

# Health Equity, Social Justice & Well-Being

2012 – 2016 Report



## FROM OUR TEAM

# A look at 2012-2016

Since its founding over 30 years ago, UC San Diego's Center for Community Health (CCH) has worked tirelessly to promote sustainable health equity, social justice and well-being among low-income and underserved communities, throughout San Diego and California, by developing partnerships which result in innovative initiatives focused on environmental, systems and policy changes.

Over the four year (2012-2016) reporting period we reached tens of thousands San Diegans, bringing together over 300 local, state and national partners and training more than 100 interns/volunteers/community members, without whom this would not be possible. Together we have implemented policies and practices that support healthy lifestyle habits and increased access to healthful foods and physical activity where people live, work, learn, and worship.

In an ongoing effort to build a culture of health within our communities, we have partnered with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and USDA since the late 1990s on the largest and longest running social marketing nutrition initiative in the nation that works with low-income communities – SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education, also known as NEOP). NEOP (Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention) strives to create environments that encourage healthy living for SNAP-Ed eligible families and communities. We have implemented NEOP programs under the San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) and have been dedicated to promoting evidence-based health practices and innovative initiatives at the community level through research, service, training and education.

Through our dedication to improve and promote health and wellness in our most in need and vulnerable communities, this report highlights how we have addressed health equity through technical assistance and training support. We also detail how we have been able to create and implement multiple and long lasting interventions through strategic policy, system and environmental changes and development. Our partnerships and collaborations have allowed us to improve the lives within these communities, and we are honored to be a part of this network. UCSD CCH has leveraged additional funding via USDA, CA Endowment, Prevention Institute and other funding agencies to influence NEOP resources and expand and sustain initiatives. Collectively, we are dedicated to continue the development and implementation of innovative approaches which are focused on best practice-based strategies and programs to improve the health of those that need it most, honoring its original grassroots-level development of the CCH.

We are humbled by the opportunity to do this work in partnership with SD HHSA, CDPH and the USDA. We hope that this report speaks to this critically important transformative work and the ongoing resilience, energy, and positive movement forward to promote access to healthy food, beverages and physical activity opportunities. On behalf of the UCSD School of Medicine and all our partners, we look forward to our continued work together as we expand our reach by joining CCH and HHSA in our work to address health equity by promoting a healthy, safe and thriving San Diego.

Sincerely,  
Blanca Melendrez, Executive Director  
UC San Diego, School of Medicine  
**Center for Community Health**  
**[Ucsdcommunityhealth.org](http://Ucsdcommunityhealth.org)**

## WHERE WE WORK

# Helping cultivate a culture of health in San Diego businesses

## Worksite Wellness: Who We Are

For over 12 years, Live Well @ Work, with a mission of reducing chronic disease and health disparities among the working population, has partnered with San Diego's business community in creating healthier workplace environments that are supportive of healthy eating and active living. As a part of the countywide Live Well San Diego Initiative, Live Well @ Work provides direct support to businesses' key stakeholders, such as human resource professionals and top-level executives, to build organizational capacity for establishing sustainable employee wellness programs that reach individual employees and empower healthy behavioral changes.

We also provide hands-on support in making health-related goals and objectives part of a company's organizational/corporate policy. In building more than 100 partnerships with health and wellness providers, Live Well @ Work serves as the liaison to bring employees those services and resources aimed at creating awareness around prevention and treatment of such chronic diseases as obesity and diabetes. Overall, Live Well @ Work utilizes the socio-ecological model to affect change at all levels within an organization. This multi-level approach fosters a culture of health within companies that encourages healthy lifestyles.

## REACH & SECTORS ENGAGED

- 9,000+ employees |120+ Worksites| 22 Employers|100+ Partnerships |
- Agricultural| Healthcare |Resorts & Casinos | Hospitality | Social Services | Non-Profit |Retail| Wholesale |Grocery| Food Security | Health & Fitness | Information Technology

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & TRAINING

In an effort to transform the workplace environment and culture, Live Well @ Work uses evidence-based toolkits and resources to provide ongoing technical assistance and training to wellness leads. We are the only initiative in the San Diego region that prioritizes working with low-wage industries throughout San Diego such as hospitality, agriculture, gaming, non-profit, and healthcare where employees often face disproportionately higher health disparities.

