Partnering with Communities to Address COVID-19

What is CEAL?
In the United States, COVID-19 has taken its toll on almost every community. But some groups — especially African Americans, Hispanic/Latinos, immigrants and Native Americans — have suffered more than others. The Community Engagement Alliance (CEAL) Against COVID-19 Disparities is a national network of community-engaged researchers, community-based organizations, government officials, and public health experts working to reduce the burden of the disease on those who are hardest hit by it. Funding for CEAL comes from the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

CO-CEAL: Colorado COVID-19 Community Engagement Alliance
The Colorado CEAL Team, CO-CEAL, is a partnership between the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, Servicios de la Raza, the Trailhead Institute, Immunize Colorado, Denver Public Health, Salud Familia Health Center, UCHealth, 2040 Partners for Health, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and many other community-based organizations and individuals. Our mission is to provide trustworthy information through active community engagement and outreach to the people hardest-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic while building long-lasting community partnerships to improve diversity and inclusion in COVID-19 research.

Through our COVID-19 Community Engagement Alliance, we aim to:
• Make available the best, most accurate information about the spread of COVID-19, about recruitment and participation in clinical studies, about the safety and effectiveness of vaccines and treatments, and about any concerns that may come from false rumors.
• Increase the use of preventive practices that can reduce the spread of COVID-19, especially in underserved communities, while offering timely access to proven new treatments.
• Increase the public’s understanding of how science works—specifically, the medical research process and how treatments and vaccines are developed.

CO-CEAL Program Leadership
Donald E. Nease, MD, Principal Investigator (University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus)
Ricardo Gonzalez-Fisher, MD, Multi-Principal Investigator (Servicios de La Raza)
Montelle Tamez, Co-Director (University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus)
Charlene Barrientos Ortiz, Community Engagement Manager (University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus)
CO-CEAL Program Aims

1. Assess current and ongoing levels of misinformation and concerns regarding COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics in disproportionately impacted racial and ethnic communities.

2. Evaluate effectiveness of community-specific messaging and materials delivered through trusted channels to address vaccine barriers for adults and children in disproportionately impacted racial and ethnic communities.

3. Understand partner network connections to the most vulnerable populations across the state, including gaps/weaknesses.

4. Create a community Clinical Trials Advisory Board to enhance collaboration between community based organizations and clinical trial study teams and provide consultation with trial teams on community engagement.

CO-CEAL Focus Communities

CO-CEAL will focus on working with the following communities: African American/Black communities in the Denver-Metro area; American Indian/Alaska Native communities in the Denver-Metro area; Hispanic/Latino/a/x communities in the Denver-Metro area, Pueblo, Fort Morgan, Greeley and the San Luis Valley; and Black/Refugee communities in Fort Morgan and Greeley.

CO-CEAL Project Activities

• Work with members of each focus community to translate information about COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics into culturally sensitive messaging and materials using a proven technique called Boot Camp Translation.

• Conduct a repeated survey at the individual level to evaluate the impact of messaging in each focus community. Surveys will be conducted by individuals hired from each focus community.

• Assess the reach of efforts into target communities using Social Network Analysis.

• Create a Community Clinical Trials Advisory Board to establish linkages between researchers and communities, providing ready access to partnerships with community members who can inform recruitment methods and materials.

• Work with other national CEAL Teams to share findings, information and resources.

CO-CEAL Paid Community Engagement Opportunities

Local residents know their communities best and we plan to contract with local residents of our focus communities for the following positions. Please contact Charlene Barrientos Ortiz for additional information about the opportunities listed below.

• Community Connector: Approximately five hours per week over 6-12 months, $40-$60 per hour depending on qualifications

• Boot Camp Translation Participant: We are offering two 8-week cycles, one meeting per week (20 hours per cycle). Participants may choose to be part of one or both cycles, $400 per cycle ($800 for both) for your time and expertise.

• Survey Data Collector - hours will vary over 6-12 months, $20 per hour plus mileage.