

# Equity Report

Volume 1: 2022



**RWJ**Barnabas  
HEALTH

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Robert Wood Johnson  
University Hospital

[rwjbh.org/rwjuhthequity](https://rwjbh.org/rwjuhthequity)

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## A Message from the Chief Executive Officer and President

At Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH), we, as our state's most comprehensive academic medical center, have a unique opportunity to provide high quality and culturally sensitive and competent care to the diverse communities we serve. Our goal, in alignment with the mission of RWJBarnabas Health, is to make our communities healthier. A key component of achieving this mission is the elimination of health disparities. Through strategic priorities and initiatives, we are working towards equitable care and outcomes for all patients. This work requires tremendous organizational agility and an ongoing journey of learning and understanding that creates a culture inclusive of every employee and patient we serve. At RWJUH, it is our aim to be the provider, employer, and community partner of choice. Our strong and shared commitment to equity is fundamental to accomplishing this goal.



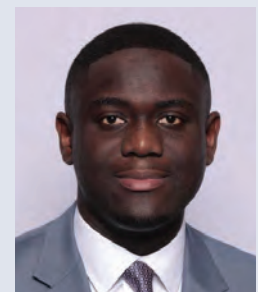
**Bill Arnold**  
Executive Vice President  
and President, Southern Region,  
RWJBarnabas Health;  
and Chief Executive Officer,  
Robert Wood Johnson  
University Hospital



**Alan Lee**  
President,  
Robert Wood Johnson  
University Hospital

## A Message from the Assistant Vice President, Administration and Equity

In 2021, RWJUH implemented its first Health Equity structure with a strategic focus on care optimization, operational alignment, patient navigation, and community outreach. Our goal is to eliminate health disparities and increase access to care. We understand that such a task requires a shift in paradigm as we learn to intentionally review our systems, identify areas of improvement and collectively work with our various teams to outline the best interventions leading to equitable outcomes. With our teams' collaboration, along with the engagement of the communities we serve, we will continue to adopt cultural humility as we deliver equitable care to those we serve to achieve excellent outcomes.

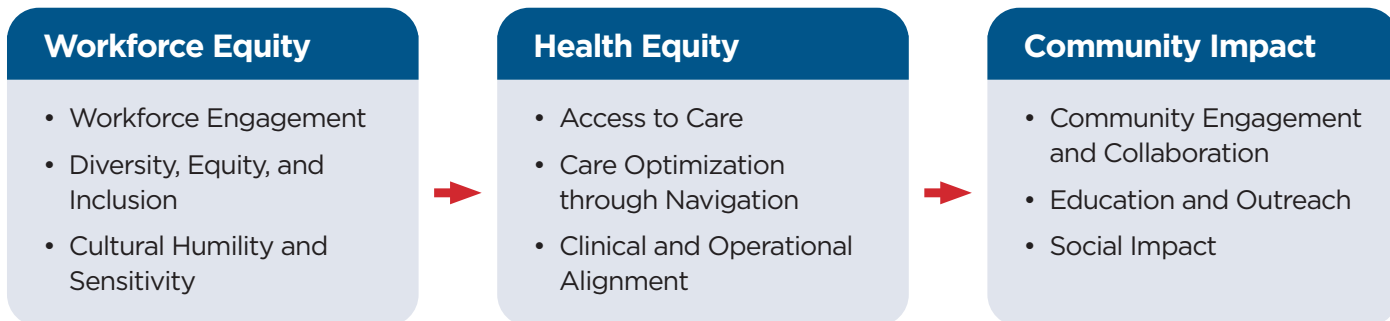


**(Franck) David Nelson,**  
MSN, RN



# RWJUH Equity Framework

To demonstrate our commitment to equitable care and outcomes for every patient we serve, we established a model of organizational equity that strategically supports our workforce, our patients and our community. This model crosscuts all of our organizational priorities and includes the following:



## Our Definitions

**Health Equity** is the attainment of the highest level of health for all people, intentionally removing barriers that may prevent one from reaching their full health potential.

