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SUMMIT 2024



ASTHMA IN A CHANGING CLIMATE: COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIES FOR RESILIENCE

Tuesday, June 4, 2024 9:00 AM - 03:30 PM EST Hogan Center, College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA

Registration & Breakfast **9:00-9:30am**

Welcome, Introductions, and MAAP Updates **9:30-9:50am**
Geraldine Medina, MAAP, Health Resources in Action

Updates: Asthma Prevention and Control Program, MDPH **9:50-10:00am**
Michelle Warner, MA Department of Health, Asthma Prevention and Control Program

Keynote **10:00-11:00am**

Urban Heat Islands & Air Quality: Addressing Environmental Justice in Lawrence Through the Pa'lante Project
Destiny Gonzalez, Lawrence Pa'lante

..... **Break - 11:00-11:15am**

Breakout Sessions #1 **11:15am-12:15pm**

A. Mitigating Mold and Moisture: A Collaborative Workshop on Asthma Management in Housing
Rita Longe, Revitalize CDC

B. Fostering Community Engagement for Climate and Health: A Skills Building Workshop for All
Cynthia Espinosa Marrero, Health Resources in Action

..... **Lunch - 12:15-1:15pm**

Post-Lunch Energizer **1:15pm-1:30pm**
Shannon Collins, Public Health AmeriCorps

Breakout Sessions #2 **1:35pm-3:00pm**

A. Empowering Communities in the Mystic River Watershed: How Local Voices Shape Air Quality Decisions through the CLEANAIR study
Karina Ramos, MyRWA & Sarah Kielsmeier-Jones, Mothers Out Front - East Boston

B. Gas Stoves and Asthma: Short-term Improvements and Planning
Molly Fairchild & Angie Alberto Escobar, HEET

C. The Impact of Climate Change on Health and Wellbeing: What You Need to Know
Suellen Breakey, PhD, RN, FAAN, Center for Climate Change, Climate Justice and Health, MGH School of Nursing

& Building Your Own DIY Air Filter for Improved Indoor Air Quality
Francheska Bermudez, Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts

Wrap Up **3:00pm-3:30pm**
Raffle to win a PurpleAir Air Quality Sensor!

Any questions? Please contact Paula Giraldo at pgiraldo@hria.org

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Massachusetts
Asthma Action Partnership

SUMMIT 2024



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ASTHMA IN A CHANGING CLIMATE: COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIES FOR RESILIENCE

More About the Speakers and Sessions!



Geri Medina, MAAP, Health Resources in Action

Welcome, Introductions, and MAAP Updates

Speaker Bio: Geri Medina, MPH, is a Senior Program Manager at Health Resources in Action (HRiA), where she currently helps lead the MA Action Partnership (MAAP), and other asthma-related projects. Prior to HRiA, Geri worked in clinical research for several years, including a Boston University study using a text-based application to address pediatric dental health disparities, the Framingham Heart Study, and for a nonprofit that provides FMT treatments for microbiome-mediated diseases and conducts microbiome research. Geri obtained her MPH at the Boston University School of Public Health, with a focus on Environmental Health, and is currently completing a Climate and Health program at Yale University School of Public Health.



Michelle Warner, MA Department of Public Health, Asthma Prevention and Control Program

Updates: Asthma Prevention and Control Program, MDPH

Speaker Bio: Michelle Warner has been the Director of the Asthma Prevention and Control program at the MA Department of Public Health since May 2020. Prior to joining the asthma team, Michelle had been with the Department of Public Health since 2014, working with the Massachusetts Tobacco Cessation and Control Program supporting community-based prevention and policy efforts, as well as supporting smoke-free housing interventions. Michelle started her career in public health over 15 years ago working with Community Health Centers across Massachusetts. Michelle is a passionate advocate for community health interventions that support racial equity and address inequities in health outcomes too often faced by historically marginalized communities.



Destiny Gonzalez, Lawrence Pa'lante

Keynote: Urban Heat Islands & Air Quality: Addressing Environmental Justice in Lawrence through the Pa'lante Project

Speaker Bio: Destiny Gonzalez, a Boston College graduate in Political Science with minors in Managing for Social Impact and Dance, is a passionate advocate for social impact and equity. In her professional journey, Destiny served as a Policy and Research Intern at Climate XChange, managing a 50-state climate policy database and contributing to policy research. At Groundwork Lawrence, she spearheaded community engagement and social media campaigns, bolstering Lawrence's environmental initiatives. At the heart of Destiny's advocacy is her leadership in the Lawrence Pa'Lante project. This initiative blends urban planning, advocacy, and community empowerment to create affordable, safer, and cooler transportation options. As a key figure in the Pa'Lante movement, Destiny conducted community climate sessions centered on environmental justice. Her objective was to equip residents with insights into climate's effects on their health and communities, empowering them to contribute to transformative change.

