

# **Igniting Change from the Ground Up: Uplifting Best Practices for Community Organizing and Leadership Engagement**

Prevention Institute

Maureen Silva, MPH

La'Quana Williams, MPH

Roxy Rivas

**PREVENTION**  
INSTITUTE

# Guest Presenters

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## **The Foundation for Sustainable Urban Communities**

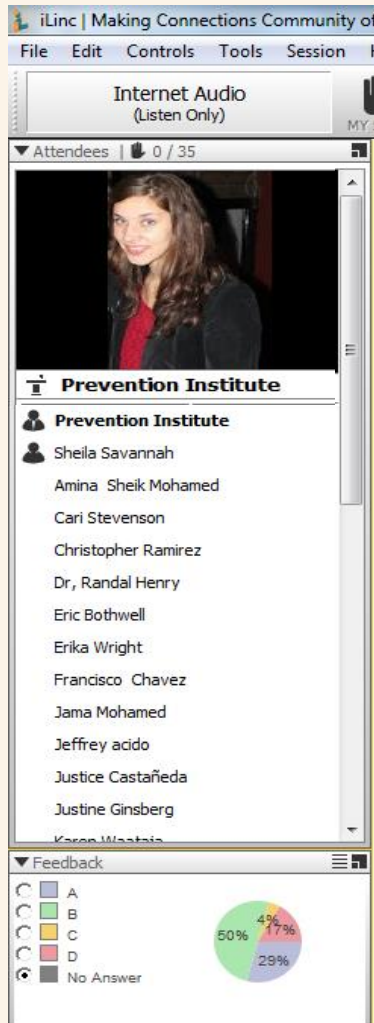
Alisha Brown—Senior Vice President



## **Community Farm Alliance**

Martin Richards—Executive Director

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# Webinar Objectives

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- Describe strategies and principles for cultivating authentic community engagement
- Highlight best practices from both rural and urban communities on community organizing and resident leadership
- Identify action-oriented strategies that support policy and systems change rooted in partnership



**In just a few words,  
how would you define  
“community?”**






## **Community [defined]:**

Community is both a feeling and a set of relationships among people. People form and maintain communities to meet common needs. Members of a community have a sense of trust, belonging, safety, and caring for each other. They have an individual and collective sense that they can, as part of that community, influence their environments and each other.

- David M. Chavis & Kien Lee





**Community participation**, when it's real, is your main investment in accountability. It's your main investment in sustainability...community participation is when, truly, you involve people in creating a mechanism for themselves to define change.

- America Bracho, Executive Director, Latino Health Access



# Moving from transactional to *transformational* community engagement



# SEEDS Take Root for Pedestrian Safety



# SEEDS Take Root for Pedestrian Safety



# Valuing Community Experience and Capacity

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- Partnerships with communities experiencing health and safety inequities are strengthened by prioritization of an equitable process
- Community engagement efforts that provide space for identifying root causes of inequities build trust and foster long term relationships
- Collaboration that identifies and compensates community partners, fairly acknowledging contributions, helps build equity into institutional practices



# Creating Space for Being/Doing/Connecting



# Lessons Learned: Community Focus

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- Community conditions form the basis for an actionable prevention approach.
- The THRIVE Community Clusters are interrelated and mutually reinforcing.
- A focus on community conditions provides a mechanism to address and reduce stigma.
- A focus on community conditions provides an opportunity to move beyond traditional treatment models.

# Questions for Reflection

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- ☐ Are those most affected by the issue actively involved in defining the problem and shaping the solution?
- ☐ Are we using techniques that build community capacity and leadership? If not, what techniques could be pursued?
- ☐ What barriers to community engagement—including our perception and history in the community--should we consider?
- ☐ What can we do differently to improve or enhance community engagement? What is our plan of action to implement those changes?



# Partnering for Health Equity



Explores how the political landscape, funding, staff skills, leadership, and partnerships influence the ability of community-based organizations to work effectively with public health agencies to address health inequities and racial injustices

The logo features the words "be well" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font. The "be" is positioned above the "well". A small "TM" trademark symbol is located to the upper right of the word "well". The text is centered within a light green circle. This circle is surrounded by a larger purple circle containing numerous thin, white radial lines that create a sunburst or ripple effect.

