



Harvard School of Public Health
Prevention Research Center
 on Nutrition and Physical Activity



W.K. Kellogg Foundation Food & Community Partner

Leaders in Health:

Strengthening community nutrition and physical activity initiatives through introductory training in public health research and science

Request for applications: DUE Friday, February 14, 2014

Overview: Leaders in Health is seeking applications from community members who are striving to improve nutrition and physical activity in Boston and surrounding communities. Now in its 4th year, the program's goal is to build the capacity of our community partners by providing participants with an introduction to the fundamentals of community-based participatory research (CBPR) and nutrition, physical activity, and obesity prevention among children and youth. Individuals who are currently involved with a nutrition- or physical activity-related program or project (on either a work or volunteer basis) are eligible to apply. Participants will attend interactive training sessions, complete assignments, and receive support to create an action plan to enhance their current work.

Why is this program important?

The Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center on Nutrition and Physical Activity (HPRC), the Boston Collaborative for Food and Fitness (BCFF), and Harvard Catalyst co-sponsor the *Leaders in Health* program. All three organizations work with community partners who provide invaluable knowledge of local issues as well as communication and organizing skills essential to the implementation, effectiveness, reach, sustainability, and dissemination of nutrition & physical activity work.

Through our conversations with community partners working to improve nutrition and physical activity, many organizations have asked for a program that will help them understand and use a public health approach, community-based participatory research methods, and the science underlying effective evidence-based obesity prevention strategies. This program will benefit our work, the work of our organizational partners, and individual program participants. By working together, we can have a more significant impact on improving nutrition and physical activity and reducing overweight among Boston area residents, particularly children and youth.

Past participants say...

~The Leaders in Health Program allowed me to understand the supporting factors that assist with creating a healthy individual, neighborhood and community. Learning about environmental factors such as open space availability, access to reasonably priced healthy food and the importance of developing programming and policies through research that is informed by the community were instrumental in helping me to truly understand health in a holistic manner.

~My participation in Leaders in Health has helped to go beyond just teaching fitness by allowing me to better understand the various components that lead to better health for a community at large.



What is community-based participatory research?

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is a joint effort that involves researchers and community representatives in all phases of the research process. The joint effort engages community members, uses local knowledge to understand health problems and design interventions, and invests community members in the processes and products of research. In addition, the researchers and community representatives are committed to the dissemination and use of research findings to improve community health and reduce health disparities.

Who is eligible to participate?

If you live or work in the greater Boston area and are currently involved with a nutrition- or physical activity-related program or project (on either a work or volunteer basis) you are eligible to apply. The program will be limited to 12 participants. Community-based work is at its best when all members of the community are represented: *Leaders in Health* encourages applications from participants of all ages, education levels, races, ethnicities, and gender/sexual identities.

What are the benefits of participating?

Individual participants will benefit from:

- Professional development, in areas including public health research methods, application of up-to-date evidence-based research, project planning and evaluation
- Networking opportunities with leaders in the public health profession and other participants from local organizations doing nutrition and physical activity work
- Designing an action plan to set goals for improving a nutrition- or physical activity-related program or project you are currently working on
- Opportunity to present research and publicize your project
- Certificate of completion and help incorporating the program into your résumé
- Stipend upon completion (see below for more details)

Organizations that support an employee's participation will also benefit from the program. Participants' exposure to new research methods and skills will be directly applied to enhance organizations' current nutrition and physical activity projects.

Program Structure and Timeline

Eight sessions will be held weekly, on Thursdays from 11am to 1pm, between March and May. The sessions will be interactive and discussion-based to provide opportunities for two-way learning and sharing among participants. Each session will include an overview of the topic, time for questions, and an opportunity for participants to discuss how they might apply the topic to their work. Participants will be expected to regularly complete small assignments applying new knowledge to a specific program or project of interest. The end products will be an action plan that will guide participants in applying the knowledge and skills they gain from the program to enhance their current work and a short presentation summarizing their progress and plans for a broader audience. Sessions will be facilitated primarily by Harvard School of Public Health Prevention Research Center staff.

Training sessions will be held at the Landmark Center in the Fenway/Kenmore neighborhood: 401 Park Drive, Boston, MA 02215. Please take travel to and from the Landmark Center into account when considering applying for the program.



Is there a cost to participate in the training program?

Participants are asked to pay a \$200 deposit to secure a place in the program. Upon completion of at least 7 out of 8 sessions in the program, participants will get their \$200 back *plus* a \$400 stipend. We do not want payment to be a barrier for any potential participants. If you have any concerns or questions about this payment or any other aspect of the program, please call or write to Bekka Lee at 617-384-5457 or rlee@hsph.harvard.edu.

Program Schedule (*subject to change*)

Session 1: An Introduction to Public Health Principles and Practice

- Public health approach
- Theoretical frameworks used in public health – social ecological model, theories of change

Session 2: Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) and Health Equity

- What is CBPR? What is the value of learning how to do it in my community?
- Learning how to read RFPs and critically review research proposals

Session 3: Basics of Nutrition and Obesity

- Latest science
- Food system-related policy and environmental change (examples of interventions)

Session 4: Basics of Physical Activity and Obesity

- Latest science
- Physical activity policy and built environment change (examples of interventions)

Sessions 5 and 6: Project Development, Implementation, and Monitoring & Evaluation

- Applying what you've learned to create a nutrition- or physical activity-related action plan

Session 7: How do you use your voice to make a positive impact?

- Presentation and facilitation skills
- Organizing and advocacy
- Leadership development

Session 8: Participant Presentations

Application Process

Please submit the following by email or fax:

1. Completed application form found on the next page
2. Résumé or work/volunteer history
3. A one-page statement of interest including the following:
 - a. Description of a nutrition- or physical activity-related project you're currently working on and how this program would benefit your project
 - b. Ways in which your participation in this program would be meaningful to your personal and professional development
4. A one-page letter of support from your supervisor including the following:
 - a. How would this training program benefit the needs and interests of your organization/community?
 - b. Given the research needs and interests of your organization/community, why is the applicant a good candidate for this training program?

(Note: if you're planning on applying the training to a community project you're working on with someone other than an employer, you can get a letter of support from someone in the community, instead).

Deadline is Friday, February 14, 2014.



Please e-mail or fax the entire application to:

Bekka Lee

Research Associate

Harvard Prevention Research Center on Nutrition and Physical Activity

Harvard School of Public Health

E-mail: rlee@hsph.harvard.edu

Fax: 617-384-8730

APPLICATION FORM

First Name:

Last Name:

Street Address (Home):

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone Number:

Email:

Gender:

Age:

Ethnicity (optional):

Are you currently employed? YES

NO

→ If YES

Name of Organization/Company:

What is your position there?

How long have you worked there?

Work Phone #:

Work Email:

What is your supervisor's name?

Supervisor's Phone #:

Supervisor's Email:

→ If NO

Who will be writing your letter of support?

Where do they work?

What is their contact information?

Phone #:

Email:

