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Partners in Seattle's Chinatown-International District receive national grant award for health and housing innovation

A community-based effort led by InterIm Community Development Association (InterIm CDA), Public Health - Seattle & King County, and Swedish was awarded a national grant designed to support community collaborations to give everyone a fair chance to be healthy. The national BUILD Health Challenge grant will fund efforts to develop and deepen bonds and working relationships among neighborhood-based partners, the health care sector and local public health. The \$75,000 grant will bring partners together to focus on the underlying conditions that impact health in the Seattle neighborhood of Chinatown/International District.

The Chinatown-International District project is one of 18 awardees from across the nation announced June 9, 2015. BUILD Health is funded by The Advisory Board Company, the de Beaumont Foundation, the Colorado Health Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Awarded projects were recognized on the strengths of their “**B**old, **U**pstream, **I**ntegrated, **L**ocal, and **D**ata-driven” approaches to address the social and environmental factors that have the greatest impact on health.

“This is the first time our partners have come together with a common goal of specifically focusing on improving health in Chinatown-International District based on the BUILD Health pillars,” said Andrea Akita, Executive Director of InterIm CDA. “We want Chinatown/International District to remain the heart of the regional Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. Our local and national partners all share the same goals. We know that health is improved when community members come together and create solutions in their neighborhoods for safer streets, active parks and open space, access to fresh food, and affordable housing. The effects of creating a healthier community here will ripple outward to support a culture of health in other areas.”

“I’m proud of this national recognition for King County’s commitment to promoting health in the International District,” said King County Executive Dow Constantine. “Successful partnerships tackle underlying causes, and that’s precisely why the Interim CDA’s efforts were singled out.” The Chinatown-International District is currently home to about 3,500 people and is celebrated as the historic and cultural hub for the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities and the first American home for successive waves of immigrants since Seattle’s founding. There are more than 500 businesses employing over 8,000 people. At the same time, more of its residents are living in poverty and have poor health conditions than in other neighborhoods in Seattle. Thirty-four percent of residents live at or below the poverty level; many are low-income seniors

(25% are over 65 and 42% are over 55). More young families have recently moved into the neighborhood; the number of children under age five has increased 64% since 2010.

The BUILD Health funding identifies local solutions that focus on housing, transportation, public safety and healthy food to address high rates of respiratory illnesses, heart disease, diabetes, and smoking seen in neighborhoods like Chinatown-International District.

“We are excited for this opportunity to work with our partners in moving community development forward in the Chinatown-International District. This collaboration will bring residents, businesses, and stakeholders together to foster a shared responsibility for a healthier quality of life for our community,” said Maiko Winkler-Chin; Executive Director of Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation and Development Authority (SCIDpda).

“Since our founding, Swedish has been resolved to improve the health of the region beyond traditional patient care. This translates into our commitment to charity care, research, community health and education,” said Tom Gibbon, Manager of Community Health Programs at Swedish. “Through this collaboration, we hope to apply strategies that have proven effective with other Swedish community programs and will work with our local partners to bring together clinical care, public health and community services in a coherent strategy to help meet community needs.”

“The opportunity to plan effectively for improving the community conditions that affect health answers a growing need. We will continue to support these efforts as they get underway,” said Doris Koo, lead consultant for Yesler Community Collaborative.

The full list of collaborative partners includes: InterIm CDA; Swedish; Public Health – Seattle & King County; Seattle Chinatown International District Preservation and Development Authority (SCIDpda); Friends of Little Saigon; Vietnamese Friendship Association; International Community Health Services (ICHHS); and Yesler Community Collaborative (YCC).

Together, partner organizations will convene agencies across service systems; engage residents, property owners and businesses; improve health and wellbeing by addressing the barriers faced by immigrants from many places living in the same area; collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative data; and measure and evaluate progress.

The BUILD Health Challenge was founded to encourage community partnerships among local non-profit organizations, hospitals and health systems, and health departments to improve the health and well-being of their residents.

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More about InterIm CDA: *InterIm CDA is a community-based nonprofit, with a 45-year history providing planning, advocacy, social services, affordable housing, a community garden, and environmental justice programs. InterIm CDA promotes policies and facilitates projects that bring together business leaders, property owners, residents and nonprofits to improve livability, health and sustainability of the CID.*