



## HEALTH EQUITY FELLOWSHIP: A RADICALLY WELCOMING LEARNING EXPERIENCE WITH PROMISE NEIGHBORHOODS OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY

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### **Student Interns:**

Chelsea Budde, DeSales University, Division of Nursing  
Emelyn Cruz, DeSales University, Division of Nursing  
Abigail Dugo, Temple University, Lewis Katz School of Medicine  
Noel Kelly, DeSales University, Medical Studies  
Daniel Phillips, Marywood University, School of Social Work  
Charlene Weiner, Moravian College, Department of Nursing and Public Health

### **Academic Preceptors:**

Mary Ellen T. Miller, PhD, RN, APHN-BC, DeSales University Division of Nursing

### **Community Preceptors:**

Hasshan Batts, DHSc, MSW, Promise Neighborhoods of the Lehigh Valley  
Oladoyin Onawole, B. A., Promise Neighborhoods of the Lehigh Valley





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Summer 2020



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# Project

## **The Project:**

- The interns created LMS (Learning Management System) PowerPoint presentations for people in the Allentown community on the topics of Cultural Competency in health care, housing access, and social isolation.
- Interns participated in virtual interviews of community members where they were taught the importance of a radical welcome, and the value of community expertise as they have the greatest knowledge of how to possibly fix problems in their own community. They utilized community-based participatory research to gather information for their presentations.
- Every Monday, the interns listened to and participated in discussion during Webinars hosted by Promise Neighborhoods of the Lehigh Valley on various topics related to health equity that affect Allentown and in this country in general.
- The interns contributed to research on various topics about police brutality in order to assist staff of Promise Neighborhoods of the Lehigh Valley to write a white paper that they plan on presenting to Allentown legislators.



# Project Results

- The interns collaborated with PNLV staff on creating a survey that addressed the three topics areas of their Learning Modules.
- Due to time constraints PNLV was unable to administer the survey during the internship, but it will be used in the future.
- Each LMS module contained information regarding BTG's community health objectives of cardiovascular health, oral health, and smoking cessation.



# Reflections

**Noel & Emelyn:** From the first day of our internship working with PNLV, we were introduced to the concept of "radical welcome" which is the idea that people show up different when they feel welcomed. We felt that welcoming atmosphere throughout our whole internship. Using this concept of radical welcoming, we were able to connect on a deeper level with community members which really enriched our understanding of what life is like living in Allentown. Our interview with Dr. Alang enlightened us on how color impacts quality of care within the health care system, but when people realize that they are educated the narrative changes. This made us motivated to want to break this disparity in our future careers as health care professionals because quality health care is a basic human right.

**Abby & Chelsea:** PNLV's vision of using community-driven problem solving and solutions seems so intuitive but has been very impactful on us. In interviewing community members, we were introduced to ideas that we would never have thought of, proving the value of deriving solutions from community members themselves. We have learned that studying social determinants of health does not make you an expert; the experts are those living in the community who see every day what the community needs and how it can best be served.

**Charlene & Dan:** The fellowship through Promise Neighborhoods of the Lehigh Valley and Bridging the Gaps helped us gain a deeper understanding of the strengths of the Allentown community and the deficits in their supports through the various context experts that we were connected with. The implementation of interdisciplinary teams helped us gain new perspectives and challenge our approach to community-based work. Through this experience, we have learned that people's overall quality of health are heavily influenced by the social determinants of health, racial inequality, and social disparities.