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*An Initiative of the Stapleton Foundation*

PREVENTION INSTITUTE

August 7, 2018

**“Uplifting Best Practices for  
Community Organizing and Leadership Engagement”**

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Alisha Brown, M.N.M.  
Senior Vice President  
Foundation for Sustainable Urban  
Communities  
Director  
***be well*** Health and Wellness Initiative

The logo for 'be well' is centered on the left side of the slide. It consists of a bright green circle containing the words 'be' and 'well' in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font. The 'be' is positioned above the 'well'. To the right of 'well' is a small 'TM' trademark symbol. The green circle is surrounded by a larger purple circle with thin, white, radial lines extending from the center to the edge, creating a sunburst or ripple effect. Below the green circle, the text 'Health & Wellness Initiative' is written in a yellow, sans-serif font, following the curve of the purple circle. Below that, in a smaller yellow font, is the text 'An Initiative of the Stapleton Foundation'.

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Health & Wellness Initiative  
An Initiative of the Stapleton Foundation

An on the ground  
movement of communities  
coming together to take  
charge of their health and  
wellness.

**The mission** of **be well** is to effect  
programs, policies and practices to create  
health equality and access for all people.

**be well's** vision is for a culture in which all  
people have an equal opportunity to achieve  
the health they desire, regardless of their race,  
income, gender, or location.



# the be well<sup>TM</sup> zone

6 Neighborhoods  
Approximately 100,000 People



# *be well* *Community Collaborative*



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*Health & Wellness Initiative*  
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A multi-sector coalition that  
consists of :

- Residents & Community Stakeholders
- Healthcare
- Housing
- Development
- Education
- Transportation
- Churches Businesses & Organizations
- City Officials

*be well*  
**Community Collaborative**

Residents and Community  
Stakeholders

- 1st Bank
- 2040 Partners for Health
- 50/50 Fitness
- AF Williams Family Medicine
- Aurora Housing Authority
- Aurora Public Schools
- Bluff Lake Nature Center
- Center for African American Health
- City of Aurora Parks and Recreation
- City of Denver Parks and Recreation
- Colorado Council of Black Nurses
- Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
- Denver Health
- Denver Health Community Voices
- Denver Public Schools
- East Montclair Neighborhood Association
- Forest City, Stapleton
- Gary Williams Energy Company
- Greater Park Hill, Inc.
- Greater Stapleton Business Association
- I'm Unique
- Inner City Health Center
- Johnson and Wales University
- Mile High Fitness
- Northwest Aurora Neighborhood Organization
- Northeast Denver Housing
- Original Aurora Renewal
- Park Hill Thriving Communities
- Piton Foundation
- Platte College
- Regis University
- Regional Transportation District (RTD)
- SandCreek Regional Greenway
- Senator Michael Johnston
- Stapleton Development Corporation
- Northeast Transportation Connections
- Stapleton United Neighbors
- Taking Neighborhood Health to Heart
- Tri-County Health Department
- University of Colorado Dept. of Family Medicine
- Urban Land Conservancy



# Advancing Health Equity through Community Engagement



**Building capacity of communities is essential to advancing health equity and involves:**

- **Community leaders and residents being educated about disparities in their community**
- **Bringing together multiple stake-holders who have an interest in health equity**
- **Stakeholders engage decision-makers in discussions on community needs**

# *be well* strategies to Community Engagement

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**Inclusive Participation:** *be well* is characterized by partnering with groups or individuals that others may not be aware of or have access to.

**Civic Engagement:** *be well* helps educate community members around policy and system level improvements informing them of opportunities to become fully active in their communities.

**Health Education:** *be well* educates and builds awareness around the social determinants of health using trainings and information dissemination.

Education is essential to helping community members overcome their skepticism that their opinions don't matter.

# The *be well* Way

## Engagement Strategies

The logo for 'be well' is centered within a large purple circle that has a radial striped pattern. The words 'be' and 'well' are stacked vertically in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font. A small 'TM' trademark symbol is positioned to the upper right of the word 'well'.

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- Meet people where they are:
  - Little League Practice
  - Apartment Complexes
  - Bus Stops
  - Healthy Happy Hours
  - Church
  - School
  - Grocery Store
  - Door to Door Outreach
  - Word of Mouth
- Make involvement simple
  - Clear pathways to participation
- Be open to the community's suggestions for how they'd like to be engaged

# *be well* Block Captains



- **Share & receive information**
- **Demonstrate how individual experiences are part of the larger community context**
- **Engage residents in community efforts**
- **Address community challenges and leverage opportunities**
- **Empowerment**



# *be well* Block Captain Tiers



At ***be well***, we know how busy life can be, so we've created a volunteer structure within the Block Captain program that gives volunteers the opportunity to engage the ***be well*** community at a level that best matches their personal interests and availability.

