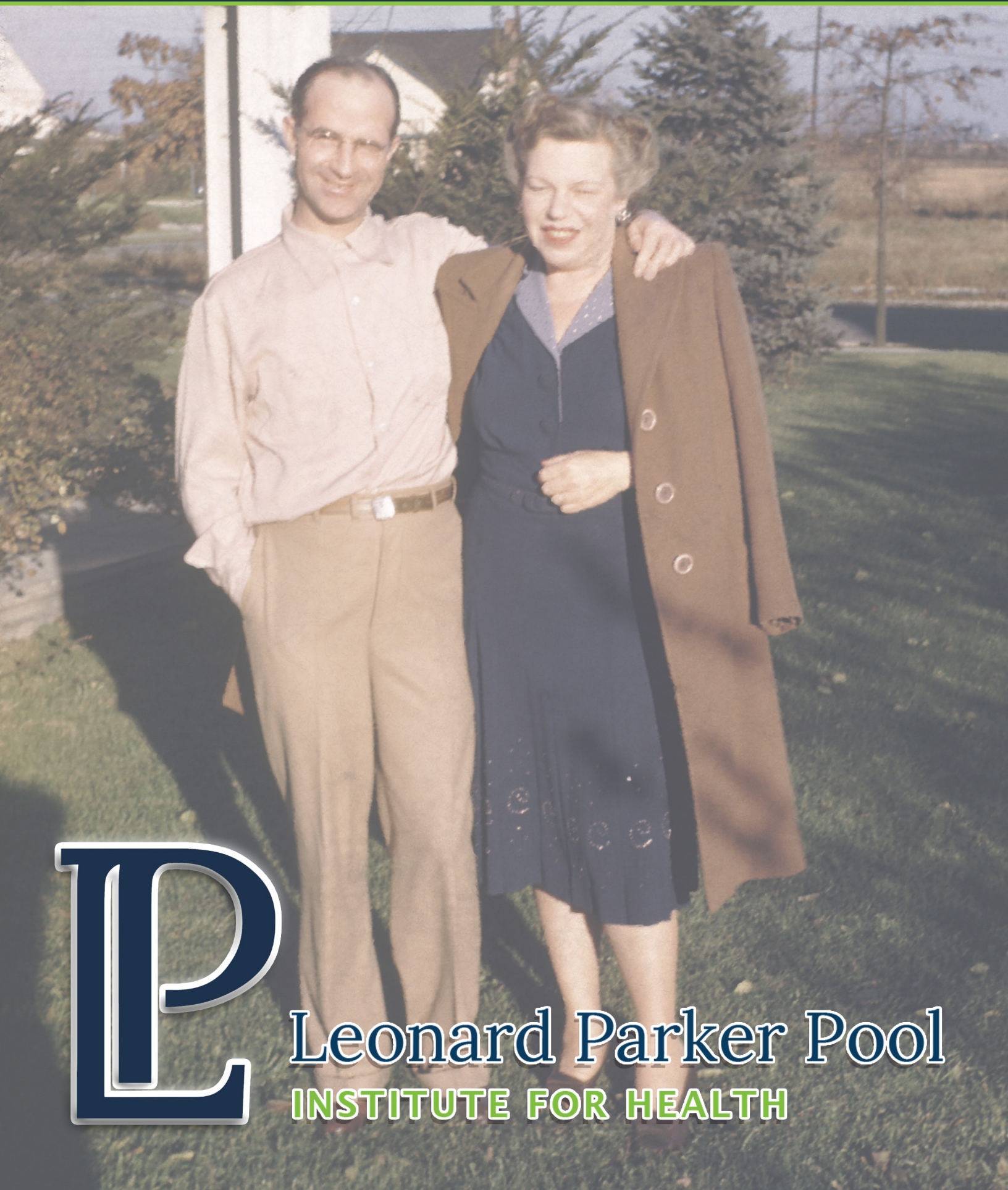


*Annual Report*

*Fiscal Year 2023*



**L**

**Leonard Parker Pool**  
**INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS



- Letter from the Executive Director.....4
- Place-Based Health Improvement Initiatives in Franklin Park.....5
  - Neighborhood Engagement.....8
  - Cradle-to-College or Career Pipeline.....10
  - Housing.....11
  - Community Well-Being.....12
  - Healthy Food Access.....12
- Inside the Institute: Supporting System-Level Efforts.....13
- Supporting Lehigh Valley Health Network.....21



*Photo courtesy of Peter Keady/PK3 Photography*

THE DOROTHY RIDER POOL  
HEALTH CARE TRUST 

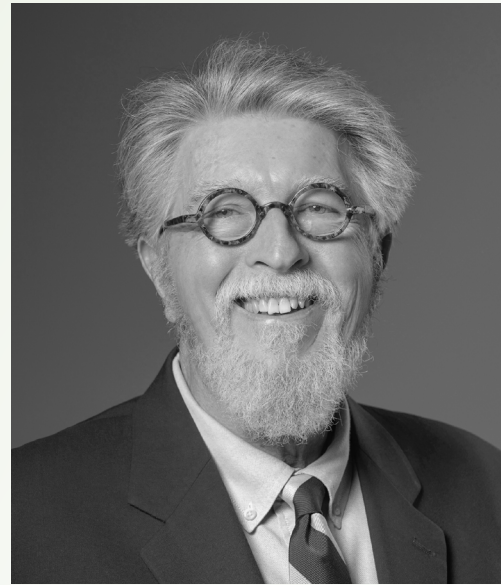
Leonard Parker Pool  
INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH

1975-2021

2021-Present



*Letter from the Executive Director*



The past 12 months have been a dynamic, transitional and productive time. As we have all worked through the various stages of the pandemic, The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health has also been in a growth and developmental stage. We began in July 2021 with a renewed energy to preserve the legacy of Leonard and Dorothy Rider-Pool and focus on the factors that impact health in the Lehigh Valley: education, safe and healthy housing, community well-being, and food and nutrition.

We are firmly convinced that a “place-based” neighborhood approach is the best way to tackle these broad and complex matters -- the place where these matters have direct impact on families’ lives.

Our work is data driven, and it equally includes the authentic voice and perspective of people in the community. Our work facilitates win-win-win opportunities across multiple sectors such as housing, education and health. Our work includes coordination and sustainability of initiative “for the long game.”