- Policy Development & Implementation: Serve as content expert on a variety of workplace policies supportive of healthy eating, physical activity, and lactation accommodation.
- Trainings: Support countywide forums, trainings, webinars, and conferences for key stakeholders to improve knowledge and build capacity for their wellness programs.
- Wellness Committee Formation: Support development of comprehensive employee wellness committees to increase employee engagement and build program sustainability.
- Employee Education: Serve as liaison to community partners and health experts in providing on-site educational sessions and fitness classes.
- Communications/Marketing: Provide monthly newsletters, posters, educational materials, wellness signage, and updates on wellness events and trainings.

## POLICY, SYSTEMS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES

Live Well @ Work is a coordinated approach to workplace health promotion that aims to engage all levels within an organization to improve employee health through adoption of impactful policies, systems and environmental changes. These organizational changes have significantly improved access to healthy food and beverages and

enhanced opportunities to engage in physical activity. We have the ability to develop tailored marketing and outreach tools to support policies and organizational changes that resonate with the company's culture.

### **Organizational Supports for Building a Culture of Health**

- Wellness committee formation
- Lactation accommodation policy and supportive programming
- Comprehensive wellness policies adopted in employee handbook

### **Access to Healthy Food & Beverages**

- Local procurement into workplace food environment to support local food system
- Healthy vending policies and supportive programming
- Healthy food and beverage standards for employer-sponsored meetings and events adapted and modified from HHS's Meet Well Pledge
- Healthy employee cafeteria redesign and menu development
- Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) box delivery system

### **Access to Opportunities for Physical Activity**

- Flex-time policies supporting physical activity
- Pre-shift stretching programs and policies
- Safe walking route audit and identification of paths
- Employer-subsidized gym memberships
- On-site facilities for exercise

## **INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES**

- Live Well @ Work Advisory Task Force – Co-led the establishment and facilitation of a countywide committee focused on prioritizing employee wellness efforts in the San Diego region.
- Nationally Recognized Wellness Policies – Supported local organizations in the adoption of wellness policies and replication of effective national-level wellness strategies.
- Live Well San Diego – Small-Medium Business Toolkit – Supported development and refinement of the Small-Medium Business Toolkit that provides tailored resources for our business community.
- Healthy Vending Policy Expert – Served as content expert for healthy vending policy development and program implementation for local and statewide groups.
- Technical Assistance & Support – Provided ongoing technical assistance and support to regional NEOP Worksite Program leads in Orange County and Los Angeles County.
- Informing Key Stakeholders & Funders – Updated USDA's Western Regional Office and related stakeholders on best practice strategies to support expansion and awareness of the program.
- Partnerships with Insurance Providers & Brokers – Collaborated with local insurance providers and brokers to leverage each other's strengths and increase capacity for supporting local businesses.

## WHERE WE WORSHIP

# Keeping the faith: Developing an interfaith approach to community health & wellness

## Faith-based Wellness: Who We Are

The UCSD Faith-Based Wellness Program has had a unique role in reaching, training, organizing, and working with community members and leaders to impact not only the health and well-being of the targeted congregations but also the surrounding neighborhoods and communities. Our interfaith, intergenerational, County-wide approach has allowed us to reach multiple faith-based groups and communities which have not traditionally been the focus of other initiatives and research interventions. Working within the cultural framework of religion, the FB Wellness Program has established partnerships with faith-based organizations across San Diego County to implement policy, systems and environmental changes that create physical activity opportunities and promote nutrition education in a culturally sensitive and -aware manner that responds to the specific needs of our diverse communities.

## REACH

The UC San Diego Faith-Based Wellness Program has worked with 24 Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) across San Diego County. These FBOs included mosques, churches, houses of worship, and faith-based learning centers. From 2012-2016, the FB Wellness Program has reached over 22,000 individuals directly and in faith based settings. This was achieved by working with over 45 partnerships across SD County.