**Diversity** brings together people of many backgrounds, beliefs and experiences to foster a culture of inclusion that enriches the workforce, physicians, patients, families, partners and communities.

**Inclusion** creates a sense of belonging by consciously inviting, welcoming, respecting and engaging each other without bias; inclusion requires that we intentionally embrace an expansive set of attitudes, attributes, cultures and skills where everyone is valued and treated with respect and dignity.

**Unconscious Biases**, also known as Implicit Biases, are the attitudes and/or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions in ways we are not aware. Everyone possesses these biases.

**Cultural Humility** is being aware of our deficient knowledge and having a humble and respectful attitude towards individuals and other cultures. It is the idea of adopting a growth mindset to continuously learn from others as we learn to treat them the way in which they want to be treated.

**Microaggressions** are brief, common exchanges that can communicate hostility, disrespect, or similar negative messages about the identity of a person or group of people. Microaggressions can be hard to recognize because they are often subtle and sometimes unintentional.



# Workforce Equity



**Suzette Robinson, MHA**  
Vice President,  
Corporate Office of  
Diversity and Inclusion

## A Message from the Vice President, Corporate Office of Diversity and Inclusion

At RWJBarnabas Health, we are proud to be a health care leader in New Jersey, the fourth most diverse state in the country. It is our goal to create an equitable environment in which to work and receive care, to champion a diverse workforce and to foster an inclusive setting to improve the health of the diverse patient communities we serve throughout the state.

We embrace the diverse values and beliefs, life experiences and behaviors of our patients, physicians, employees and communities, treating every person with kindness, respect and dignity, by tailoring health care delivery and work experiences to meet the social, cultural and linguistic needs of our patients and employees, respectively. Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion leaders guide RWJBarnabas Health to ensure this is achieved in every aspect of our organization's operations. However, our work does not stop at the organizational level. Our goal of achieving a safe and equitable RWJBarnabas Health also requires individual reflection and effort to learn and grow, to overcome biases, and to look at every situation through lenses of cultural humility and equity. That is how we will all be healthy, together.

Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts are woven into the fabric of everything we do. In alignment with our aim to create an inclusive culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity, our employees are involved with our business resource groups (BRGs), which are sponsored by executive leaders. Generally, BRGs provide support for colleagues, promote career advancement and enhance cultural sensitivity in the work environment. At RWJUH, they have proven to be so much more. These efforts empower our employees, enrich the patient experience, and engage the communities we serve, supporting RWJUH's efforts to eliminate health disparities.