We are very grateful to the Pool Fellows of the past eight years, and all our colleagues and friends who share our vision. We are also appreciative of our national partners who provide advice, encouragement and validation that our approach is consistent with current best thinking on genuine health improvement for all.

Lastly, we are grateful for our team. Our staff size grew by three talented professionals in the past year, and my long-time colleague Ron Dendas retired after an accomplished career serving The Pool Trust, The Rider-Pool Foundation, and eventually The Pool Institute for over 20 years combined. Please review the accomplishments highlighted in this report and think of them as building blocks for a broader and sustained path to meaningful improvements in health in the Lehigh Valley.

Best regards,

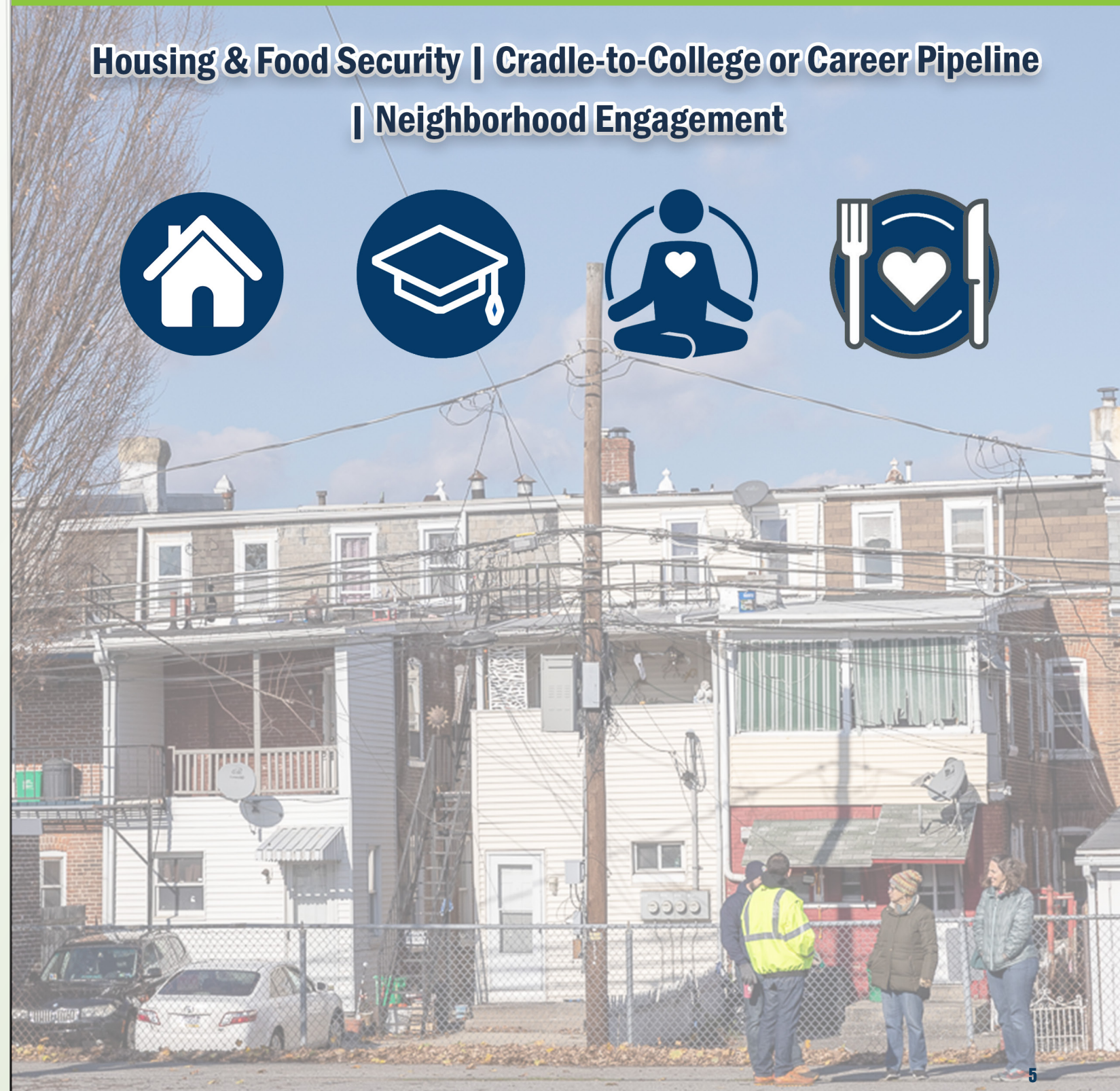
Edward F. Meehan, MPH  
Executive Director  
Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health

*Honoring the Pool legacy...  
...and striving towards a healthier future*



# Place-based Health Improvement Initiatives in Franklin Park

**Housing & Food Security | Cradle-to-College or Career Pipeline  
| Neighborhood Engagement**





## Place-Based Approach to Community Well-Being & Health Improvement Franklin Park 2023 Plan

### Housing & Food Security

Strengthen the pathways to economic mobility by improving the safe and stable housing options in Franklin Park and surrounding neighborhoods

**Local Partners:**

North Penn Legal Services  
Ripple Community, Inc.  
The City of Allentown  
Community Services for Children  
The Century Promise

**National Partner:**

Enterprise Community Partners

### Cradle-to-College/ Career Pipeline

Establish Early Childhood and Health collaborative to better understand the resources and supports that are most valuable and most needed in the community for families with young children

**Local Partners:**

Community Services for Children  
Allentown Health Bureau  
LVHN (Reilly Children's Hospital,  
Pool Center for Health Analytics)  
Valley Health Partners

**National Partner:**

BUILD Health

### Neighborhood Engagement

Improve connectivity to the neighborhood and sense of safety, engagement and empowerment among residents

**Local Partners:**

Cohesion Network  
St. Stephen's Outreach Center  
Ripple Church  
Ripple Community, Inc.  
The City of Allentown  
Valley Health Partners

**National Partner:**

FCS The Lupton Center

### Our Pillars

Using a **data-driven** sense of inquiry based on local, place based data

Ensuring the **voice of the community** is incorporated into all of our work

**Collaborating** across sectors and improving systems

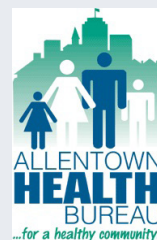
**Coordinating** all of the pieces and initiatives