There are 3 different tiers:

- Connector
- Captain
- Coach

# The *be well* Way

## Block Captain Training

The logo consists of the words "be" and "well" stacked vertically in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font. A small "TM" trademark symbol is positioned to the upper right of the word "well". The logo is centered within a light green circle, which is itself set against a larger purple circle with radial lines emanating from the center.

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- **Capacity-focused approach**
- **Supports residents seeking to create positive and meaningful improvements**
- **Helps residents to actively contribute to their health and wellness and that of their families, friends, neighbors, and community**

# *be well* Way

## Training Sessions

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### Week

### Topic

1. The *be well* Way Orientation
2. Prevention: Heart Health & Chronic Disease
3. Nutrition & Physical Activity
4. Manage Your Mental Load
5. Who you are impacts your health
6. Policy and Systems Change
7. The Built Environment and
8. Civic Engagement Strategies



# Increasing Physical Activity Opportunities through Transit Equity



In Northeast Denver, physical inactivity is a risk factor for poor health outcomes, particularly among African Americans

**Hypothesis:** Poor health outcomes are related to a variety of obstacles including the potential of under-developed linkages to public transit systems from targeted neighborhoods.

**Activities:** *be well* is leading efforts to better engage African American residents in opportunities to impact transit decisions

## **Outcome:**

- *be well* hosted six community conversations
- residents formed a transit stakeholder group
- group reviewed proposed plans and provided feedback to RTD
- route that was deemed to be cut, will be continued with a slight reduction in service

# Increasing physical activity by making Denver Recreation Centers more accessible



**Hypothesis:** Poor health outcomes are related to a variety of obstacles including the lack of usage of the local recreation centers for physical activity

**Activities:** *be well* is leading efforts to engage African Americans in compiling data and participating in civic engagement processes to impact recreation center services

## **Outcomes:**

- Hosted 9 Healthy Happy Hours
- Created a recreation center workgroup
- Shared the City Auditor's 2014 Report
- Completed a Health Impact Assessment
- Learned about new methods
- Entered into an agreement with Denver Parks and Recreation to form a standard partnership project

# Challenges

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## **Slow Wins**

- Relationships take time
- Policy and systems improvements take time

## **Burn Out**

- Too many meetings
- Duplication of effort

## **Competing Priorities**

- *be well* framework allows flexibility

## **Political Environment**

- Changes in administration or leadership
- Organizational Changes

The *be well Block*  
*Captain*  
*“How To Guide”*  
&  
*Tool-Kit*



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Denver, Colorado 80238



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be well BLOCK CAPTAIN HOW TO GUIDE  
&  
COMMUNITY HEALTH TRAINING INSTRUCTOR MANUAL



| Task   | Outcome   | Timeline                              |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| Project kick-off call  | Confirm project plan and schedule for both organizations. Tentatively, APDC has identified training dates in July/August and the VNA has identified training dates in September/October   | June                                  |
| Training preparation   | Customized training materials and presentation slides for all three training sessions for APDC  | June<br>1 Day                         |
| <b>Training Day 1:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of Organizing the be well way.</li> <li>Identifying partners and roles</li> <li>Establishing boundaries</li> <li>Reaching affected populations</li> <li>Designing a successful engagement (recruitment) strategy</li> </ul> | Understanding of the be well Way approach and how its methods to build organization's capacity to engage the community to advance health equity<br>Criteria for which organizations can refer to as they are engaging the community<br>Established boundaries from which they would like to first achieve community engagement<br>Specific strategies to intentionally reach out to affected populations to become partners | July<br><br><br><br><br><br><br>1 Day |
| Complete customized engagement strategy  | be well will compile the notes from the training day to provide APDC with a customized engagement strategy  | July<br><br>.75 Day                   |
| <b>Training Day 2:</b><br>Preparation of a shared learning experience<br>(Development of the training)   | The establishment of a customized shared learning experience<br>(Development of the training)   | July/August<br><br>1 Day              |
| Complete customized shared learning experience syllabus in partnership with the community  | be well will compile the notes from the training day to provide APDC with a customized shared learning experience syllabus and tools to be implemented among the new volunteers   | July/August<br><br>.75 Day            |
| <b>Training Day 3: Organizing your Block Captain Program for the Long-Term</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversight</li> <li>Roles and Responsibilities</li> <li>Recognition</li> <li>Monitoring and</li> <li>Continuing</li> </ul>  | Detail plan of how to support your the be well block captain program on an ongoing basis  | August<br><br><br><br><br>1 Day       |
| Complete customized program management tools   | Tools, templates, reporting processes, community support  | August<br>1 Day                       |
| Call/webinar to review toolkit and customized program management tools   | Understanding of how to use tools and templates moving forward  | August<br><br>.25                     |
| 6-months implementation support and coaching (~4 hours/month)  | Ongoing advice and troubleshooting  | June-November<br>6 Days               |
| Project coordination   | Project management  | .5                                    |
| <b>Total Days</b>  |   | <b>11.0</b>                           |

# Northwest Colorado Health *be well* Block Captain Impact

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1. Advocated for approval of property taxes that helped fund affordable housing in the area.