## KEY STRATEGIES

### Health Ministries and Health Committees

The creation of Health Ministries, Health Committees, and Wellness Councils for both adult and youth members were a unique outgrowth of organizing congregants and community members. Utilizing NEOP approved materials and resources and connecting with community health organizations, these health advocacy and education groups had direct impact on the health and wellness of FBO members and their families, as well as their neighborhoods and communities.

- Many of the African-American and Latino FBOs incorporated physical activity through the creation of Walking Clubs, held before Bible study classes and Prayer Groups.
- Led by FBO youth, Youth Health Ministries were created and developed action plans and projects specific to their communities. An example was the development of a Culinary Ministry where youth were taught food preparation skills, healthy cooking, and kitchen safety.
- A Wellness Council was created with the local Mosques and Islamic learning centers to engage parents and community members to advocate and support healthy eating, active living and to implement healthy policies.
- Health Committees in Southeast San Diego FBOs supported the wellness mission of local African-American churches. The Health Committees provided assistance with assessing the needs of the congregation, supported health campaigns, and provided recommendations to improve community wellness efforts.
- Partnered with Gospelcise Ministries to create the Health Coach Program that served as a resource to churches to enhance wellness programming and to keep participating churches motivated about improving their health.

### Creating Health and Wellness Policies and New Partnerships

The FB Wellness team provided technical assistance across all FBOs to help assess the needs of both the FBO membership and also the surrounding community. This provided a platform to develop new partnerships that led to new and innovative programs and policies.

- Established eight (8) participating churches and mosques as food and summer food distribution sites in partnership with San Diego Food Bank and Feeding America.
- Developed six (6) joint use agreements between local recreation centers and FBOs to offer physical activity classes to church and mosque members.
- Developed modesty and girl-only swimming hours at the Copley-Price YMCA to improve Muslim youth participation in physical education and physical activity.
- Incorporated Healthy Food/Beverage policies to improve the quality of food and drink served at events, meetings, and children's program across many participating FBOs.
- FBO youth and community members led advocacy efforts to establish halal food options and update school food policy for Muslim youth attending San Diego Unified School District schools.

### **Externally Focused and Community Engaged**

The FB Wellness Initiative validated key elements to successful faith-based organizing and health promotion: strong partnerships, positive health values, availability of services, and access to FBO facilities, community-focused interventions, positive health behavior change, and supportive social relationships. Utilizing the Placemaking process, the FB Wellness Team collaborated with local organizations and community members to make neighborhoods surrounding the churches or mosques safer, walkable, and more active.

- An example of this effort was the redesign University Avenue, from Estrella Ave to 52nd, which included traffic safety and place making projects such as cultural art, landscaping, pedestrian safety, and gathering spaces.
- Implemented Safe Routes to Healthy Places, which established Overcoming Barriers to Health for East African Refugee Youth. This was led by FOB youth and utilized the PhotoVoice method to capture food insecurity and hunger issues in the neighborhood. Another outcome was improved social marketing and use of EBT at the Farmers' Market.
- At many of our FBOs the introduction and building of garden beds and gardening education allowed both congregation and community members to build, learn, and harvest. An innovative partnership connected an afterschool program, a STEM program and the church-based garden site to teach community youth about nutrition and food.
- Together with USDA and CDPH, developed culturally specific cookbooks to support healthy shopping, cooking and eating in our diverse communities. These included: *Soulful Cooking: Building Healthy Traditions* and *Around the World at the Farmers' Market: Recipes from San Diego's African and Middle Eastern Community Cooks*.
- Increased community awareness through the use of culturally- and ethnic-specific media and print outlets. Targeted messages included: Food waste and healthy eating during Ramadan and Lent; Latino and African-American men's health; and, youth health and wellness.