asian ASIAN SOCIETY FOR  
IMPACT & ADVOCACY  
NETWORK

aware ADVANCING WOMEN THROUGH  
ADVOCACY, RECOGNITION AND  
EMPOWERMENT

bpn BLACK  
PROFESSIONALS  
NETWORK

edge EMPOWERING  
DIVERSE GROUPS  
OF EMPLOYEES

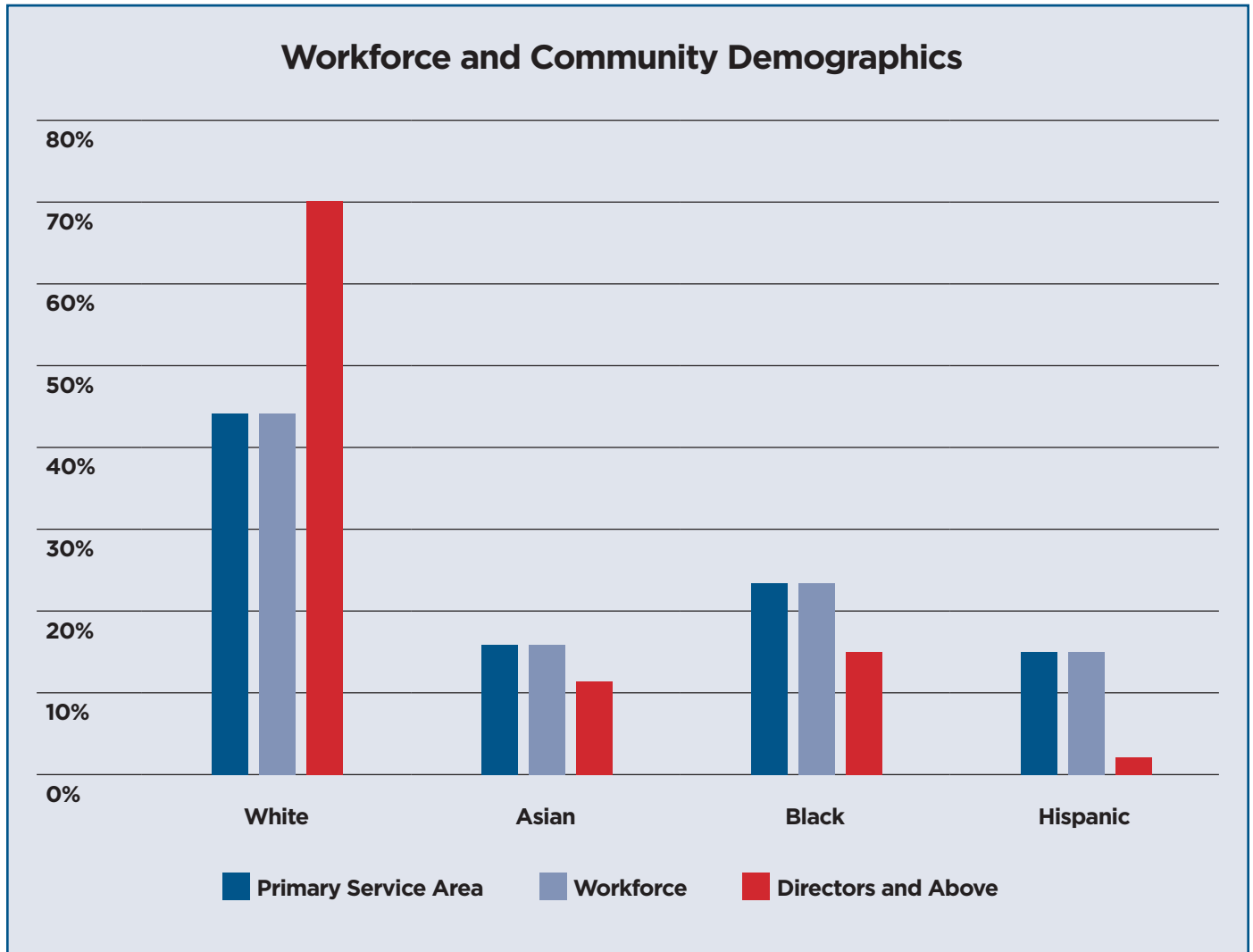
proud PROMOTING  
RESPECT, OUTREACH,  
UNDERSTANDING, AND DIGNITY

salud SERVICE AND ADVOCACY  
FOR LATINOS UNITED  
FOR DEVELOPMENT

vets VETERANS  
ENGAGING  
THROUGH SERVICE

# Workforce Equity: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

A strategic priority for RWJUH is to create a diverse workforce and leadership team that reflects the community we serve.



To nurture and maintain cultural humility and sensitivity amongst our workforce, the RWJUH Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion provides ongoing training and learning opportunities covering topics such as (but not limited to) cultural humility, unconscious bias and LGBTQ+ sensitivity. In 2022, as a collaborative effort between Human Resources and department leaders, RWJUH improved the completion rates of mandatory learning management system modules.

Completion Rate	
<b>75.23%</b>	Cultural Competency Humility
<b>82.70%</b>	LGBTQ+ Education
<b>78.58%</b>	Unconscious Bias Training



# Workforce Equity: BRG Highlights



## Juneteenth Celebration

Hosted on June 17, 2022, by the Black Professionals Network (BPN) and The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Juneteenth was a day of celebration and reflection on American history and the ideals of equality and equity.

