



Community-Campus Partnerships for Health

Promoting Health Equity & Social Justice

FOOD DIGNITY RECEIVES 13th ANNUAL CCPH AWARD

May 3, 2014 – Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (CCPH) is delighted to announce **Food Dignity** as the recipient of its 2014 annual award. The award highlights the power and potential of partnerships between communities and academic institutions as a strategy for social justice and health equity. It honors community-campus partnerships that are striving to achieve the systems and policy changes needed to overcome the root causes of health, social, environmental and economic inequalities.

Food Dignity is a collaboration between five community organizations, three academic institutions and one “action-think” tank. In the face of soaring obesity and hunger rates, socioeconomic decline, and threats of peak soil and peak oil, many communities are making paths to a brighter future by building community food systems that aim to nourish everyone in current and future generations. Begun in April 2011, **Food Dignity** traces these paths taken by five US communities and collaborates in mapping and traveling the most appropriate and effective roads forward for creating sustainable community food systems that build food security. The community partners all struggle with historical trauma and severe deprivation associated with poverty and exclusion from the mainstream economic system, including access to fresh, healthy food. Project funding provides a community food system organizing support package to each community over five years to use as it determines best to address the problem of food insecurity. The academic partners collaborate with the community organizations to help document their histories, progress and accomplishments, particularly in the form of five case studies.

Over its first three years, significant struggles in community-campus relationships have emerged. With substantial hard work and intention to identify, name and address these challenges of differential power and privilege, the partnership has produced important lessons, both in understanding how to build a sustainable community food system and in building and maintaining healthy, productive and increasingly equitable relationships between community and academic partners. None of this work has been easy. Yet with passion, persistence and commitment the partnership continues to evolve and grow. The partnership is documenting lessons as a ‘sixth case study’ of the project collaboration itself.

As explained in the partnership’s application, “Our name, **Food Dignity**, signals both our **ethical stance** that human and community agency in food systems is an end in itself and our **scientific hypothesis** that building civic and institutional capacity to engage in sustainable community food systems for food security action will improve the sustainability and equity of our local food systems and economies.”

Diverse groups that include the **East New York Farms!**, Brooklyn, NY; **Whole Community Project**, Ithaca, NY; **Feeding Laramie Valley**, Laramie, WY; **Blue Mountain Associates**, Wind River Reservation, WY; **Dig Deep Farms & Produce**, Cherryland/Ashland, CA; **University of Wyoming**, **Cornell University**, and **Ithaca College**; and **Center for Popular Research, Education and Policy**, Oakland, CA can all be counted as **Food Dignity** partners.

Reviewers overwhelmingly praised the honesty and self-reflection of the partners who revealed their challenges and addressed them admirably. One reviewer remarked on how thoughtfully **Food Dignity** was initiated and its attention to “capacity building and mutual respect and commitment to mutual process and reflection,” concluding that “this is an outstanding model of collaborative partnership work!”

Award reviewer Alex Pirie, Coordinator of the Immigrant Service Providers Group/Health in Somerville, MA presented the award at the closing session of CCPH’s 13th International Conference in Chicago, IL. Accepting the award on behalf of the partnership were Hank Herrera, President & CEO of the Center for Popular Research, Education and Policy, Oakland, CA; Jemila Sequiera, Director of the Whole Community Project in Ithaca, NY; and Gayle Woodsum, Founder & Director of Feeding Laramie Valley, of Laramie WY.

In his remarks presenting the award, Mr. Pirie noted. “I am honored to introduce this year’s award recipient. You will be as impressed with their work and as eager to learn from them as I was when I read their application. The incredible work of this partnership was originally initiated by **Food Dignity’s** Principal Investigator, Christine Porter, during her graduate work at Cornell University – a reminder to all of us to cherish the graduate students and post-docs on our projects. Today’s struggling grad student is tomorrow’s Secretary of Health and Human Services – or as in this case, the builder of an extraordinary community and academic collaboration.”

Also announced at the conference was the partnership that received an Honorable Mention: the Crossroads Collaborative in Tucson, AZ that is working to advance research, graduate training, public conversation and – ultimately – social change in the area of youth, sexuality, health, and rights.

For more information about the 2014 CCPH Award Winner and Honorable Mention, visit <http://ccph.memberclicks.net/annual-award-winners>. Visit **Food Dignity** at <http://fooddignity.org/>. Visit the Crossroads Collaborative at <http://mcclellandinstitute.arizona.edu/crossroads>.

Application guidelines for the 2015 CCPH Award will be posted online at <http://ccph.info> in Fall 2014. Applications in English are accepted from any country or nation. Partnerships need not be members of CCPH.

Please email questions and inquiries to award@ccph.info

About CCPH: Community-Campus Partnerships for Health promotes health equity and social justice through partnerships between communities and academic institutions that focus on changing the conditions and environments in which people live, work and play. CCPH’s strategic goals are to:

- Mobilize the knowledge, wisdom and experience in communities and in academic institutions to solve pressing health, social, environmental and economic challenges
- Build the capacity of communities and academic institutions to engage each other in partnerships that balance power, share resources, and work towards systems change
- Ensure that community-driven social change is central to the work of community-academic partnerships

Learn more about CCPH at <http://ccph.info>. Follow the latest CCPH news through our E-News, listservs and social media at <http://ccph.memberclicks.net/listservs-and-social-media>.



Accepting the 2014 CCPH Annual Award on behalf of Food Dignity are, from left, Hank Herrera, President & CEO, The Center for Popular Research, Education and Policy, Oakland, CA; Jemila Sequiera, Director, The Whole Community Project, Ithaca, NY; and Gayle Woodsum, Founder & Director, Feeding Laramie Valley, Laramie, WY. Photo credit: Chuck Conner Photography

The award plaque reads: "In recognition of your ability to mobilize community and academic partners to collaboratively build sustainable community food systems to achieve food security, we hereby present Food Dignity with the 2014 Community-Campus Partnerships for Health Award. Your outstanding model of community-driven collaborative research and action is an inspiration to us all."