## WHERE WE SHOP

# Transforming food retail environments

## Healthy Retail: Who We Are

The overarching goal of the Healthy Retail Program is to develop and implement strategic policy and environmental changes in collaboration with local food retailers to increase access to healthy, affordable food in San Diego County. The Healthy Retail Program aims to improve and create access to affordable, healthy foods for San Diego residents—which benefits businesses by increasing produce sales, improving the bottom line, building customer loyalty, and promoting a healthier community. The Healthy Retail Program has worked with over 80 retailers and offered no-cost services and technical assistance to retailers, including but not limited to:

- Store design and layout support
- Connection to local produce growers and distributors
- Technical support for utilizing CalFresh Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Programs
- Marketing and merchandising assistance
- Promotional events and media coverage

In addition, in partnership with other organizations the Healthy Retail Program has historically supported the openings of local farmers' markets, such as City Heights and Linda Vista Farmers' Markets.

## REACH

- 460,342+ consumers | 80 retailers
- Large and small-scale neighborhood markets | Produce growers | Distributors | Farmers' markets

## HEALTHY RETAIL STRATEGIES AND SUCCESSES

### Food System

UCSD staff works hand in hand with food system partners to understand the role of the small neighborhood market in a holistic perspective. UCSD's staff is highly competent and qualified in food systems, social justice, cultural competence, economic development, and public health in order to deliver customized technical assistance services to market owners and neighborhood residents who patron small markets.

### Farm-to-Fork

Worked with small farmers/growers and storeowners to help create new sales opportunities for local small growers and to introduce new fresh local produce to stores.

- The Healthy Retail Program has partnered with many farmers' markets in the past and currently partners with two farmers' market sites, in City Heights and El Cajon, encouraging Farm-to-Fork procurement systems. The program conducted farmers' market tours that highlight where food comes from (e.g., "meet your farmer" concept), explains proper produce storage and handling, and provides tips to market patrons on how to shop on a budget. The tours emphasize the market as a safe and healthy place for residents to gather, interact with their neighbors, and learn about locally grown produce directly from farm vendors.
- Garden to Market Project: The goal is two-fold: to help create new sales opportunities for local small growers and to introduce new fresh local produce to stores. In El Cajon, the Healthy Retail Program connected International Rescue Committee (IRC) New Roots urban growers and a local market, Rema Halal, to facilitate and help broker a procurement deal between growers and the market owner.



## **Market Makeovers**

Helped storeowners reorganize existing inventory and added or expanded healthy food options in order to design the market in a way that supports healthier shopper choice.

## **Healthy Checkout Lanes**

Replaced unhealthy foods and beverages with healthier options and other non-food alternatives as one way to help consumers make healthier choices. Examples include:

- **Store Display:** Featured fresh produce at the front of stores to be the first thing that customers see and consider purchasing instead of snack foods.
- **Expanded Produce Section:** Added fresh herbs, salad kits, and seasonal produce to increase the variety of healthy options provided to shoppers.
- **Grab N' Go Refrigeration:** Set aside a refrigerated section for fresh cut fruit, store-made salsa, sandwiches, and salads.
- **Monthly Discounts:** Worked with local distributors to provide discounts on seasonal produce.

## **Safe Routes to Healthy Places**

Worked with storeowners to understand the opportunities and barriers of safe and easy walkability and bikeability to their markets by their patrons and advocated for needed infrastructure improvements such as crosswalks, bike lanes, and bike racks. The Healthy Retail Program partnered with local organizations to ensure safe and accessible walkability, bikeability, and public transit in the surrounding areas of partner stores. Examples include:

- As a result of the Healthy Retail Program's dedication to the project, the mayor of National City and its City Council announced their support of the Health Retail Program's continued efforts within the community to transform many other stores through the Safe Routes to Healthy places program. In addition, the Healthy Retail Program formed a unique partnership with the City Engineer in National City after requesting bike rack installations for each of our partner retail sites. The Healthy Retail Program was able to participate in the National City Bicycle Facilities Celebration in 2014 celebrating the newly implemented bike lanes that stretch for two miles, from Rancho de la Nacion Park to Kimball Park.

