education

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Policy

Selected Projects and Outcomes in Action, 2025: Child and Family Health

New Project: KIN: Community Incubator Network

The KIN: Community Incubator Network is a new collaborative effort between UC San Diego Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science, CCH, YMCA of San Diego County, and COI with the Community Council at the center. Funded by the American Heart Association, KIN is designed to advance food justice for all through community-driven research. This program includes a 5-year community regranting program and seeks to reverse the research paradigm by placing the community in the decision-making role.

CCH Strategies Employed



Research



Partnerships



Education



PSE Change

TSBM Aligned Impact

Community, Policy, Economic

Key Outcomes

During 2025, the project:

- ✓ Established Next of KIN subcommittee, including 2 community PIs
- ✓ Collaborated under YMCA leadership to co-design community granting program that awarded \$175,000 in research awards
- ✓ Engaged and trained 2 postdoctoral fellows to support KIN methods and grantees
- ✓ Hosted 9 partner events for 69 attendees

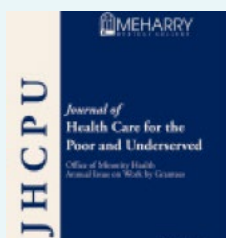
“

As someone who brings lived experience to this work, I've seen how meaningful it is when institutions genuinely partner with the community. Together, we've helped shift the narrative – from telling people what they need to building solutions with them. That's where real impact happens.”

- Earl Felisme, Community PI and Impact Lead

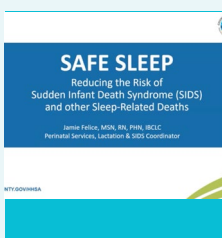


Selected Dissemination Products, 2025: Child and Family Health



Article:

Transforming a Regional Initiative by Building Community Power to Advance Health Equity



Video:

Creating Safe Sleep and Breastfeeding Friendly Environments in Childcare Settings



Blog Post:

COI Strategic Plan 2025-2030

A SHARED VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Investing in CCH's long-term sustainability reinforces UC San Diego's commitment to health equity and advances translational research to real world outcomes in public health.

Call to Action

Partner with Us to Improve Community Health

Real change starts with action. Join us in strengthening communities through community-led solutions to improve health outcomes, ensuring all communities have the resources to thrive – regardless of race, income, or zip code.

Your Support Will:

- ✓ **Expand community-driven research:** Create opportunities for community members to co-lead research on health disparities, ensuring their lived experiences shape solutions.
- ✓ **Strengthen community leadership in public health:** Support community members and CBOs in shaping public health policies, programs, and research through paid leadership roles.
- ✓ **Advance food justice and improve nutrition security:** Scale programs like Growing Equity and ¡Más Fresco! Plus, increasing access to affordable, healthy food while supporting local farmers.
- ✓ **Advance refugee and immigrant health:** Expand culturally affirming care, workforce training, and advocacy.
- ✓ **Build capacity for community organizations:** Equip organizations with tools, funding, and partnerships to expand services, research, and advocacy.





Take Action Today:

✓ **Give** – Invest in community-led solutions that improve health and well-being.



- ✓ **Collaborate** – Partner with us on research, advocacy, and public health programs.
- ✓ **Get Involved** – Volunteer, share our mission, and help create lasting change.

Contact Us:

Email CCH Executive Director Blanca Melendrez, bmelendrez@ucsd.edu to explore funding opportunities, research partnerships, and collaborative projects.

Thank You!

We couldn't do this work without you and we look forward to growing our partnership to improve community health together.

“

Our partnership with CCH reflects the very best of what public health should be – it’s collaborative and community-driven. Our alignment supports us in ensuring that our work has real-world impact and addresses modern day root causes of health for the communities we serve.”

- Cheryl Anderson, PhD, MPH, MS; Dean, Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science

2025

IMPACT REPORT