2 . In partnership with Colorado Mountain College Advanced workforce development to train mechanics and provide certification to community residents whom complete the program.

# Asian Pacific Development Center

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1. Improvements to transit services

2. Enrollment of refugee community members in Medicaid

3. Engagement in Renters Rights Sessions to better understand housing contracts



# *Sustainability*



- Community Ownership
  - How the community has informed the project
- Clear Roles and Responsibilities
  - What is expected of me
  - What supports are in place
  - Who is my contact person
- Recognition
  - be well Awards and Community Celebration
  - Newsletter Articles
  - Presentations at Community Meetings
- Support from other sources
  - Refreshments
  - Tickets to Events
  - Gift-cards
  - Exploring the development of a **be well** Club Card

# Lessons Learned

The logo for 'be well' is centered within a green circle. The word 'be' is in a smaller, lowercase font above the word 'well', which is in a larger, lowercase font. A small 'TM' trademark symbol is to the upper right of 'well'. The background of the slide features a large purple circle with radiating lines, and a teal circle at the bottom right.

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- Do your home-work
- Ensure that your staff is diverse and can relate to the community you intend to serve
- Enter communities humbly/You are not the expert
- Speak the community's language not public health lingo
- Invest time, energy, and **resources** in relationship building
- Expose your agenda while being open to change
- Be open and genuine
- Communities are not laboratories: Be committed

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# Get in the ZONE!

**Follow us:**



Facebook:

be well Health and Wellness Initiative

Twitter:

@bewellconnect1

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PREVENTION INSTITUTE

“Uplifting Best Practices for Community  
Organizing and Leadership Engagement”

August 7, 2018



**COMMUNITY FARM ALLIANCE**  
*33 Years of Change From The Ground Up!*



[www.cfaky.org](http://www.cfaky.org)

Martin Richards  
Community Farm Alliance  
Executive Director

A graduate of the University of Kentucky's College of Architecture, Martin was a farmer for twenty years.

Martin has been an active member of CFA since 1995, serving as the CFA President in 1998.

Martin became the director of CFA in November of 2010.