### Investments in Franklin Park Place-Based Work

**FY 22** \$255K    **FY 23** \$436K    ↑ **71%**



Photo courtesy of Peter Keady/PK3 Photography



# Franklin Park Neighborhood (Census Tracts 18 & 20)

## Total Population

**10,150**

## Race/Ethnicity

**Hispanic/Latinx** →

**6,620 (65.2%)**

**Non-Hispanic White** →

**2,137 (21.1%)**

**Black/African American** →

**1,138 (11.2%)**

## Population Age (0-17 Years Old)

**3,408 (33.6%)**

**Ages 0-4 years old** →

**1,079 (32% of 3,408)**

**Children Living in Poverty** →

**1,538 (45% of 3,408)**

## Population Age (25+) with no High School Diploma

**1,519 (27%)**

Courtesy of U.S. Census Bureau



# NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGEMENT

## FCS Visits Franklin Park Neighborhood Discussion



Photo courtesy of Gracie Santana / Cohesion Network David Park from Focused Community Strategies (FCS) leads a neighborhood engagement workshop in Franklin Park

engagement with community residents. Since 2022, Cohesion Network has hosted monthly neighborhood meetings for Franklin Park residents and community stakeholders. The meetings are committed to meaningful, place-based improvements at Franklin Park through cross-sector collaboration.

On April 20, 2023, Pastor David Park and Pamela Stringfield from Focused Community Strategies (FCS) paid a visit and facilitated a series of meaningful conversations around neighborhood community engagement. FCS' visit included a workshop at a Cohesion Network Franklin Park Community Meeting. During the visit, FCS introduced a blueprint for effective community engagement and provided training to further relationship-building with neighbors in Franklin Park.

Based in Atlanta, FCS' mission is to empower neighborhoods to thrive by leveraging the unique attributes of the people, place and systems that shape them. The core values at FCS are being good neighbors, dignity and development, which is consistent with the core values at the Institute for Health. Authentic community engagement is one of the four Institute for Health pillars and an essential component for creating lasting health improvement.

Our goal at The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health is to create systems of organizing the community and engaging people in the neighborhood to connect and develop social fabric. Empowering neighbors will lead to greater ownership of their place and encourage leadership in civic change.

The Institute for Health partners with Cohesion Network, a local nonprofit dedicated to meaningful

## Benches make awaited return to Franklin Park

The community asked and has been heard! Surrounding neighbors at Franklin Park at St. Stephen's Outreach Center requested sitting park benches, new recycling and trash bins and better lighting for their neighborhood park located between North Franklin Street and North 14th Street in Allentown.

On November 19, 2022, an important first step was made when benches were installed at Franklin Park. The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health is thankful for



Photo courtesy of Peter Keady/PK3 Photography Allentown Mayor Matt Tuerk (L) observes the newly constructed benches at Franklin Park, as an emotional Reverend Maritza Torres Dolich embraces City of Allentown Recreation Program Specialist, Ryan Griffiths (R).

leadership from the Rev. Torres Dolich at the St. Stephen's Outreach Center. For decades the Rev. Torres Dolich has worked

on behalf of Franklin Park residents to help improve local resources impacting social determinants of health.

Dolich plays a key role in planning various Franklin Park community events throughout the year, such as an Easter Egg Hunt, "Franklin Park Spring Fling" and most recently, a Summer Block Party.

Thanks to the partnership between the Institute for Health, Cohesion Network, and Ripple Church, Franklin Park residents are encouraged to continue their dialogue at monthly meetings hosted at St. Stephen's Outreach Center on the third Thursday at 6:15 p.m.



Photo courtesy of Peter Keady/PK3 Photography City of Allentown Mayor and Pool Fellow, Matt Tuerk (right) addresses fellows and community partners at Franklin Park

## Fellows, Community Partners Take to Franklin Park

In March 2023, members of the Pool Fellowship for Health welcomed to Allentown Nico Connolly, Principal Strategist from FrameWorks Institute. Connolly led a daylong discussion on framing complex social issues in ways that activate and unite people with a focus on understanding people's deeply held worldviews and widely held assumptions. During his visit, Connolly, fellows and visitors from additional community partners toured the Franklin Park neighborhood throughout Census Tract 20 in Allentown.

"The Franklin Park walk with different community leaders from various sectors provided the opportunity for meaningful conversations between individuals that may not be experienced inside a traditional boardroom setting," said Edward Meehan, Executive Director of The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health.

The tour began and concluded at Brigadier General Anna Mae Hays Elementary School on Gordon Street, with additional stops at Franklin Park adjacent to St. Stephen's Outreach Center on Turner Street and Ripple Community Inc. along Linden Street.

"I found Allentown to be a place with a really unique history and an abundance of people who really just love their city, and their community whether it's Franklin Park or within broader Allentown," said Connolly.

Also attending the walk were representatives from TD Bank, the City of Allentown, Allentown Police Department, North Penn Legal Services, Community Services for Children (CSC), Valley Health Partners, Ripple Community Inc., Ripple Church and Cohesion Network.

# Hear from our proud partners!

**Leonard Parker Pool**  
INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH



SCAN TO WATCH on YouTube

**Cohesion**  
FRANKLIN PARK  
**Community Conversations**

3rd Thursday of each Month  
6:15PM

St. Stephen's Outreach Center  
1421 W Turner St.

Dinner provided

Cohesion Network in partnership with Stephen's Outreach Center of Christ Lutheran Church, Leonard Parker Pool Institute of Health, and Community Health Workers at Valley Health Partners

For more information: info@cohesionnetwork.org



## Lehigh Valley-Based Health and Education Services Launch New Collaborative

A new collaborative aims to create an equitable health and early learning environment for young children in Allentown and particularly in the Franklin Park neighborhood. The Allentown Health Bureau, Community Services for Children (CSC), Lehigh Valley Reilly Children's Hospital, The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health, Pool Center for Health Analytics and Valley Health Partners are committed to working together in new and innovative ways to integrate and reduce barriers to services that families rely on to support healthy development.

Additionally, this collaborative is excited to announce its selection to participate in the fourth cohort of a national program, The BUILD Health Challenge® (BUILD). Launched in 2015, BUILD addresses the root causes of our most pressing health challenges by changing conditions in our society, environment and policies that impact health and well-being at the population level.

