



CERC-SON-UVI

A RICH VI NEWSLETTER

HSRP-VI Year I Highlights—Part I

Noreen Michael, PhD

Notable Tidbits:

- The Human Services Research Partnership: Virgin Islands (HSRP-VI) was established in 2014.
- The work of the Partnership has been featured in the *St. Thomas Source* (2014 and 2017).
- The Partnership is Co-Chaired by the Director of CERC-UVI and the Commissioner of the V.I. Department of Human Services.
- Information on the activities and achievements of the HSRP-VI can be accessed at the project's microsite: <http://uvi.edu/academics/nursing/cerc/default.aspx>.

THE RESEARCH PARTNER-

SHIP: Year I of the Human Services Research Partnership: US Virgin Islands (HSRP-VI) was an eventful one! The Research Partnership was formally established and potential partners invited. The first Research Partnership meeting, held in November 2014, included Partners from the Department of Human Services; other local government agencies; semi-autonomous agencies; the Federally Qualified Health Centers; community-based organizations, current/or former HS and TANF clients; and researchers from UVI. Two training sessions on the CBPR approach were provided for Partners.



RESEARCH ACTIVITY: The HSRP-VI commenced its research work in spring 2015, after receiving IRB approval for the completion of an environmental scan study.

COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT, & DISSEMINATION: The HSRP-VI's microsite was also established in Year I. This made information about the project available to anyone, whether here in the USVI community or across the globe. The *St. Thomas Source* published an online article on the HSRP-VI project. Project staff

participated in a radio show on WUVI to provide the community information about the HSRP-VI and UVI's Public Relations Office provided a press release to the media describing the HSRP-VI.

A Message from Partnership Co-Chair, Dr. Gloria Callwood

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It is a special privilege to co-chair the USVI Human Services Research Partnership (HSRP-VI) whose mission is to work collaboratively and systematically to improve the Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS), and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) programs in the USVI. The Research Partnership comprises key personnel from the VI Department of Human Services (VI-DHS), policy makers from central and semi-

autonomous government agencies, leaders from community-based organizations, current and/or former HS/EHS and TANF clients, and researchers from UVI. Since its organization in fall 2014, the Partnership has worked to define and address research questions regarding the social and economic well-being of human services clients. Partners have been fully engaged in activities that have led to the gathering of relevant data to enhance our understanding of human services programs in the Territory. Co-chairing

the partnership has provided a firsthand appreciation of how partners with shared values, expectations, equal voice, and commitment have been instrumental in framing the research agenda to address family self-sufficiency, stability, and well-being. It is gratifying to be associated with all Partners who are dedicated to making a significant, positive difference in the lives of some of the most vulnerable in our community.

FITTING IN WITH THE HSRP-VI/ONBOARD AT A RICH VI

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Some of our Partners:

Department of Human Services
Department of Labor
Department of Education
Lutheran Social Services
Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands
Women's Coalition
ARCH Institute

We're on the Web!
[http://uvi.edu/
academics/nursing/
cerc/default.aspx](http://uvi.edu/academics/nursing/cerc/default.aspx)

With an open mind and a pep in my step, I joined the HSRP-VI Team in July 2016, as Post-Doctoral Research Fellow and I am still basking in the wisdom of this decision. I was immediately made to feel welcomed; and this salute allowed me to settle in quite quickly with the help of my very supportive colleagues. Information about the HSRP's mission, vision, goals and past activities were readily available so I delved into my new role with gusto. It was not long before I was fully engaged in the day-to-day activities of the project and all my skills were being fully utilized. I find working with the HSRP to be a positive experience as it not only provides an engaging atmosphere but also promotes the values about which I am passionate. The work we do to influence policy and to improve the quality of service delivery to vulnerable populations in the USVI is central to my personal creed.

It is smooth sailing for me on board the A RICH-VI project at CERC. The team and I gelled remarkably and with this fusion, we are fully armed with a sense of purpose and the capacity to weather all challenges. There is a great deal of camaraderie among the team members and this extends to the members of the Partnership and to all whom I have encountered in the USVI.

DOING
WHAT YOU LIKE
IS FREEDOM

LIKING
WHAT YOU DO
IS HAPPINESS

STAFF OF THE HSRP-VI:

Lead PI: Noreen Michael, PhD
Co-PI: Gloria B. Callwood, PhD, RN, FAAN
Co-Investigator: Janis M. Valmond, MS, DrPH
Post Doctoral Research Fellow: Deborah E. Brown, PhD
Research Associate: E. Aracelis Francis, PhD
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Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) as a Framework for the HSRP-VI: Part I

Janis M. Valmond, MS, DrPH

Background

The Human Services Research Partnership (HSRP) VI elected to conduct an environmental scan as a first step of a three-year initiative to conduct research and build research capacity within the Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) programs in the USVI. The community based participatory research approach seemed a logical choice for this project.

What is CBPR?**CBPR is:**

"... a collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings." (p.2, W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Community Health Scholars Program, 2001)

"... a partnership approach to research that equitably involves, for example, community members, organizational representatives and researchers in all aspects of the research process." (p.48, Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008)

CBPR is guided by nine key principles:

1. Recognizes community as a unit of identity
2. Builds on strengths and resources within the community
3. Facilitates collaborative, equitable partnership in all research phases and involves an empowering and power-sharing process that attends to social inequalities
4. Promotes co-learning and capacity building among all partners
5. Integrates and achieves a balance between research and action for the mutual

benefit of partners

6. Emphasizes public health problems of local relevance and also ecological perspectives that recognize and attend to the multiple determinants of health and disease
7. Involves systems development through a cyclical and iterative process
8. Disseminates findings and knowledge gained to all partners and involves all partners in the dissemination process
9. Requires a long-term process and commitment to sustainability.

This is the first of a two-part series on CBPR. Look for Part II in Volume 1, Issue 2.