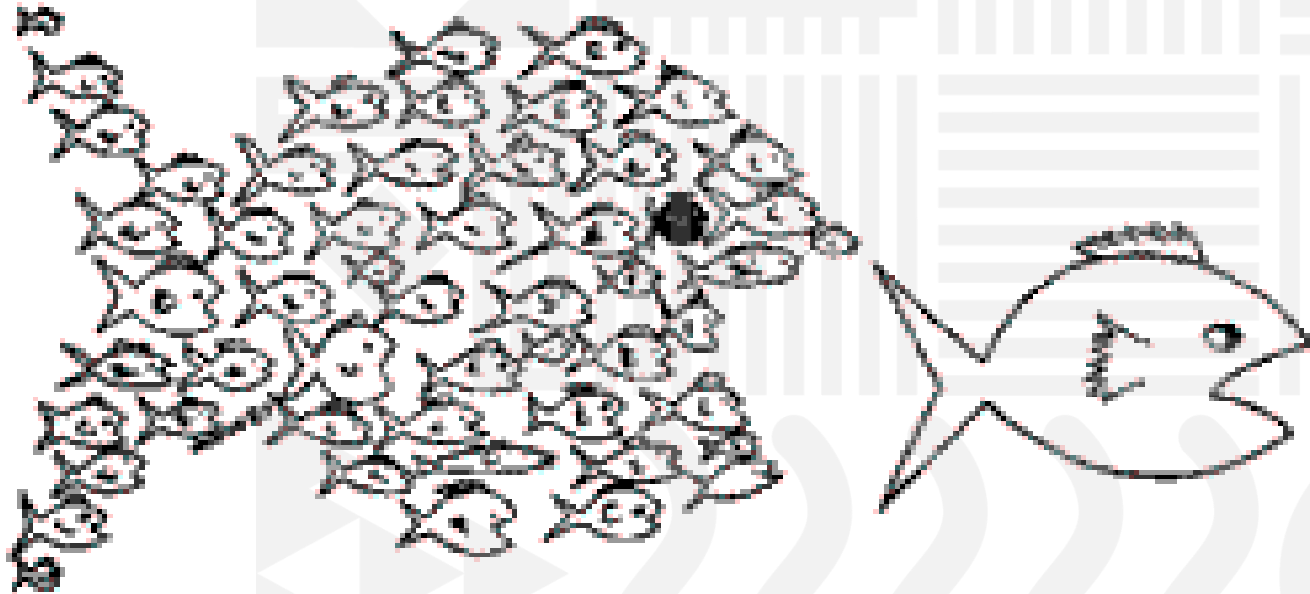




- Formed during the 1980's farm crisis
- 1500 members statewide







# ORGANIZE

SPARK



## **CFA Mission:**

We work to organize and encourage cooperation among rural and urban citizens through leadership development and grassroots democratic processes to ensure an essential, prosperous place for family-scale agriculture in our economies and communities.

## **CFA Vision**

“We envision a food and fiber system that provides nutritious food for Kentuckians in a manner that is socially, economically, and ecologically sustainable.



# What Community Farm Alliance Does: OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

During the Farm Crisis of the 1980s, Kentucky farmers came together to face the industrial agricultural policy of “get big or get out!”

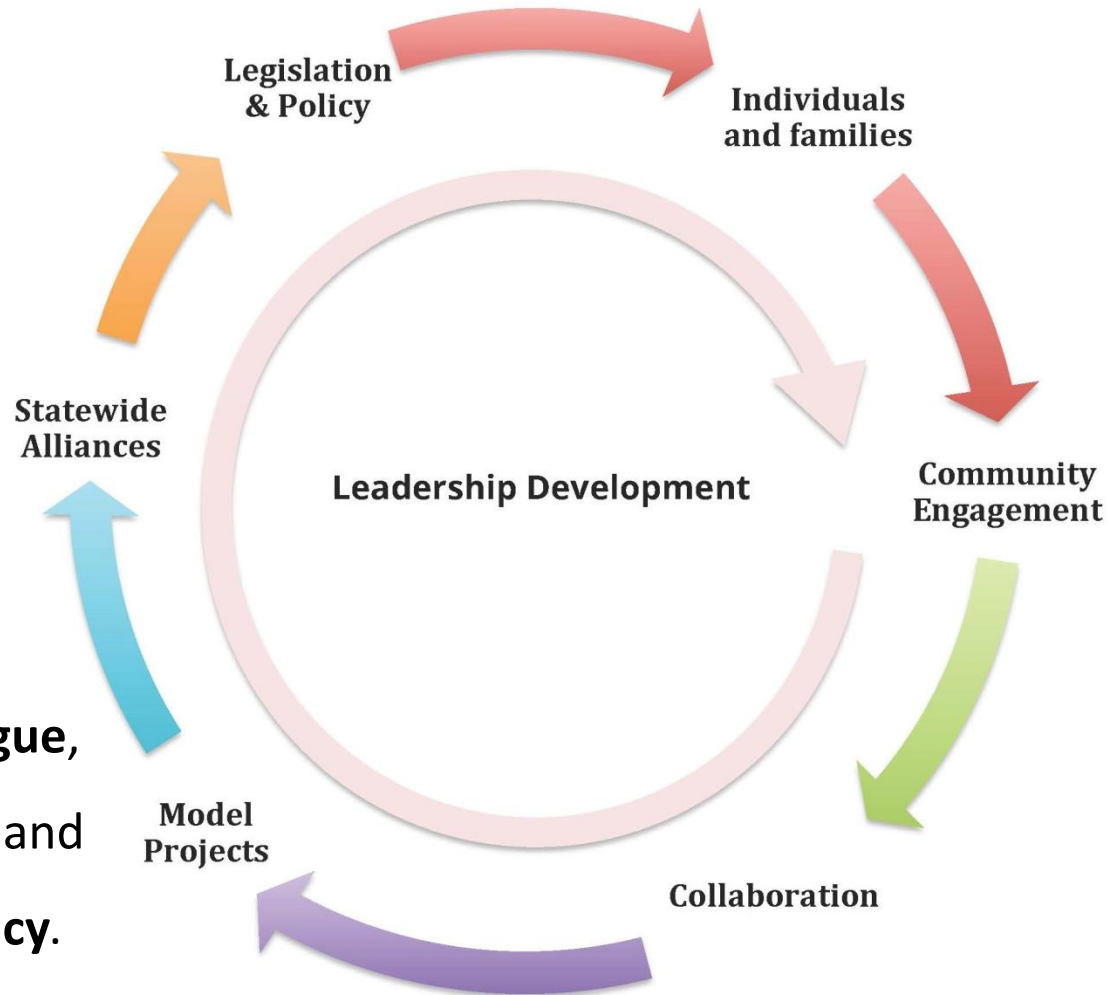
Their first action was **direct service** to their neighbors by setting up a suicide hotline.