## **Healthy Cocina Initiative**

Pilot helped to make the healthy choice the easy choice at Supermercado Murphy's Market. The pilot project focused on serving low-cost, prepared meals that meet the USDA's Dietary Guidelines for Americans to benefit both the shopper and the store's profit margin. The Healthy Retail Program encouraged community participation by partnering with residents, local high school students, and the market's employees to select recipes for the initiative. The project also integrated items from San Diego's Harvest of the Month calendar into Supermercado Murphy's prepared meal for a three-month duration. Meals were offered to customers at a reduced price of \$3.97, and to the store's employees for \$2.97. The Healthy Cocina Initiative was also a pre-conference session for the 8th Biennial Childhood Obesity Conference. The long-term goal of this initiative is to develop a guide for stores to implement a similar program within their own prepared food sections.

## **Store Assessment**

Assessed individual stores and the surrounding food landscape to identify opportunities for improvement and strengths to build upon, promoting CalFresh EBT and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Programs acceptance, connecting with community stakeholders, connecting to economic business development support, and point-of-purchase strategies.

## **Healthy from Here to There Initiative**



The Healthy Retail Program also initiated the “Healthy from Here to There Initiative!” which supported the implementation of permanent wayfinding signs in the City Heights neighborhood that indicated safe routes to the farmer’s market. Results from the Center for Community Health’s Youth Advisory Council’s PhotoVoice assessment were on display at the City Heights Farmer’s Market and the youth had the opportunity to explain the importance of working with fellow community residents. The youth also performed walkability assessments using Circulate San Diego’s walkability form.

### **Health Promotion**

Provided support to stores through marketing and merchandising, and by holding promotional events to showcase healthy changes that would increase customer demand for healthy, fresh foods.

## WHERE WE LEARN

# Creating whole child-whole school wellness communities

## School Wellness: Who We Are

For over 16 years, the School Wellness Program has built comprehensive, multidimensional programming based on the unique needs of San Diego County's schools and districts. The School Wellness Program has continued the legacy of CCH's founding by striving to influence student health and prevent childhood obesity through school-based interventions. Based on the socio-ecological model, the School Wellness Program's nationally recognized initiatives have taken into account the multifaceted relationships that exist within a school community at the individual, interpersonal, institutional, neighborhood, and policy levels. We bridge classrooms, cafeterias, and families with policy in practice. Our approach to school wellness is grounded in the pillars of access, curriculum integration, healthy role modeling, and instructor self-efficacy. We endeavor to create and support school environments that inspire the attainment of health equity for all students.

### REACH & SECTORS ENGAGED

- 44,300+ students | 3,300+ parents | 47 Schools | 14 School Districts | 6 Summer Meal Sites | 105 Partnerships | 22 Coalitions | 37 Hosted Gatherings & Forums | 51 Trainings
- Education | Healthcare | Agriculture | Social Services | Non-Profit | Military | Food Security | College and Professional Sports |

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING

The School Wellness Program has strived to positively influence student health and academic outcomes by providing support in the form of resources and expertise to districts and schools. Through staff training, professional development, and maintaining a district presence as health advocates, we ensured quality implementation and sustainability of school-based programs.

#### **District Wellness Policy Development**

Served on the San Diego Unified School District's Wellness Council and the San Ysidro School District's Wellness Committee from 2013 – 2015 and served on relevant subcommittees to revise the wellness policies for these districts. The school boards of both San Ysidro and San Diego Unified approved their revised wellness policies in 2015.

#### **Tools and Resource Design**

Received funding from San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) to oversee the development of a video series designed to be used during Breakfast in the Classroom. The Power Play! Healthy Champion video series was created to offer a turn-key approach for elementary school teachers to enhance nutrition education lessons in the classroom and help to standardize lessons from the Power Play! Curriculum.

#### **Staff Continuing Education**

Provided on-site trainings that met state level professional development requirements to nutrition services staff in the areas of "Communications and Marketing" and "Operations" to develop positive relationships with students and enact effective Smarter Lunchrooms interventions.

#### **Farm to School Curriculum Integration**

Made California-grown produce and nutrition education accessible to tens of thousands of students and trained hundreds of teachers; School Wellness Programs' Harvest of the Month initiative was the largest farm to school

program in the county that facilitated local procurement for school meals and integrated curriculum-based nutrition education aligned to California Content Standards and Next Generation Science Standards.