## Pride Month Flag Raising

On June 10, 2022, RWJUH held its annual Pride Flag Raising event, honoring our LGBTQ+ community. Throughout June, Pride Month, RWJUH specifically highlighted our array of health, referral, and educational services for members of the LGBTQ+ community to promote LGBTQ+ health equity and access to care. We proudly recognized our partnerships with LGBTQ+ organizations, agencies and allies.



## Dwali Celebration of Light

The Asian BRG hosted a Diwali Celebration of Light on October 21, 2022. Diwali, India's biggest and most important holiday of the year, is a festival of lights that celebrates the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil and the human ability to overcome.

## Veteran's Day Breakfast

On November 14, 2022, RWJUH honored our veterans, who have unselfishly placed their lives on the line for our freedom. We dedicated a sculpture called "The Weight" and shared breakfast to recognize the occasion. The support of Bill Arnold, President & Chief Executive Officer, RWJUH, and the RWJUH Foundation made this dedication and event possible.



## A Message from the Executive Vice President and Chief Health Equity and Transformation Officer



**Paul Alexander, MD, MPH**

Executive Vice President,  
Chief Health Equity and  
Transformation Officer

At RWJBarnabas Health, we are steadfast in our commitment to create and sustain healthy communities. As we fulfill that mission, we have implemented a System's approach to health equity that is designed to address both clinical and social barriers that may prevent one from reaching their full health potential. Our social mission is to improve the health of all New Jerseyans by strategically working to foster health-promoting environments and conditions across the key social determinants of health. As the leading academic health system in the state, we are advancing innovative strategies in high-quality patient care, education, and research to address health disparities in the communities we serve. Together, we will continue to ensure that RWJBarnabas Health is well positioned to provide equitable care to all.



In alignment with RWJBarnabas Health System's mission to improve the health of the diverse communities of New Jersey, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, a comprehensive academic medical center, is well positioned to address disparities in care throughout our community and beyond. Expanding our services with a commitment to cultural humility and sensitivity is crucial to achieving our mission of creating healthier communities. Our innovative programs and services attract our state's diverse population to RWJUH; as such, we are intentional about identifying strategic priorities that address the needs of our diverse population.



### **Mission**

To ensure the delivery of equitable, person-centered and culturally sensitive care to the communities we serve through a workforce culture of equity and inclusion.

### **Vision**

To eliminate health disparities by increasing access to care and transform health and wellness one person at a time.

### **Overview**

Our Health Equity model focuses on access to care to the vulnerable communities, care optimization through population-specific navigation services, a better understanding of the social determinants of health that impact our patients and operational initiatives to address disparities in care and outcomes.





## Health Equity: Access to Care

RWJUH works to improve access to care to vulnerable communities. For example, through our collaborative efforts with our local Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC), RWJUH facilitated follow-up appointments upon patient discharge and improved the booking rate by 66.11%.

**1012** Total Referrals

**89.69%** Outcome Completion Rate

In December 2022, the RWJUH Health Equity and Maternal Health teams partnered to increase care for postpartum people and newborns served by the local FQHC.

### Postpartum Data

**43** Total Referrals

**88.37%** Total Referrals

**84.21%** Outcome Completion Rate

### Newborn Data

**34** Total Referrals

**85.29%** Total Referrals

**89.6%** Outcome Completion Rate

*\*Booking rate is the percentage of patient appointments scheduled\**



## Health Equity: Care Optimization: Community Medical Programs

African-American Medical Program | Chinese Medical Program | Su Salud Medical Program

Care optimization at RWJUH consists of three population-specific medical programs that were designed using patient demographics and feedback from the community via the Health Equity Advisory Council. Another specialty program was developed in collaboration with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey (CINJ).

Such programs address the needs of specific patient groups, including lack of access to care, and ensure a navigation model that enhances care delivery and outcomes. These navigation programs assist patients by making medical appointments on their behalf, completing forms, arranging transportation, providing interpretation services and identifying and addressing social determinants of health.