Then they **organized** to change public policy.

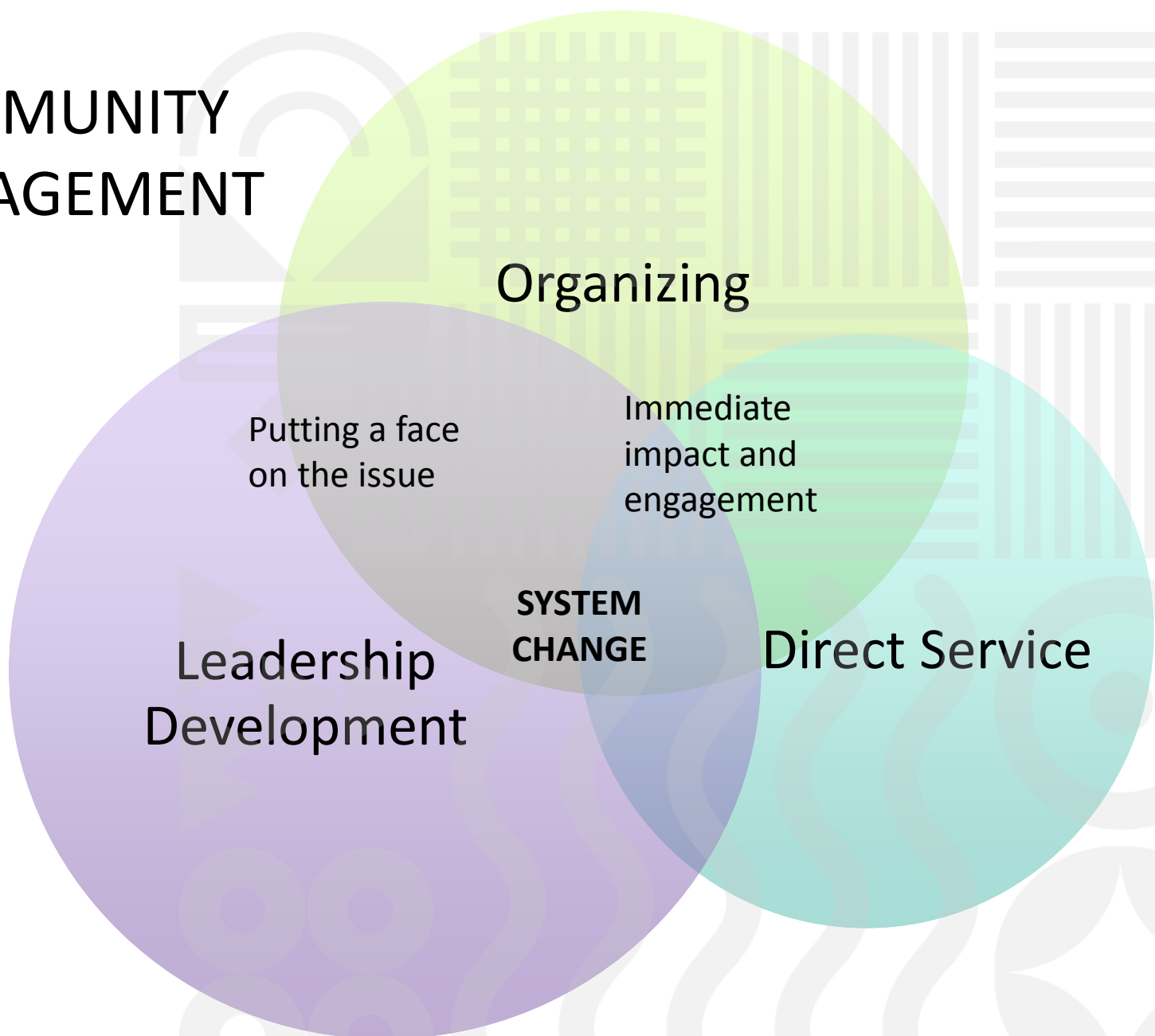
Resulting in CFA’s Theory of Change that positive change begins with

- **constructive grassroots dialogue,**
- **is built on successful models, and**
- **secured with good public policy.**

CFA utilizes a Story-Based communications strategy to lift the voices of those most effect to the front of every issue!