While access to care remains a critical issue in the U.S., it is only a small



piece of the puzzle when addressing health disparities and the long-term well-being of a communi-

multi-sector partnerships that strive to ensure that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be healthy.

“The BUILD Health Challenge goal of improving health for all through cross-sector, upstream and community driven approaches aligns with the work of The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health and one of our other signature initiatives, the Pool Fellowship for Health. We are grateful to be selected as part of this national program which will provide technical assistance to partners and will offer best practices from participating cities.”

-- Edward Meehan,  
LPPIH Executive Director



SCAN TO VISIT  
ALLENTOWN'S BUILD  
HEALTH WEB PAGE

ty. An acronym for Bold, Upstream, Integrated, Local and Data-Driven, BUILD invests in community-centered,

Allentown is among 13 new communities throughout the United States in BUILD's fourth cohort that will receive

support to advance health equity over the next three years. Other communities in this cohort of BUILD include San Antonio, TX, St. Louis, MO and Durham, NC.

“BUILD communities are working to level the playing field,” said Melissa Monbouquette, Executive Director of BUILD.

“Health disparities across the country have been caused or exacerbated by systemic racism and disinvestment; no organization or sector can address all of the interlocking drivers of health inequity alone. True health transformation requires a shared responsibility to move these systems of oppression and neglect toward justice and universal well-being.”

Meetings are underway between the BUILD Health team and awarded cities. After a virtual orientation session on May 24, 2023, representatives from each site convened in Atlanta for a three-day “Community Connections” workshop from September 19-21, 2023. Updates on the initiative and its progress in Allentown can be found online at [lppih.org](http://lppih.org)

## LPPIH Continues Partnership with Enterprise Community Partners

In 2021, The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health began a Franklin Park Housing Group to address the need for more safe and healthy housing in the Franklin Park neighborhood. Core partners in this collaborative also include the City of Allentown, Ripple Community Inc., North Penn Legal Services, The Century Promise, and Community Services for Children (CSC).

Additionally, the Institute for Health applied for technical assistance from Enterprise Community Partners (ECP) to help advance its goal of improving the success, economic mobility and health of students and families living in the Franklin Park neighborhood through housing. ECP is a national nonprofit organized around three central goals: to increase housing supply, advance racial equity and build resilience and upward mobility. As of 2023, Enterprise has worked with community-based nonprofit organizations to develop 781,000 homes, investing \$44 billion throughout the United States.

Additionally, the organization works in more than 800 communities and in collaboration with thousands of partners in the nonprofit, public and for-profit sectors. In 2018, with funding from The Balmer Group, ECP launched a customized technical assistance program to explore ways in which housing and education collaborations could advance economic mobility for low-income communities.

Enterprise is working to create home and community pathways to upward mobility by developing community-designed strategies with local and national partners across different sectors. ECP's technical assistance program is designed to support communities across the country that are trying to work across

systems and address the multi-faceted issue of housing and particularly how it intersects with education.

ECP identifies five housing components that can be essential for upward mobility, giving families a strong foundation to move out of poverty, including housing stability, housing quality, housing affordability, neighborhood context, and housing that builds assets and wealth. These five components work together to influence holistic upward mobility and offer ways to measure progress toward those goals.

Phase I of the partnership between The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health and ECP occurred between March and June 2022 and included an assessment of the local landscape and an exploration of stakeholder perspectives in the Franklin Park neighborhood.

The Neighborhood Assessment revealed five key themes: 1) Housing stability is a major concern in Franklin Park. 2) Housing quality is often substandard. 3) An inability to afford rent has a significant impact on housing that is not safe to live in. 4) Neighborhood context and connectivity are critical. 5) It is difficult to isolate housing issues from education, health and other social and economic factors. The Institute for Health and its collaborators, with ongoing technical assistance from ECP, are using this assessment to design and drive a long-term, generational effort to measurably impact and improve these disparities.

ECP and the Franklin Park Housing Group developed a Phase II of the partnership based on the findings of the assessment from Phase I. The work in 2023 of the Franklin Park Housing Group and ECP partnership includes: 1) Data and Evaluation Support to Fill Key Information Gaps. 2) Cultivating Partnership Structure for the Franklin Park Housing Group. 3) Learn from and about the community. 4) Assess capacity and develop capacity-building plan.

### Housing Affordability, Stability, and Quality in the Franklin Park neighborhood

Median Housing Cost: \$959

Evictions Filed: 2,056

Occupied Housing Units with One or More Substandard Conditions: 2,039

Housing Constructed Before 1960: 3,414

Housing Constructed Between 1960 and 1979: 316

**3,572 total households**





# COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

## Visible Hands Collaborative Presents New Therapy Model



Photo courtesy of Peter Keady/PK3 Photography  
 Dr. Adalberto Barreto, founder of Integrated Community Therapy (ICT), provides insight into his studies at the Pool Speaker Series

On May 31, 2023, the Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health welcomed Dr. Ken Thompson and Dr. Adalberto Barreto from Visible Hands Collaborative to Allentown as part of the Pool Speaker Series. The Collaborative educates community members, students and mental health professionals about a community health care framework founded in Brazil called Integrative Community Therapy (ICT). Attendees enjoyed a morning of conversation about community well-being and how to create conditions for healing in the community. Attendees also participated in an ICT demonstration with partners at Lehigh Valley Health Network and local community nonprofit leaders.



SCAN TO WATCH on YouTube

# HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS

## Franklin Park Community Garden Blossoms



Inside the Institute:  
 Supporting System-Level Efforts



# Pool Speaker Series Debuts with Visits from Rippel and Visible Hands Collaborative

At the 2022 Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) Community Health Symposium, attendees expressed a desire to continue conversations through a series of speakers who specialize in various health topics. By spring, the Pool Speaker Series was proudly launched by The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health.

The Speaker Series began on April 20, 2023 at Lehigh Valley Hospital (LVH)–Cedar Crest with a visit from Dr. Bobby Milstein, Director of System Strategy at ReThink Health at The Rippel Foundation.

In 1953, The Rippel Foundation was established to invest in initiatives addressing cancer,



Photo courtesy of Peter Keady/PK3 Photography

Dr. Bobby Milstein from ReThink Health at The Rippel Foundation begins the Pool Speaker Series with a lecture on April 20, 2023

heart disease, the health of women and the elderly, and the maintenance of our nation's hospitals. In decades since, its mission has been approached

through a broader focus: guiding transformational change that supports better health and well-being for all—a future where everyone thrives, without

exception.