With an emphasis on addressing health disparities through language support and other services, our navigators adopt a mindset of cultural humility and build trust with each patient, ensuring that each patient is treated the way they wish to be treated, with respect and dignity.

**182** Rounding

**1,129** Discharge Calls

**3,318** Services Completed

**83** Community Events

**11,531** Total Participants

**34,593** Depth of Outreach

Our Community Medical Programs partnered with local organizations to assist with providing health resources to the communities through hosting and attending events.



# Health Equity: Care Optimization: Breast Care Connection

## Early Detection is Key!

Breast cancer is one of the leading causes of death for women in the United States. Breast Care Connection (BBC) is a unique breast health program, developed in partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, and designed to guide women through the breast health process in a private, comfortable and friendly environment. Breast health includes a full range of specialty services.

**1,179** Total Patients Served

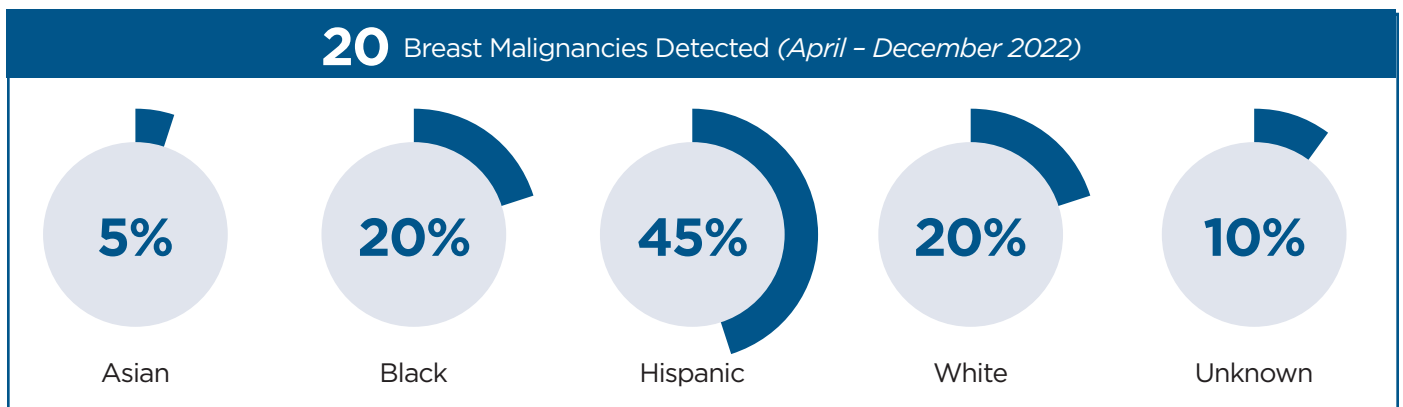
**999** Total Services Completed

**350** Total Patients Screened

### These include:

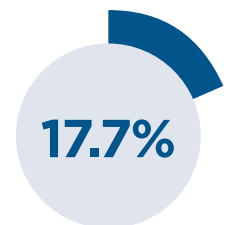
- Women’s Imaging and Diagnostic Work Up
- Genetic Counseling
- Breast Surgery Consultation
- Plastic Surgery
- Oncology
- Psycho-Social Services
- Community Education

Clients of Breast Care Connection receive high-quality, reliable, safe, equitable and individualized care. The program’s navigators help patients gain access to services that reduce breast cancer morbidity/mortality.



## Breast Cancer

Racial/ethnic identity, social determinants of health, access to care and allostatic load contribute to breast cancer disparities. Black or African American women are 41% more likely to die from breast cancer even though their incidence rates are similar to or lower than those of White women.<sup>1</sup> Our primary goal is to eliminate these disparities and achieve optimal health for all.



patients screened by BCC identified as Black or African American

Reference for superscript 1: More Black Women Die from Breast Cancer Than Any Other Cancer. (2022, February 14). American Cancer Society. Retrieved July 20, 2023, from <https://www.cancer.org/research/acs-research-news/facts-and-figures-african-american-black-people-2022-2024.html>





# Health Equity: Clinical and Operational Alignment

We aim to ensure that outcomes are equitable across all aspects of care, irrespective of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity, ability/disability status, religion, and any other attribute that contributes to the uniqueness of an individual. This can be achieved by addressing disparities in care and outcomes for the diverse communities we serve. At RWJUH, health equity is, therefore, embedded as a key element of our care delivery model.