Session Description: At this year's Asthma Summit, Destiny aims to highlight the nexus between extreme heat, air quality, and their adverse effects on Environmental Justice (EJ) communities, particularly in Lawrence, through the Lawrence Pa'Lante project. This initiative blends urban planning, advocacy, and community empowerment to create affordable, safer, and cooler transportation options. These efforts aim to improve health, quality of life, and enhance resilience against extreme heat impacts. She will spotlight Lawrence's proactive approach to supporting vulnerable populations, such as asthma sufferers, and provide actionable insights for replicating similar initiatives in other communities.

Any questions? Please contact Paula Giraldo at pgiraldo@hria.org



Rita Longe, Revitalize CDC

Breakout #IA: Mitigating Mold and Moisture: A Collaborative Workshop on Asthma Management in Housing

Speaker Bio: Rita Longe is a Senior Manager at Revitalize CDC, a community development corporation in Western Massachusetts that performs critical repairs on homes of low-income families with children, the elderly, military veterans and people with special needs. Rita started working at Revitalize CDC as a Registered Dietitian over three years ago and co-managed the Nutrition Rx program. She currently leads a team of phenomenal healthy home coordinators in the Healthy Home programs to foster innovation to address the evolving needs of the community, and also oversees the implementation of healthy home initiatives. Since 1992 Revitalize CDC has served over 30,000 individuals investing over \$52 Million into Western Massachusetts.

Session Description: How can we reduce the impact of mold and moisture in housing to better manage asthma and other respiratory conditions? Join us for a hands-on breakout session focused on mitigating mold and moisture-related issues in the home. This collaborative workshop brings together folks working in housing, health, municipalities, and more to explore practical strategies for improving indoor air quality and managing asthma risks. You'll participate in small roundtable discussions to analyze real-life case studies, identifying key factors that contribute to mold growth and moisture buildup in homes. Together, we'll brainstorm effective solutions and share insights on best practices for maintaining a healthy living space or advocating for one. We'll also discuss available resources and explore ways to raise awareness about asthma management within housing. Don't miss this opportunity to engage with peers and experts and make a positive impact on community health.



Cynthia Marrero Espinosa, Health Resources in Action

Breakout #IB: Fostering Community Engagement for Climate and Health: A Skills-Building Workshop for All

Speaker Bio: Cynthia Espinosa Marrero is a Senior Manager in the Health and Racial Equity cluster at Health Resources in Action (HRIA). Cynthia has extensive experience in community engagement and racial and equity advocacy, which led to being featured in Latina Magazine as a Latinx Changemaker in 2018 and recognized as a Commonwealth Heroines class of 2022 by the MA Commission of Status of Women. She holds a B.A. in Sustainable Food Management from UMass Amherst and an M.S. in Environmental Science from Antioch University New England.

Session Description: Join Health Resources in Action (HRIA) to dive deeper into a community engagement strategy centering relationship building towards decision-making and power-sharing. This session will share tools and resources around (re) designing initiatives, programs, and projects to center community decision-making that can lead to changes in climate, education, and quality of health as related to asthma. This session will be interactive and fun - so come ready to engage and play!



Shannon Collins, Public Health AmeriCorps

Post-Lunch Energizer Activity

Speaker Bio: As the Climate Justice Community Connector through Public Health AmeriCorps at Everett Community Growers (ECG), a food access and environmental justice organization in Everett, MA, Shannon is responsible for assisting with planning and implementation of climate-related projects and facilitating ECG community engagement and outreach. The goal of Public Health AmeriCorps is to enhance community preparedness and resilience to climate change impacts, fostering partnerships with stakeholders, academic institutions, and other organizations.

Session Description: Shannon will be leading a brief energizer activity after lunch to help us stretch and get to know one another a bit better!



Karina Ramos, Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA)

Breakout #2A: Empowering Communities in the Mystic River Watershed: How Local Voices Shape Air Quality Decisions through the CLEANAIR study

Speaker Bio: As a Project Manager at Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA), Karina is responsible for working closely with researchers and scientists on air quality related projects. Additionally, Karina's workflow is centered around community engagement with residents in communities on the Mystic River Watershed, as she centers their voices in the decision-making aspects of air quality monitoring to ultimately result in equitable benefits to the community. She also assists on park-related and tree planting projects. Karina has experience in K-8 science education, academic research, and project management in recreational infrastructure. She holds a B.A. in Chemistry and Art History from the College of the Holy Cross and earned her M.S. in Marine and Environmental Sciences from Northeastern University. In her free time, she enjoys cooking/baking, crafting, swimming, and being active outside.



Sarah Kielsmeier-Jones, East Boston CAB Member, Family Nurse Practitioner

Breakout #2A: Empowering Communities in the Mystic River Watershed: How Local Voices Shape Air Quality Decisions through the CLEANAIR study

Speaker Bio: Sarah is an Eastie resident and a pediatric nurse at the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center. Originally from Minnesota, she has a background in policy and international development. During the pandemic, Sarah started a second career in nursing and recently finished her Family Nurse Practitioner degree. She is a mother of four kids (one with paws) and an active member of the advocacy group Mothers Out Front – East Boston. She is privileged to represent East Boston and its strong activist community as a CLEANAIR CAB member.