Dr. Milstein's lecture focused on bridging social needs and vital conditions, and how the role of hospitals can evolve in the future as shared stewards of health and well-being. Dr. Milstein defined "stewards" as people and organizations who take responsibility for working with others to create conditions that everyone needs to thrive together, beginning with those who are struggling and suffering.

The Speaker Series continued on May 31, 2023 with a focus on mental health. Dr. Ken Thompson and Dr. Adalberto Barreto from Visible Hands Collaborative visited Allentown to lead a conversation on community well-being and creating the conditions for healing in the community. With mental health professionals and local health workers present, Dr. Barreto introduced the concept of Integrated Community Therapy (ICT). The Institute for Health extends its thanks to both The Rippel Foundation and Visible Hands Collaborative for their respective visits, lectures and commitment to the health of residents in Allentown.

way we invest resources to create a thriving community.

The Lyric Room at Miller Symphony Hall hosted an engaged group of nonprofit community leaders and health care professionals. The workshop was titled "Thriving Communities Workshop: Bridging Social Needs and Vital Conditions." The Rippel Foundation started with the premise that a future in which every person has the opportunity to thrive cannot be achieved with a series of narrow projects or technical fixes. Holding a vision that centers the community as the focus requires us to think and act differently.

## Milstein Returns for Thriving Communities Workshop



Photo courtesy of Peter Keady/PK3 Photography

Dr. Milstein and his colleagues from The Rippel Foundation made another visit to Allentown on June 8, 2023. Following a presentation at the Pool Speaker Series event on April 20, Rippel led a morning of conversation and activities focused on the vital conditions framework and evaluating the

## FELLOWSHIP FOR HEALTH Cohort 8 Completes the Pool Fellowship



Photo courtesy of Peter Keady/PK3 Photography

Members of the Pool Fellowship for Health engage in a full-day workshop on February 8, 2023 at One City Center in Allentown

For eight years, the Pool Fellowship for Health has been a staple program provided by The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health. Each year, eight to 12 local leaders from different sectors form a new cohort.

Every month throughout a nine-month program a full-day workshop is held with a national faculty member who holds expertise in leadership and communication, systems change and authentic community engagement of data literacy. The Institute for Health believes to systematically change the way complex social issues are addressed, there is a need to refocus on the fundamentals of problem-solving, particularly (1) building trust with collaborative partners, (2) authentically engag-

ing with the community and (3) using stories and numbers to better understand the problem and inform solutions.

Thus, learning, coaching, practicing and relationship-building are four pillars that drive the Pool Fellowship for Health. In the short-term, the program increases local capacity and social capital that can work effectively in cross-sector partnerships and re-envision solutions to complex social issues. The ultimate, long-term goal is for improved health in the local community.

The Institute expresses thanks to Christofolo Schermer Consulting, The Lupton Center, The Systems Sanctuary, TCC Group, StriveTogether and The Frameworks Institute for serving as faculty for Cohort 8.

## Cohort 8

<b>Tommy Acevedo</b>	<i>Director of Integrated Behavioral Health Services</i>	Valley Health Partners
<b>Cheryl Arndt</b>	<i>Community Partnership Data Strategy Analyst</i>	Pool Institute for Health
<b>Darian Colbert</b>	<i>Executive Director</i>	Cohesion Network
<b>Chloe Cole-Wilson</b>	<i>Program Coordinator</i>	Project Silk Lehigh Valley
<b>Yusuf Dahl</b>	<i>CEO</i>	Century Promise
<b>Yorman De La Rosa</b>	<i>Community Liaison</i>	Lehigh County Department of Community and Economic Development
<b>Ramona Hollie-Major</b>	<i>Chief Operating Officer</i>	COI Energy
<b>AJ Lemheney</b>	<i>Vice President &amp; Executive Director</i>	Muhlenberg College Division of Graduate and Continuing Education
<b>Matt Tuerk</b>	<i>Mayor of Allentown</i>	City of Allentown
<b>Deidra Vachier</b>	<i>CEO/President</i>	Community Services for Children, Inc.
<b>Max Weintraub</b>	<i>CEO/President</i>	Allentown Art Museum

## Faculty

**Beth Schermer**, Principal, *Christofolo Schermer Consulting*

**Rosemarie Christofolo**, Principal, *Christofolo Schermer Consulting*

**Shawn Duncan**, Director of FCS's Training and Consulting Division, *The Lupton Center*

**David Park**, Lead Trainer and Consultant, *The Lupton Center*

**Rachel Sinha**, Co-Director, *The Systems Sanctuary*

**Jared Raynor**, Director of Evaluation, *TCC Group*

**Colin Groth**, Director of Innovation, *StriveTogether*

**Nico Connolly**, *The Frameworks Institute*





## All Episodes Available on Demand!

Join The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health Executive Director Edward Meehan and WDIY's Greg Capogna each month for a new episode of HealthBeat! Each episode, the duo discusses vital conditions that impact our health. All episodes are available on demand at [lppih.org/healthbeat](http://lppih.org/healthbeat).



**Community Heals:** Dr. Ken Thompson, Brigit Hassig, and the Development of ICT



**Health Systems, Community Health Symposium and Studies with LVHN:** Dr. Brian Nester, Lehigh Valley Health Network President and CEO



**Becoming Stewards of a Better 'Well-Being Society':** Dr. Bobby Milstein | ReThink Health at The Rippel Foundation



**The Future of Allentown School District :** Dr. Carol Birks, ASD Superintendent

(April Gamiz/The Morning Call)



**Allentown's Community Health and Preparing for the Next Public Health Emergency :** Vicky Kistler, City of Allentown



**Urban Renewal and Growing Up in Allentown :** The Story of Daniel Bosket

# LPPIH Supports Efforts to Improve our Regional Reponse to Human Trafficking

Human Trafficking is a crime that involves compelling or coercing a person to provide labor or services, or to engage in commercial sex acts. The U.S. State Department has estimated 50,000 persons are trafficked into the United States and there are approximately 400,000 domestic minors involved in human trafficking.