Improving our collection of Race, Ethnicity, and Language (REaL) and Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity (SOGI) data is important to strengthen our efforts in developing intervention programs that will help us achieve that goal. Such data is analyzed in every aspect of care delivery, assessing metrics including (but not limited to) quality, patient experience and readmissions. Through ongoing staff training, RWJUH is improving the quantity and quality of REaL and SOGI data collected. For more information on REaL and SOGI, visit [rwjbh.org/realandsogi](http://rwjbh.org/realandsogi)

*Race and Ethnicity Data Collection Baseline Null Value 22%*

*U.S. News & World Report* evaluates hospital performance in health equity by analyzing data for historically under-served patients in various areas. The publication measures racial disparities in outcomes by analyzing 30-day readmission rates in the areas of knee replacement, heart bypass surgery and back surgery. RWJUH leaders have reviewed the disparity data in these areas presented by *U.S. News & World Report*; the RWJUH data review for 2021-22 noted no disparities.

Baseline Data		
Readmission prevention after knee replacement	Minimal Disparity	
Readmission prevention after heart bypass surgery	Significant Disparity	
Readmission prevention after back surgery	Significant Disparity	

In 2022, the Health Equity team assisted with the successful completion of Leapfrog and *U.S. News & World Report* surveys that included questions on operational alignment addressing health disparities and achieving equitable care. Now working with a team to enhance these efforts in 2023.

# Community Impact



As an organization, we acknowledge the importance of engaging our community to best understand their needs. In collaboration with the RWJUH Community Health Promotions team, we connect with members of our community through a Health Equity Advisory Council. To support our community engagement efforts, we ensure representation and direct feedback from community leaders through advisory councils, community events and growing community relationships. In alignment with our core mission to hire local, invest local and buy local, RWJUH partners with internal and external stakeholders to adopt a comprehensive supplier diversity model that is reflective of our community composition.



## Health Equity Symposium

RWJUH hosted its first Health Equity Symposium on December 9, 2022, which included community representatives from throughout New Jersey. Keynote speaker, New Jersey Lieutenant Governor Sheila Y. Oliver, shared her views on understanding and addressing health disparities in our community. In addition, a series of panels discussed the rationale for adopting a comprehensive equity model to eliminate health disparities, as well as key aspects of workforce equity and harnessing a collaborative process that engages stakeholders at various levels of the organization for equitable outcomes. Through this symposium, participants understood the strategic priority of RWJBarnabas Health and RWJUH to create a patient-centered, culturally sensitive and inclusive model of care.

**Panelists Included:** Bill Arnold (Executive Vice President, RWJBarnabas Health & Chief Executive Officer, RWJUH), Alan Lee (President, RWJUH), Dr. Courtney Vose (Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer), Dr. Meika Neblett, (Community Medical Center, Chief Medical Officer), Kathleen Arcidiacono, (Associate Vice President, RWJUH and CINJ), Dr. Gloria Bachmann (Associate Dean for Women's Health, Rutgers RWJMS), Dr. Keith Lewis (Chief of Anesthesiology, Rutgers RWJMS), Manny Gonzalez, (Chief Human Resources Officer), James Cahill (Mayor, New Brunswick), and Kimyatta Washington (Regional Vice President, Oncological Services, RWJBarnabas Health & CINJ).





## Men’s Health

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) estimates that approximately 12.9 percent of men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer at some point during their lifetime, based on 2017–2019 data. In 2020, there were an estimated 3,343,976 men living with prostate cancer in the United States. The health disparity in prostate cancer within the United States has been attributed to several interrelated factors, including differences in socioeconomic status and lifestyle exposures; access to healthcare; language and cultural barriers; and a delayed disease diagnosis in socioeconomically deprived communities.

