

**UPDATE:
PARTNERSHIP FOR URBAN HEALTH
RESEARCH**

**PREVENTING
KATRINA WITHOUT THE STORM**

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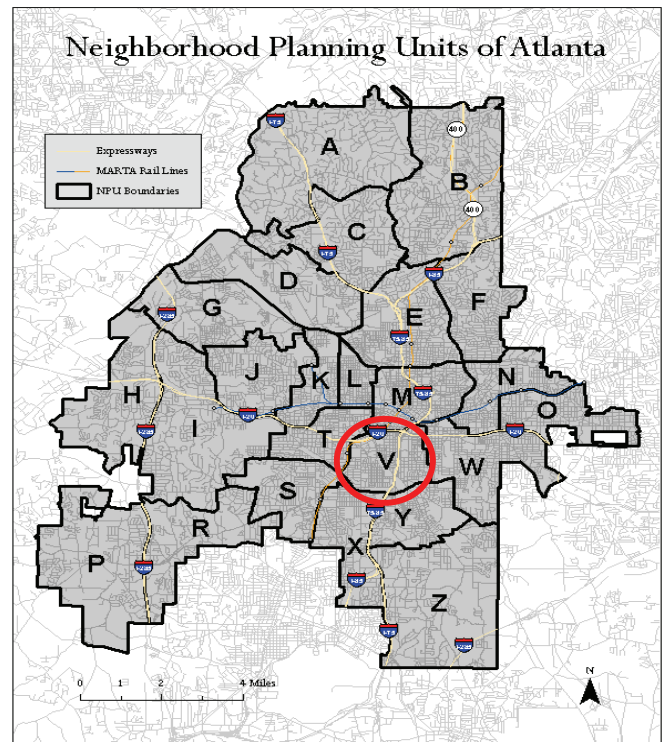
Contributing to this issue:

Kimberly Glenn, BS
John Steward, MPH
Marshall Kreuter, PhD

On December 5, 2006, Marshall Kreuter, PhD spoke to a room of faculty and students about the progress to date on the “Accountable Communities: Healthy Together” (AHT) community-based participatory research project. The project is based within Neighborhood Planning Unit V (NPU-V) of Atlanta, which consists of Mechanicsville, Pittsburgh, Summerhill, Peoplestown, and Adair Park neighborhoods. Kreuter and his research team seek to interact with and receive input from residents of NPU-V to provide them with not just an intervention, but the tools to sustain the results.

In this community, located near downtown, just south of Interstate 20, the health, social, and economic disparities are among the highest in Georgia. The NPU-V community, rich in land and cultural resources, lacks economically-promising options, such as businesses, to help contribute to the community’s wealth. Since 1962, the residents have seen a drastic decrease in the number of businesses within the neighborhood (from 178 to 25). Of these twenty five businesses, in a neighborhood where over 16,800 people live, there is not a single grocery store. This deficiency makes good nutrition a huge challenge for residents and make purchases of food high in fat, sugar, and calories more likely.

The lack of economic development in NPU-V, coupled with



significant crime rates, make the property values low. With low property values, developers can buy large amounts of real estate in NPU-V, build properties and develop the area to the point where it is no longer affordable for current residents to live there. If this occurs, a substantial portion of residents could be displaced from their homes. Kreuter calls this possibility “Katrina without the storm.”

But the problems are not only economic. Southside Medical Center, an outpatient healthcare center in NPU-V, has

provided AHT with data concerning the diagnoses of patients who use their services. Hypertension, eye disorders, and teeth disorders were among the most frequent diagnoses. Kreuter pointed out that disorders which affect the appearance of a person can cause embarrassment, depression, low self-esteem, and social withdrawal. Furthermore, those kinds of cosmetic disorders can prevent someone seeking employment from being hired.

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“The loss of even one building is important to the block where it is located, and the loss of one block affects the entire neighborhood surrounding it.”

- Dr. Fullilove

ROOT SHOCK

HOW TEARING UP CITY NEIGHBORHOODS
HURTS AMERICA AND WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT IT



Mindy Thompson Fullilove, M.D.

“WHY IS ATLANTA DEPRESSING?”: DR. MINDY FULLILOVE SPEAKS TO GSU

On Friday, October 13, 2006, approximately 100 faculty and students attended the Annual Urban Health Lecture where Mindy Fullilove, MD made her first appearance on Georgia State University's campus. Dr. Fullilove is Professor of Clinical Psychiatry and Professor of Clinical Sociomedical Sciences, and Co-Director of Sociomedical Sciences MPH Track in Urbanism and the Built Environment at the Mailman School of Public Health of Columbia University in New York City. Her theories on place and human well being provide the framework for her current work on the long-term consequences of urban renewal and a better understanding of the environmental challenges that face American cities.