Traffickers exploit vulnerable populations, with women and children comprising 75% of its victims according to the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime. Risk factors such as poverty, unemployment, homelessness and abuse increase the likelihood of an individual becoming a victim of trafficking. Protective factors such

as education and social support networks can help mitigate members of vulnerable populations from becoming part of this modern-day slave trade.

Within the Lehigh Valley, cross-sector partners are working together to develop a community-wide approach that will build a safety net of services as victim identification and data tracking improves. This work aims to reduce the negative impacts of trauma and provide opportunities for healing for those who have been trafficked as well as reduce the number of individuals who are being trafficked and prevent it from occurring.

Central to this collaborative is Bloom for

Women, Inc., a Lehigh Valley nonprofit organization providing sanctuary and a continuum of care for women survivors of trafficking, and the Lehigh County District Attorney's office.

Bloom follows the model of the remarkably successful Thistle Farms program in Nashville, Tenn., and is part of the Thistle Farms National Network of sister communities, joining more than 60 other sister agencies across the U.S. Bloom additionally provides long-term residential services for victims of trafficking.

Bloom currently has four homes and is soon growing to five homes. Recently through the generosity of an anonymous donor, Bloom was able to

purchase a residence in Allentown that will allow survivors of trafficking, including some who are pregnant, to receive two years of residential housing and safety while they heal, deliver and care for their baby, attend parenting classes and receive mentoring and vocational training.

As a way to raise awareness of human trafficking and ignite ideas and discussion about our community response, Lehigh County, Bloom and The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health welcomed the Rev. Becca Stevens, the founder of Thistle Farms, to the Lehigh Valley on September 27-28, 2022.

Next steps are to explore a partnership between Bloom and Lehigh Valley Health Network around pathways to employment for graduates of Bloom, and to continue work with the District Attorney's Office, Bloom and other cross-sector partners to establish a social entrepreneur component and other coordinated community supports.

For more information on Bloom for Women and its local services, visit their website online at [www.bloomforwomen.org](http://www.bloomforwomen.org).

## New Downtown Community Engagement Committee Debuts

Inspired by a meeting in October 2022 between Allentown Mayor Matt Tuerk and various Allentown-based executives, local business leader's collectively expressed that the strength and success of the entire Lehigh Valley is highly contingent on a vibrant downtown. As a result, an executive in each organization based downtown selected a company representative to form a new committee of engaged leaders.

The new Downtown Allentown Engagement Committee is chaired by Jill Wheeler, VP of Sales & Marketing for City Center Allentown. Selected to represent The Leonard Parker Pool In-

stitute for Health on the committee was Matt Trust, Community Engagement and Communications Specialist. Three sub-committees were branched to support the overall mission: Civic Engagement, Marketing and Clean/Safe/Hospitality. Trust was selected to lead the Civic Engagement sub-committee, comprised of 11 individuals from Allentown-based organizations including PPL, People First Federal Credit Union, Duggan and Marcon, Da Vinci Science Center, Muhlenberg College, Lehigh Mining and Navigation, the City of Allentown and state Sen. Nick Miller's office.



# The Pool Institute Grows in Size, Welcomes Three New Additions to the Staff in FY23



## Jennifer Garcia, MS Financial Analyst

Jennifer Garcia began her role as a Financial Analyst at The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health in August 2022. Garcia specializes in streamlining LPPIH's financial and administrative requirements. Additionally, Jennifer is experienced in financial/data analysis, computer systems analysis and accounting/billing services. Garcia earned Bachelor's of Arts in International Business Management from Moravian College and a Master's of Science in Information Systems from New Jersey Institute of Technology. Her professional interests meet at the intersection of community health and healthcare technologies. Outside of work, Garcia attends continuing education classes and enjoys fun day trips around the Lehigh Valley and Philadelphia area. An avid domestic and international traveler, her favorite city visited thus far is Seville, Spain.

## Cheryl Arndt, PhD Community Partnership Data Strategy Analyst

Cheryl Arndt is the Community Partnership Data Strategy Analyst with The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health and fellow in the 2022-2023 Pool Fellowship for Health. For many years, Cheryl developed and ran mental health and social services programs for children and adults in the Lehigh Valley. When an employer encouraged her to lead a performance improvement initiative, she discovered a passion for helping nonprofits to effectively and efficiently collect, analyze, use, and communicate their critical data. Since then, Cheryl has worked in evaluation and performance improvement in healthcare, education, and social services programs in multiple states.

She has volunteered at the committee and board levels with local non-profits and at her place of worship. Additionally, Cheryl has presented at over a dozen national and state conferences, served as a peer reviewer for an American Psychological Association journal, and published a book chapter as well as articles in trade and academic journals. In addition to her non-profit work, Cheryl has experience as a small business owner, having owned a successful consumer insight and user experience research company where she worked internationally and with multiple Fortune 500 companies. Cheryl's degrees are in psychology—her master's was clinical in nature while her PhD was focused on research. She has taught Psychology at the community college, university, and graduate levels. When not working, Cheryl enjoys dog training, kayaking, and trying to keep up with the garden. She lives with her family in rural, northwestern Lehigh County.



## Matt Trust, MS Community Engagement and Communications Specialist

A Lehigh Valley native, Matt Trust is the Community Engagement and Communications Specialist at The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health. After joining The Institute in October 2022, Matt began his tenure working in health communications following six years with Hershey Entertainment & Resorts as a Media Relations Coordinator. In his previous role, Trust garnered relationships with media outlets in the Harrisburg-Lancaster-Lebanon-York market, which often showcased Hershey as a tourist destination for sports and entertainment. Serving primarily the Hershey Bears hockey team sector of HE&R, Matt connected professional athletes with local community events such as hospital visits at Penn State Health Children's Hospital and classroom visits at the Milton Hershey School.

In his work with The Institute, Trust frequently attends community conversations hosted by the City of Allentown and Cohesion Network, and encourages cross-sector collaboration among non-profits regarding work within Allentown's Franklin Park neighborhood. Trust earned his Bachelor's of Arts in Communication-Journalism, Public Relations in 2018 and Master's of Science in Communication Strategies in 2020 from Shippensburg University. Matt is a current graduate student enrolled in Lehigh University's College of Health with desires of obtaining a Master's in Public Health. In his spare time, Matt is an avid New York sports fan and enjoys outdoor activities.