**50** Attendees

**17** Screenings

On Sunday, October 16, 2022, RWJUH Health Equity hosted a Men’s Health Fair & Football event. This event offered information related to men’s health through collaboration with hospital and community organizations, free food, football viewing and access to free screenings, which included prostate cancer screening.

*Reference for superscript 2: Cancer of the Prostate - Cancer Stat Facts. (n.d.). SEER. Retrieved July 20, 2023, from <https://seer.cancer.gov/statfacts/html/prost.html>*

## Seniors Day

On May 13, 2022, the Community Health Promotions team recognized seniors who have spent their lives contributing to society and impacted everyone’s lives for the better.



## Asian-American and Pacific-Islander Heritage Month Health Fair

The RWJUH Chinese Medical Program hosted a Community Wellness Day in recognition of Asian-American and Pacific-Islander Heritage Month on May 21, 2022. Health information, health screenings, activities, and entertainment were provided.



## Hispanic Business Expo

On July 19, 2022, the Community Health Promotions Program and Su Salud Medical Program hosted an information table at the Middlesex Regional Chamber of Commerce's Hispanic Business Expo.



## Mid-Autumn Lantern Festival at Bridgewater Mall September 10, 2022



## Breast Cancer Awareness Webinar October 10, 2022 10月乳癌健康月

## Fresh Food for the Community with Community Outreach

On September 28, 2022, Mariam Merced, Yesenia Hernandez, Jessica Guzman, Angela Lee, Stephanie Zou and the New Jersey Fukien Association and Church in Piscataway, New Jersey, delivered 50 boxes of fresh food to local families, seniors and new college students in Edison, Piscataway, Highland Park, New Brunswick, East Brunswick.



## Sustainable Health & Wellness Village Fest

Hosted by CareSparc, the Community Connections Seniors event held at New Brunswick's Boyd Park on September 30, 2022, was dedicated to addressing the unique challenges faced by mature adults in a fun environment.

## Sister2Sister Walk

The RWJUH Breast Care Connection partnered with Sister2Sister, Inc. on September 21, 2022, for their 5K Run/Walk 4Life. The race raised more than \$20,000 to help support the Sister Network's Breast Cancer Assistance Program.



# Community Health Promotions Program

Our Community outreach programs are effective vehicles for bringing health education, screening and other health care services directly to those in need. The efforts of the Community Health Promotions Program, led by Mariam Merced, focuses on increasing health literacy, providing better access to quality health care facilities and providers and supporting communities in need by funding vital health programs.

# of Participants	Health Initiative
<b>2,325</b>	<b>Health Promotion Initiatives</b> (Youth summer programs, large community events, support groups)
<b>9,766</b>	<b>Health Education Programs</b> (Programs at fitness center, online programming, domestic violence prevention programs, hospital violence intervention program)
<b>27,719</b> <sup>1</sup> <b>20,000</b> <sup>2</sup>	<b>Health Promotion Initiatives</b> (CHA's outreach efforts <sup>1</sup> and social media <sup>2</sup> )
<b>1,075</b>	<b>Community Screenings/Early Detection Family Planning Services, Eye Screenings, Cervical Cancer Screening</b>
<b>568</b> <sup>1</sup> <b>4,000</b> <sup>2</sup>	<b>Community Immunization Programs</b> (Pediatric & adult clinics <sup>1</sup> and COVID-19 <sup>2</sup> )
<b>8,403</b> <sup>1</sup> <b>288</b> <sup>2</sup>	<b>Social Impact and Community Investment Projects</b> (Housing collaborative - social media <sup>1</sup> , workshops <sup>2</sup> )
<b>275</b> <sup>1</sup> <b>60</b> <sup>2</sup>	<b>Other Community Needs</b> (Food distribution <sup>1</sup> , adopt a family <sup>2</sup> )