Session Description: Join us for a lively session with the Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA) to learn about their community-based outdoor air quality monitoring project, "Community-Led Improvement of Air Quality and Health in the Lower Mystic (CLEANAIR)"—currently happening in the cities of Malden, Everett, East Boston, and Charlestown. Alongside MyRWA, a member of their Community Advisory Board (CAB) will share insights into how MyRWA's Engagement Team connects with local communities and discuss the link between air quality and public health.



Francheska Bermudez, Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts

Breakout #2A: Building Your Own DIY Air Filter for Improved Indoor Air Quality

Speaker Bio: Francheska Bermudez, MS, MPH is a program Coordinator for Healthy Air Network and 413Cares database at the Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts. Being born and raised in Springfield MA, she is an advocate for her community and is very passionate about health disparities, women's health, minority health and environmental justice. She is committed to aiding communities to achieve health equity. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Public Health and a Master of Public Health degree with a concentration in Health Policy and Management from the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Session Description: Following the Mystic River Watershed Association's session, join the Public Health Institute of Western MA (PHIWM) for part 2: an engaging hands-on workshop on air quality! Discover how indoor air quality filters work and how they may help clear the air in your home, workplace, or study environment. In this interactive session, you'll have the chance to build your own DIY air filter to take with you, empowering you to enhance air quality wherever you go!



Molly Fairchild, HEET

Breakout #2B: Stoves and Asthma: Short-term Improvements and Planning

Speaker Bio: Molly joined HEET in 2019 to lead participant engagement on the gas stove study, "Home is where Pipeline Ends: Characterization of Volatile Organic Compounds Present in Natural Gas" (Michanowicz, 2022). She continues her work connecting health, buildings and people by identifying ways to improve access to weatherization and electrification from the Mass Save Energy Efficiency Program for low and moderate-income residents in Boston. With a grant from the City of Boston, she also worked with Breathe Easy at Home and BOND of Color to introduce Boston residents with gas stoves to induction cooking, as an asthma intervention, by providing them with portable induction cooktops. Molly's other experience in community engagement ranges from two years working on a weighing and feeding program for children under five with the Peace Corps in Thailand, and to developing the greenhouse gas emissions inventory for the Town of Wellesley. Molly holds a BS in Biology from Tufts University and an MS in International Nutrition from Cornell University.



Angie Alberto Escobar, HEET

Breakout #2B: Stoves and Asthma: Short-term Improvements and Planning

Speaker Bio: HEET is a Boston-based nonprofit committed to enabling a just and equitable thermal transition. Angie is originally from Los Angeles, California where she studied Mathematics and Engineering at Glendale College. She also holds a BS in Sustainable Energy Management with a minor in Economics from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry in association with Syracuse University. Angie leads the technical assistance from HEET to communities in the Commonwealth that are pursuing geothermal networks. All her work is done centering on people and equity first.

Session Description:

Recent research provides valuable insights and data about the factors that affect the severity of the impact of gas stoves on indoor air-quality and asthma. Join us for a presentation of this information in a usable format to make practical decisions to support residents with asthma today. We will brainstorm strategies to improve indoor air quality in the short-term, while planning the longer term transition to cooking with induction-electric. Please bring your experiences and understanding of the challenges to inform our discussion and guide practical short-term solutions and long-term planning!



Suellen Breakey, Center for Climate Change, Climate Justice, and Health, MGH School of Nursing

Breakout #2C: The Impact of Climate Change on Health and Wellbeing: What You Need to Know

Speaker Bio: Suellen Breakey, PhD, RN, is Associate Director of the Center for Climate Change, Climate Justice, and Health and a Distinguished Teaching Associate Professor in the School of Nursing at MGH Institute of Health Professions. She teaches in the Doctor of Nursing Practice and accelerated BSN programs. Her clinical background includes cardiac surgery, critical care, hospice care, and global health nursing. For over 10 years, she was a leader with Team Heart, a nonprofit organization that provides RHD screening, cardiac surgical care and follow-up, and patient/provider education in Rwanda. Her scholarship interests include the impact of climate change on human health and well-being, bioethics, and global health ethics. Dr. Breakey is a co-author of *Global Nursing in the 21st Century*, which was published in 2015. She co-chaired the National League for Nursing's 2022 Vision Statement on Climate Change and Health. Dr. Breakey has published widely and presented locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Session Description: Climate change isn't just an environmental issue—it's a matter of public health that affects everyone, with some groups bearing the brunt more than others. In this session, you'll learn about the many ways climate change impacts health and well-being, from early childhood to old age. We'll dive into the risks at individual, community, and population levels and discuss practical strategies to build resilience. Whether you're a community health worker, a school nurse, or work in housing, this session will provide valuable insights on how we can all make a difference.