Quinn Fantozzi  
LVHN Research Scholar 2023

## Meet our Research Scholar - Quinn Fantozzi

Quinn Fantozzi is student at Fordham University and will be starting her senior year in the fall of 2023. She has lived in Allentown her entire life and attended Allentown Central Catholic High School, where she had the opportunity to become involved in community service within the city. Quinn is majoring in psychology with a minor in marketing, and she is planning to attend graduate school so that she can one day work in both the fields of psychology and public health. Quinn's summer research project involved investigating neighborhood engagement and perceptions among Franklin Park residents.

## Fantozzi's Findings in Franklin Park

Fantozzi's project aimed to gain a better understanding of the experiences of those living in the Franklin Park neighborhood, how residents engage with their community, and what can be done to improve their conditions through piloting a survey and conducting interviews. The study also aimed to gain more context about the experience of living in Franklin Park and to add more to the historical context of the neighborhood.

A total of 14 Franklin Park residents engaged in a survey. Eight identified as White, four as Hispanic and three as Black or African American. Nine respondents reported as English speakers, two reported as Spanish speakers and three reported as both English and Spanish speakers.

Respondents were surveyed on their neighborhood engagement on a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neutral, somewhat agree and strongly agree. Additionally, respondents were surveyed on their level of satisfaction with neighborhood services on a five-point scale ranging from very unhappy, somewhat unhappy, neutral, somewhat happy and very happy.

Results from the neighborhood engagement question are illustrated in Figure 1. All respondents were in agree-

ment or neutral regarding the statements "I have supportive neighbors" and "I have good interactions with first responders." When asked if the residents feels safe in their neighborhood, 86% agreed, but 7% strongly disagreed. Furthermore, 21% noted they would not want to stay in the Franklin Park neighborhood, and 49% are not aware of resources available to residents in Franklin Park.

Regarding questions based on neighborhood service satisfaction, Figure 2 shows 43% of respondents are somewhat unhappy with supermarket/food option in Franklin Park. Additionally, 21% are somewhat unhappy with the parks/recreations within the Franklin Park neighborhood and 21% are somewhat unhappy with the healthcare services.

Figure 3 showcases the highest average satisfaction for services in Franklin Park on a five-point scale are within community-based services (4.4) and faith-based services (4.2).

Some respondents reported they feel that their neighborhood is not receiving recognition from the city, and some also felt that they may not be aware of the resources available to them within their neighborhood.

The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health will be fur-

ther developing and conducting this survey as a part of their on-going initiative. For future versions of this survey, it would be worth investigating how different age groups respond within the context of the evolution of the city, and also to hear exclusively from residents within Franklin Park.

Additionally, another pilot-ed survey could be developed for those experiencing homelessness to see what services require the most attention. The Institute should address the lack of awareness regarding resources and the poor satisfaction with the supermarket and food services.

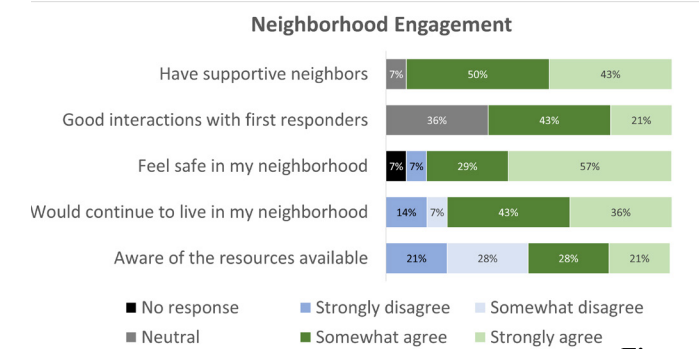


Figure 1

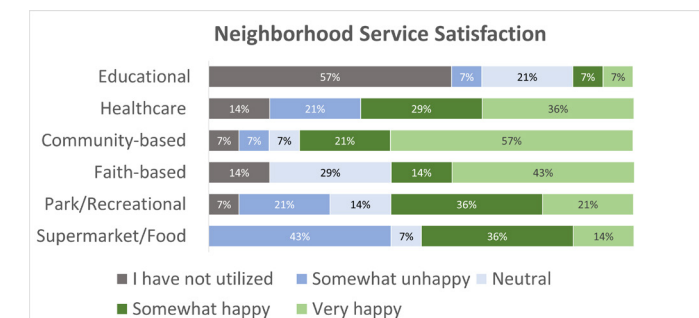


Figure 2

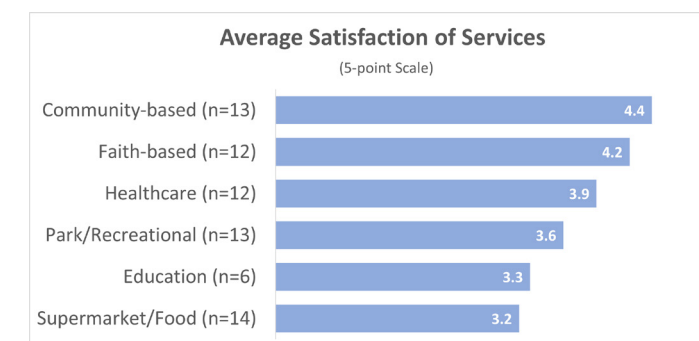


Figure 3



# Meehan Coauthors “Healthcare is not about health”

Edward Meehan, Executive Director of The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health, coauthored an article featured in the June 2023 edition of BioAdvances. The monthly open access journal is published by the Federation of American Societies for Ex-

perimental Biology. The primary author was James O. Woolliscroft with additional contributors Larry D. Gruppen and Jasna Markovac.

Woolliscroft also serves on the Institute for Health Board in addition to his role as professor of internal medicine and

learning health sciences at University of Michigan.

The article acknowledges the health care system is focused on reversing or modifying disease, rather than enhancing health.

**FASEB** BioAdvances



SCAN TO READ THE FULL ARTICLE

# Arndt, Shaak and Meehan Contribute to Healing Magazine

The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health’s Cheryl Arndt, PhD, Samantha Shaak, PhD, and Edward Meehan contributed to a recent issue of Healing Magazine, KidsPeace’s award-winning publication. The Summer 2023 issue of Healing focuses on overcoming

barriers to mental health care. In the guest article, “The Opportunity for Health: Improving Health Equity and Community Well-Being in a Post COVID World,” the Institute explores inequities in both access to care and in health outcomes.