### **Reinstating Physical Activity into the School Day**

UC San Diego athletes and Department of Pediatrics staff served as healthy role models and joined classroom teachers in supporting students with the IMPACT program. The physical activity circuit-based program was a collaborative between San Diego Unified School District's Department of Physical Education, Health and Athletics, UCSD Athletics Department, and UCSD Department of Pediatrics.

### **Parent Engagement**

UCSD staff has conducted dozens of trainings and events for parents that taught strategies to reinforce healthy learned behavior related to nutrition and physical activity in the home setting. We aided the development of parent-led physical activity clubs and helped implement a pilot program that incentivized healthy options for children at local chain restaurants.

## **LEADERSHIP**

Over the last four years, the School Wellness Program has played a leadership role and facilitated a multitude of coalitions that strived to attain an impact in family and student health and wellness. The School Wellness Program co-founded the San Diego Summer Meals Taskforce, San Diego Food System Alliance, and the County Nutrition Action Partnership. We have overseen regional strategic planning, policy analysis, program development and research dissemination to reduce childhood obesity across San Diego County sectors.

### **Childhood Obesity Initiative (COI): School & After-School Domain**

The School Wellness Program's leadership served as Co-Chair of the School & After-School Domain since spring 2014. The COI is a public-private partnership with the mission of reducing and preventing childhood obesity through policy, systems, and environmental change. The School Domain unites schools, after-school programs and other key stakeholders in creating healthy, active, and successful learning environments.

### **COI District Representatives Network**

The School Wellness Program's leadership was the lead for the District Representative Network, an initiative of the COI. This Network provided a community liaison to every school district wellness council within the County of San Diego. These liaisons attended monthly Domain meetings and quarterly District Rep Forums where they received resources and training on school wellness policy and health initiatives.

### **County Nutrition Action Partnership (CNAP)**

UC San Diego Center for Community Health has been a co-facilitator of the CNAP Farm to Fork Initiative. The initiative has taken form via collective impact among San Diego non-profits, HHSA and UCSD. Through a shared agenda of making California grown fresh produce and nutrition education accessible to all San Diegans, UCSD School Wellness Programs' Harvest of the Month in the Classroom initiative represented the Farm to Fork effort within the school sector and was the primary means for the county to reach elementary school aged children and their families.

### **San Diego Farm to School Task Force (F2ST)**

The F2ST brought school districts, farmers, distributors, and procurement brokers, as well as nutrition education agencies to the table to facilitate the farm to fork initiative specific to the schools and youth. The School Wellness Program encouraged the group to adopt a common San Diego County Harvest of the Month calendar. We worked with other Southern California NEOPB-funded partners to identify a Southern California HOTM calendar. Based on these findings, the School Wellness Program and the Retail Program then worked collaboratively to coordinate a calendar specific to San Diego County. The HOTM calendar was successfully adopted countywide.

## **UC Office of President Global Food Initiative (UCOP GFI)**

The School Wellness Program leadership served as the UC San Diego liaison to the UCOP GFI's Food Literacy Working Group and K-12 Working Group. The Food Literacy group worked to define food literacy and develop a UC plan to advance food literacy that is broadly adaptable by other organizations nationwide. The K-12 group convened a food hub network across California and produced best practices for building capacity and supplying local food to institutional buyers, including schools and universities.

## **Smarter Lunchrooms Movement of California (SLM)**

The School Wellness Program was member of SLM California Collaborative consisting of the CA Department of Education, UC Davis CalFresh, Dairy Council of California and CDPH. In our role as Technical Advising Providers (TAPs), we guided schools in implementing and evaluating SLM initiatives. We served as regional leaders in conducting plate waste studies utilizing the quarter waste method and our best practices have been shared via national SLM webinars.