She has published numerous articles, book chapters, and monographs. She is the author of *Root Shock: How Tearing Up City Neighborhoods Hurts America and What We Can Do About It*, Ballantine Books, 2004 and *The House of Joshua: Meditations on Family and Place*, University of Nebraska Press, 1999. The awards for her work have also

been numerous, including being named a “National Associate” by the National Academy of Science in 2003, being among the “Best Doctors in New York,” and receiving two honorary doctorates (Chatham College, 1999, and Bank Street College of Education, 2002). Perhaps her most treasured honor was being selected to give the Commencement Address by the 2002 Graduating Class of Hampshire College, which included her youngest child, Molly.

Her discussion on this particular day, entitled “Why Is Atlanta Depressing?” focused on Atlanta, Georgia, the built environment, and the mental health issues prevalent in this area. Dr. Fullilove pointed out that Atlanta's communities are exclusive of one another and generally disconnected. This sense of isolation, lack of diversity, and exclusion from resources can create mental health disparities such as depression for the residents living here. Fortunately, the presentation drew residents of the Atlanta community, Neighborhood Planning Unit V, which consists of Mechanicsville, Pittsburgh, Adair Park, Peoplestown, and Summer-

hill. Their questions and comments served to inspire a deeper and more empathetic analysis of the economic and social impact the built environment has on community residents.

Dr. Fullilove also discussed her previous research and community projects. One such project involved “Burn Mapping” communities that had been devastated by arson or accidental fires. In this project, these communities were treated like burn victims in the sense that the prognosis for the livelihood of the community depended on how much of the community's buildings had been lost to fires, just as a burn victim's probability of survival depends on what percentage of the body had been burned.

For her appearance and thoughtful presentation, PUHR presented Dr. Fullilove with a token of our appreciation and hope to have her back in the near future. An autographed poster of Dr. Fullilove and her discussion topic is on display in the Institute of Public Health's office.

HEALTHCARE GEORGIA FOUNDATION AWARDS IPH GRANT TO STUDY THE IMPROPER USE OF 911 AND EMS

The use of 911 and emergency medical services for non-emergency reasons has been repeatedly documented as a major and costly problem in every urban area in the United States.

In January 2007, the Institute of Public Health was awarded a \$190,000 2-year grant from the Healthcare Georgia Foundation to support a community-based, participatory research and demonstration project designed to reduce inappropriate use of emergency medical services (EMS) and emergency department (ED) services documented within urban Atlanta. The core strategy con-

sists of two complementary components: (1) strengthening the existing system of community-based primary health care, including addressing the issues of cost for health care and lack of transportation; and (2) developing and implementing a sustained educational campaign tailored to the specific needs of those who use 911 to obtain non-emergency health care. From a public health and social responsibility perspective, the practical relevance of this study is compelling. Unnecessary

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FALL 2006 IN RETROSPECT

This semester has been a building block for PUHR. We kicked off the semester with a reception in the Rialto lobby. About 30 PUHR faculty were in attendance on that September evening and everyone had an opportunity to meet one another.

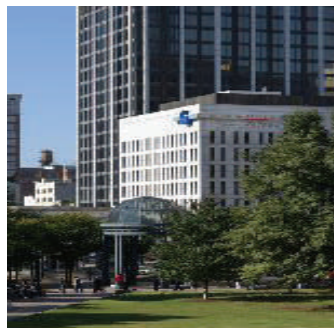
PUHR sponsored the Annual Urban Health Lecture in October which featured Mindy Fullilove, MD. The attendance and support from PUHR faculty was overwhelming.

Gabe Kuperminc, PhD was kind enough in November to conduct a seminar on the use of PsychData to create and manage online surveys. Dr. Kuperminc explained how the system worked and allowed attendees to navigate the program themselves. Several

PUHR faculty and two graduate students attended the workshop.

In December, PUHR presented Marshall Kreuter, PhD who discussed the project "Accountable Communities: Healthy Together" (see article on page 1). He discussed the research methods applied, some preliminary findings, and the practical problems that may be inherent in this kind of work.

Tom Wolff, Founder and Principal of Tom Wolff and Associates, presented a seminar entitled Collaborative Solutions: Explorations in Building Healthy Communities. The event was co-sponsored by the GSU Department of Psychology, the Atlanta Evaluation Association, and PUHR. Dr. Wolff discussed mobi-



lizing communities for action through collaboration and empowerment of the community. He gave examples of successful and unsuccessful efforts to affect change and improvement in community health problems.

Thank you for making this semester a great start for PUHR!

EMS:

INAPPROPRIATE 911 CALLS PROVE COSTLY TO THE CITY OF ATLANTA

(inappropriate) 911 calls, in which emergency medical services' ambulances are dispatched, increase the potential for traffic crashes involving ambulances, are costly compared with health care visits at primary health centers, and divert resources that should be focused on patients who require emergency care. Per-

haps most importantly, the use of emergency services for non-emergency reasons results in patients with mental health, substance abuse or chronic disease problems not receiving the care they most need.