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT







Farm to School



Distribution



Entrepreneurship



Rural and Urban Farmers Markets







CFA SAYS  
ONE PENNY  
MORE!

SUPPORT  
TOMATO  
PICKERS

YUM!  
IS  
DUMB!

TACO  
=  
EXPLO

PRIVATE  
PROPERTY  
NO  
PASSING

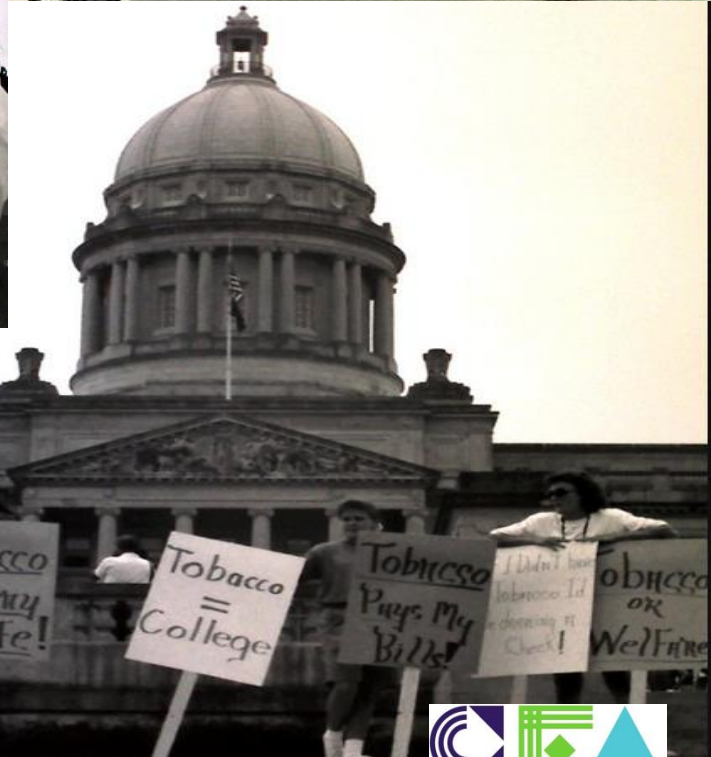
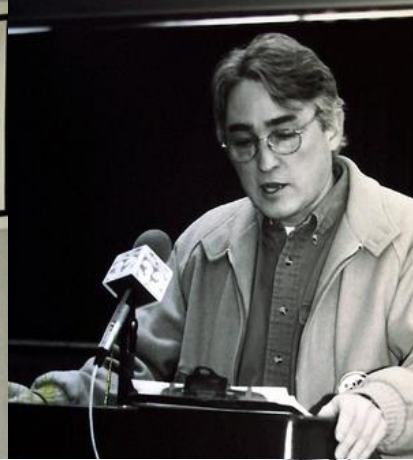
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JUSTICE

JUSTICE FOR  
TOMATO PICKERS

"As a major pur  
products, w  
opportu  
responsibili  
the way anima  
-YUM! Brands Ani