## **POLICY, SYSTEMS AND ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES**

School Wellness Program targeted multiple school environments to influence healthy behavior, specifically through Smarter Lunchrooms, afterschool youth engagement projects, Farm to School, Power Play!, and district wellness councils. We collaborated with wellness councils to improve policy language, educate stakeholders on requirements, advocate for funding allocations, and implemented programming that promoted healthy eating and physical activity. Examples included:

- Power Play! Curriculum was integrated into 4th and 5th grade classrooms. The Power Play! Campaign is modeled after a comprehensive school wellness model, providing resources that target student wellness in a number of different ways. By building teacher capacity, parent education, and social marketing in the cafeteria in order to educate, motivate and empower school-aged children to eat fruits and vegetables and be physically active.
- Actively attended Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) meetings within individual school districts to advocate for wellness priorities and met with school district superintendents to discuss opportunities for Wellness initiatives in district LCAP;
- Developed and distributed communication materials outlining San Diego County recommendations for Wellness initiatives;
- Conducted post-consumer plate waste studies to help mitigate food waste at school sites;
- Identified infrastructure to improve food recycling and recovery in cafeterias;
- Helped build civic engagement skills among elementary school aged children through innovative participatory photography lessons using digital storytelling methods. Students were enabled to represent themselves, create tools for health advocacy, and conduct environmental assessments of their schools in order to present recommendations for healthy infrastructure changes to school leadership; and,
- Worked with elementary students to conduct environmental assessments of their schools in order to present recommendations for infrastructure changes to school leadership; and,
- Facilitated the increase of local procurement of produce and seafood for school meals by district recruitment in countywide farm-to-school initiatives and engagement through relevant coalitions.

## COLLABORATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

# Creating Healthy & Vibrant Communities, Together

## San Diego Food System Alliance

UCSD Center for Community Health invests in the core operation of the San Diego Food System Alliance (Alliance) to enhance collaborations and promote public policy changes to impact our food system. The Alliance is a coalition with a mission to develop and maintain an equitable, healthy, and sustainable food system for San Diego County.

The Alliance is comprised of 33 Voting Members and over 100 organizations in the broader network through, representing nonprofits, government institutions, businesses, and community members. Due to the diverse nature of the membership, the Alliance is best-positioned to provide thorough recommendations, both programmatic and policies, to further our food system goals in San Diego County.

To encourage collaboration and sharing of best practices, the Alliance hosts Working Groups and public events focused on specific issues within the food system. Specific Working Groups supported by UCSD Center for Community Health through County of San Diego's NEOP grant includes Healthy Food Access, Urban Agriculture, and Food Recovery.

In 2016, the Alliance spearheaded policy initiatives including Urban Agriculture Incentive Zones, food and agriculture element of Climate Action Plans, and regional organics planning and policies. Programmatic ideas being conceptualized collaboratively in Working Groups include a farmers' market recovery program and farm land linking program.

## KEY COALITIONS AND COMMITTEES

CCH actively participates in various local and national coalitions and committees focused on health equity and chronic disease reduction among our working population. The following is a dynamic list of our leadership and engagement efforts across the County, State and Nation:

- San Diego Summer Meal Task Force
- HHSA's Healthy Retail Working Group
- County of San Diego Farm to Fork Workgroup
- San Diego Restaurant Meals Committee
- San Diego Region Forward
- WIC Collaboration
- San Diego Public Works
- Live Well @ Work Advisory Task Force, Co-Chair
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Physical Activity Policy Research & Workplace Health Promotion Workgroup
- UC Office of the President Healthy Campus Initiative
- HUB International's Corporate Wellness Council
- County of San Diego's Love Your Heart Steering Committee
- San Diego Food System Alliance
- San Diego Summer Meal Task Force
- County of San Diego's Farm to Fork Workgroup
- Imperial Beach Collaborative
- CA4Health
- Childhood Obesity Initiative (COI): School & After-School Domain
- County Nutrition Action Partnership (CNAP)

- Escondido Union School District Staff & Student Wellness Committee
- San Diego County CalFresh Task Force
- San Diego County Food Systems Alliance
- San Diego Farm to School Task Force
- San Diego Food System Alliance: Food Recovery Work Group
- San Diego Hunger Advocacy Network
- San Diego School Garden Collaborative
- Smarter Lunchrooms of California
- San Diego Summer Meal Task Force
- San Diego Unified School District Wellness Council
- School Nutrition Association - Chapter 34
- The Hunger Action Network
- UC Office of President Global Food Initiative
- Food Literacy Committee and K-12 Committee
- Vista Unified School District Wellness Committee