The grant will be carried out in close collaboration with the residents of Neighborhood Planning

Unit V (NPU-V) in Atlanta, the Southside Medical Center (SMC), the Department of Emergency Medicine at Grady Health System, and with selected community based organizations and faith groups within the geo-political boundaries of NPU-V. The Principal Investigator on the grant is Marshall Kreuter of PUHR and IPH.

"[NPU-V Residents] want development, but they want to have real input into the process. Residents want to ensure that the outcome maintains the cultural and historical integrity of their neighborhoods. They are of this place, not just from' it."

*- Marshall Kreuter,
PhD*

KREUTER: PREVENTING KATRINA

WITHOUT THE STORM

Continued from page 1

Together, these internal and external problems can lead to substance abuse and crime. All of these issues (mental and physical health, unemployment, substance abuse, and crime) were discussed by Kreuter and are a part of what the residents of NPU-V have voted on as targets for intervention.

Now in its second year, the ACHT project seeks to design the interventions sought by the NPU-V residents.

Even though the interventions have not yet been implemented, it is clear that the project has already provided the community with tools. ACHT staff created a Resource Directory for NPU-V residents, held a Community Health Fair and continue to participate in the neighborhood meetings.

For more information on ACHT and the NPU-V community, contact Marshall Kreuter at mkreuter@gsu.edu.



GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY

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We're on the Web!
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DATES TO REMEMBER

January 8, 2007

- Classes begin Spring semester

January 15, 2007

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, holiday

March 5-11, 2007

- Spring Break!

May 12, 2007

- Commencement



About PUHR

The Partnership for Urban Health Research (PUHR) at Georgia State University represents a university-wide commitment focused on the amelioration of health disparities that confront urban communities. Launched in fall 2004, PUHR is an interdisciplinary urban health research program developed in partnership with the College of Health and Human Sciences, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the College of Law. Situated in the heart of Atlanta, Georgia State University is uniquely poised and has a vested interest in the health and well-being of the surrounding community, particularly the vulnerable populations who reside and work in underserved areas.

The Partnership is being funded from the Provost's Areas of Focus Initiative and will provide resources for 16 new tenure-track faculty and 30 graduate research assistants. Initial research efforts will be directed at Chronic Disease and Aging, HIV/AIDS and Infectious Disease, Injury and Violence, and Substance Abuse and Mental Health.

Mission Statement

To understand how the urban environment affects the health and well-being of people who reside and work in the metropolitan Atlanta area. We focus our efforts on populations that bear a disproportionate burden of illness and disease using an interdisciplinary approach to research. In partnership with surrounding communities, we will create and disseminate knowledge that is both meaningful and beneficial to the communities that participate in the process.

REMINDERS AND UPDATES

REMINDERS

- Urban Health Faculty: please send PUHR the names and contact information for your GRA(s) each semester.
- We appreciate receiving news of your scholarship, service, activities, awards, and interests
- Please send the items to Kimberly Glenn at kglenn1@student.gsu.edu

FACULTY UPDATES

John Peterson, PhD (Psychology) has earned a position as a member of the National HIV Prevention Conference Planning Committee in the National Center for HIV, STD and TB Prevention within the CDC for 2006-07. For the same conference, he has also become a co-chair for the Basic

Prevention Track. Additionally, Dr. Peterson will be the Co-Principal Investigator with Susan Kegeles, PhD on A Community-Level HIV Prevention Intervention for Young Black Men, funded by the CDC.

James Wolk, DSW, MSW, MPA was recipient of the Frankie V. Adams Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Association of Social Workers—Georgia (NASW-GA). He was selected for this award based on service to the profession, lasting contributions to social work, and outstanding achievements. Congratulations, Dr. Wolk!

New faculty affiliated with PUHR:

Dr. Lionel Scott has joined the Department of Social Work as an Assistant Professor. Dr. Scott's interests include racial disparities in mental health service use, sociocultural deter-

minants of health disparities, and the psychosocial functioning and help-seeking behaviors of ethnic minority youth and older foster youth.

Dr. Ann Pearman has joined the Gerontology Institute, with a joint appointment in Psychology as an Assistant Professor. Dr. Pearman's research interests include memory complaints and memory performance in older adults. Her recent work examines these areas in terms of psychophysiological and hormonal reactivity.

Dr. Holley Wilkin has joined the Communications Department of the College of Arts and Sciences as an Assistant Professor. Dr. Wilkin's communication research focuses on reducing health disparities in diverse urban environments. Wilkin's recent work has also concentrated on exploring the potential of entertainment-education and new technologies for health communication.