The article also ex-

amines frameworks for understanding well-being at the community level. Seen this way, well-being in a community is comprised of more than just the mental health of its individual community members – it includes important economic, social and structural factors that

influence peoples’ opportunity to attain health.

SCAN TO READ THE FULL ARTICLE



## LPPIH.org Debuts New Interactive Local Data Modules

1.) Hover your mouse over “Data” on LPPIH.org and select one of the five modules



2.) View and share local data with ease

Export to PDF | Email Report | Share to Facebook | Share to Twitter

### Downtown Allentown Report Card

**Population**

**Total Population**  
Downtown Allentown has a total population of 59,161, covering 3.60 square miles based on U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2015-19 5-year estimates. The population density of Downtown Allentown is estimated at 16,451 persons per square mile. View source information.

Race and Ethnicity	Total	Percent
White	31,425	55.97%
Black	9,049	16.12%
Asian	1,189	2.12%
Native American or Alaska Native	675	1.20%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	128	0.23%
Some Other Race	10,617	18.91%

STAY UP TO DATE WITH OUR LATEST NEWS!

LPPIH.org /NEWS

ALL CATEGORIES: Any, Press Releases, Articles, HealthBEAT, Annual Reports, Reports to the Region, News

**Integrative Community Therapy with Ken Thompson, MD, and Adalberto Barreto, MD, PhD**  
July 14, 2023  
News | Articles | Speaker Series

On Wednesday, May 31, 2023, LPPIH welcomed Ken Thompson, MD, and Adalberto Barreto, MD, PhD, from Visible Hands Collaborative for the second installment of the Pool Speaker Series. Watch the full...

**Stewardship with Bobby Milstein, PhD**  
June 29, 2023  
News | Articles | Speaker Series

On April 20, 2023, Bobby Milstein, PhD, Director of System Strategy with ReThink Health at The Rippe Foundation, joined us to kick off our new 'Pool Speaker Series.' In his presentation, Milstein...

...more features coming soon!

# Supporting Lehigh Valley Health Network





# LVHN holds inaugural Community Health Symposium, Releases Report to Community

On November 16, 2022, Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN), in conjunction with The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health, hosted a full day's worth of meaningful conversations with local community leaders. Below are the objectives, themes and next steps, as well as a QR code linked to the full report.

## LVHN COMMUNITY HEALTH SYMPOSIUM 2022

**Objectives**

- To learn community partners' insights about factors that improve health
- To showcase local partners' innovative work in health improvement
- To highlight LVHN's role in addressing social determinants of health
- To identify next steps we can take collectively to improve community well-being



**COLLABORATION AMONG SYSTEMS**



**DATA USE AND UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH**

---



**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND UNDERSTANDING**



**ENERGY FOR INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS**

**95**  
PEOPLE ATTENDED

**35**  
AGENCIES REPRESENTED

**10**  
SECTORS PRESENT

**4**  
BREAKOUT SESSIONS

**2**  
PLENARY SPEAKERS

KEEPING IT GOING



**READINESS**



**INNOVATIVE SPEAKERS**



**SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES**



**DATA TRAINING**



**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**



**PLACE-BASED APPROACH**



Please scan the QR code to be taken to the full report.



# Shaak and Arndt Present Findings from LVHN's Community Health Needs Assessment

## Speaking engagements took place in Carbon and Luzerne County

Samantha Shaak, PhD, Director of Community Innovation and Evaluation and Community Partnership Data Strategy Analyst, Cheryl Arndt, PhD, have previously presented findings from Lehigh Valley Health Network's Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) in various counties.



Samantha Shaak, PhD (L) and Cheryl Arndt, PhD (R) present findings from LVHN's Community Health Needs Assessment

Shaak presented at the Lehigh Valley Health Network Board of Associates Meeting for Luzerne County. The event also featured a presentation by William Reppy, the President of the Lehigh Valley Hospital—Schuylkill and Vice President-Operations, LVHN Northwest Region.

Priorities for Luzerne County highlighted in the Implementation Plan were school-based behavioral and preventive health, as well as addressing language barriers to improve health outcomes for vulnerable populations.

Shaak also presented findings from Lehigh Valley Health Network's 2022 CHNA to the LVH Board of Associates in the Lehigh Valley and Carbon County.

Arndt continued the conversation at Carbon County in a separate

event by presenting at the Carbon County Community Forum. The event dedicated a day's worth of networking, collaboration and professional development with Carbon County nonprofit representatives and civic leaders.

In Cheryl's presentation of Carbon County's CHNA, priorities highlighted in the Implementation Plan were school-based behavioral health services and access to primary care and other preventive services in rural areas.

The Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health is proud to manage and coordinate the CHNA efforts for Lehigh Valley Health Network. The CHNA reports include data and information about the communities we serve and provide an important role in our region's health surveillance. Additionally, our report is instrumental in encouraging and continuing on-going community dialogue about the most pressing health issues our residents are facing.

All CHNAs for each county Lehigh Valley Health Network provides service in can be found online at [lvhn.org/chna](http://lvhn.org/chna).

## Lehigh Valley Health Network Launches Blue Zones Activate in Allentown

By Brian Downs (LVHN)

Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) and the City of Allentown have launched Blue Zones Activate, a comprehensive initiative that uses an evidence-based approach to make healthy choices easier in all the places people spend the most time. The effort begins with an in-depth assessment of the Allentown area that will help determine how to make it a healthier place to live, work and thrive.

"Lehigh Valley Health Network is committed to providing exceptional care and improving the well-being of the people in the communities we serve," says Brian A. Nester, DO, MBA, President and CEO, LVHN. "By partnering with Blue Zones and the city, we have an opportunity to expand our efforts in Allentown and work together to address the social determinants of health that impact our patients and their families. Together, we believe we can ultimately improve

health outcomes for everyone in the community."

Allentown Mayor Matt Tuerk commented, "Blue Zones Activate marks a step forward in building a healthier and more equitable Allentown, which aligns with our vision to create a more sustainable and vibrant community. I believe that by working together with Blue Zones, LVHN and other local organizations, we can build a brighter, safer and better future for everyone in Allentown."



L

**TWO CITY CENTER | 645 HAMILTON STREET, SUITE 202 | ALLENTOWN, PA 18101 |**

**CONTACT: Matt Trust | [matt.trust@lppih.org](mailto:matt.trust@lppih.org) | O:484-224-0686**