BOYCOTT  
TACO  
BELL





# *Legislation shaped by CFA members*

**HB 611** (2000): Dedicating \$1.7 billion to diversifying from tobacco.

**HB 391** (2003): On farm processing.

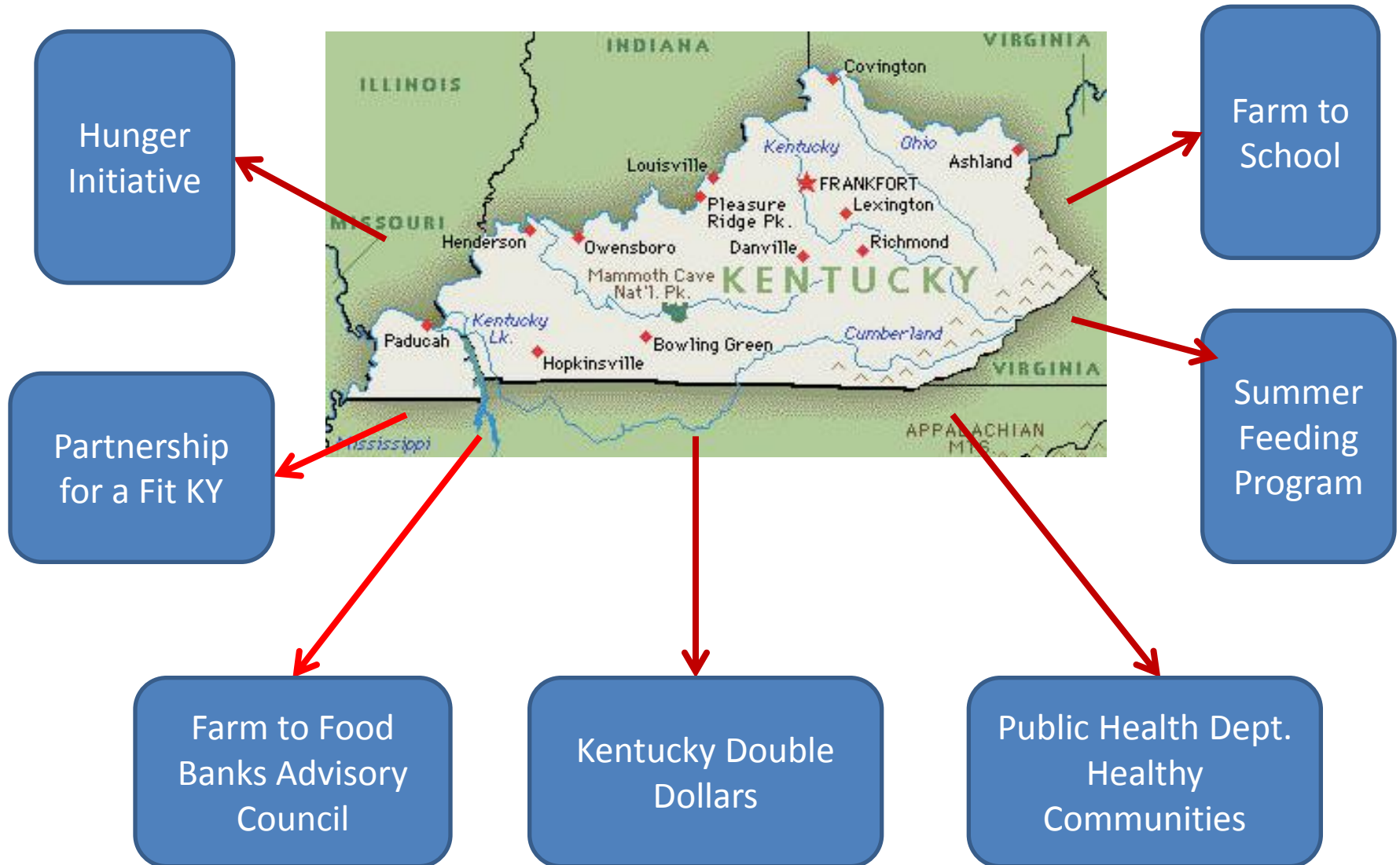
**HB 120** (2007): Allows farmers to do on-site cooking demonstrations and samples at farmers markets.

**HB 669** (2006), **SB 484** (2008) and **SB 84** (2009) to advance state institutional buying.

**CFA members have led over 24 successful grassroots legislative campaigns in the past 33 years**



# State Level Efforts on Food Security





# Improved public health is economic development!

Every \$1 spent on:

- wellness programs saves **\$3.27 in medical costs and \$2.73 in absenteeism costs.**
- nutritional and physical activity programs saves **\$1.17 in medical expenses.”**

2010 Harvard wellness program study

# Improved food access is economic development!

- An increase of SNAP/Food Stamp benefits creates a “ripple effect through the economy.
- Moody's Analytics found that food stamps were the most effective, increasing economic activity by \$1.73 for every dollar spent



# Kentucky Lessons and Challenges

Meet People Where They Are! Build a Diverse Movement!

- Kentuckians daily face the root causes of our national inequity crisis.
- The problems of limited economic opportunities, poor health, and political marginalization are among the highest in the nation.
- High unemployment, low levels of education, outmigration, low per capita income, and poor health characterize both rural and urban Kentuckians.
- With 58% of Kentuckians living in its urban centers and 42% in rural communities (but occupying 96% of the land), Kentucky looks much more like America of the 1920s than 2017 with a significant exception.
- Structural racism has forced the decline and concentration of Kentucky's rural black populations, who in 1860 made up 25% of Kentucky's population.
- According to the 2000 Census, whites make up over 89% of Kentuckians with 52% of Kentucky's African American population concentrated in the Louisville Metro Area.



**Community Farm Alliance**

[www.cfaky.org](http://www.cfaky.org)

**THANK YOU!**





When you start with needs, you get programs. When you start with strengths, you get possibilities.

- *Lupe Serrano, Casa de Esperanza*





**Q&A**