## PARTNERS

We are unable to do the work we do and accomplish the listed outcomes and success without our partners. UCSD CCH NEOP staff work in partnership with hundreds of local, regional, county-wide, state-wide and national partners. These include local FBOs, school sites, local farmers, neighborhood groups, community organizations, small neighborhood markets, and worksites. Each brings a unique story, set of strengths, and perspective that best addresses the needs of their specific communities and members. The full and growing list can be found at: <http://ucsdcommunityhealth.org>

## Southern California Nutrition Incentive Program

### REACH & SECTORS ENGAGED

- 41 Northgate Market Stores |Los Angeles, San Diego and Orange counties| 200+ partnerships|
- Retail| Public Health| Agriculture |Businesses | Non-Profit Foundations |Academic Institutions |Food Banks |Research |Food System |Produce Marketing Association |United Fresh Produce Association| National Grocers Association

The Southern California Nutrition Incentive Program, also known as **¡Más Fresco! More Fresh** is a partnership between the University of California San Diego Center for Community Health, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Northgate González Market and nearly 200 community based organizations. The primary goal of this program is to:

- Increase the purchase and consumption of fruits and vegetables among CalFresh recipients by providing financial incentives at the point-of-purchase;
- Evaluate the effect of financial incentives on the purchase and consumption of fruits and vegetables among CalFresh recipients.

CalFresh recipients benefit dollar for dollar spent on fresh fruits and vegetables. The financial incentive dollars earned can then be used to purchase additional fresh fruits and vegetables. In this way, the program helps to increase the purchasing power and consumption of fruits and vegetables among CalFresh recipients.

This program is a national model, including the development of effective and efficient technologies for benefit redemption that are replicable by others.

### Strategies

- Financial Incentive Rebate Program -Utilizes Northgate’s customer loyalty card, newly developed electronic wallet, and CalFresh customer’s EBT card
- Ongoing FV promotions including discount pricing
- Nutrition Education Activities (in-store cooking classes, store tours, and healthy food self-labeling system) to educate and support the purchasing behaviors of CalFresh families
- Good Food Purchasing Standards: Nutrition, Local Economies, Valued Workforce, Environmental Sustainability
- Fund Development

### **Advisory Board Members**

- USDA
- UCSD Public Health
- UC Office of the President Global Food Initiative
- Northgate González Market
- Latino Health Access
- Ecology Center
- Center for Good Food Purchasing
- SNAP-Ed Implementing Agencies (local health departments, social services agencies, Catholic Charities, UC Cooperative Extension offices, and Area Agency on Aging offices)
- The California Endowment
- San Diego Food System Alliance

## **Lactation Supportive Environments Project**

The Lactation Supportive Environments (LSE) Project actively works to protect, promote and support breastfeeding throughout San Diego County and beyond. For much of the past decade, the LSE team has aimed to reduce barriers to breastfeeding initiation and continuation by increasing the number of settings that provide lactation accommodation and breastfeeding-friendly environments.

The LSE Project began in 2009 as a component of the County’s obesity prevention efforts through a Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) grant awarded to the County of San Diego. With expertise in a policy, systems and environmental approach, the project team over a three year period provided technical assistance including capacity building, partnership development, policy implementation, systems enhancements and environmental change strategies to 15 low income businesses, 10 other businesses and 7 school districts. One of the most significant project outcomes was a partnership between the LSE team and the California School Boards Association (CSBA) that led to development of a CSBA sample lactation accommodation policy that is now available at no cost to all school districts throughout the state and country.

In 2013, LSE was again awarded funding, this time through First 5 San Diego and the charge was bigger. Building on the success of the earlier CPPW grant, the LSE team was tasked to improve and enhance lactation accommodation within 30 businesses, 10 school districts and 6 community health centers across San Diego County. By project conclusion in fall 2016, its reach extended to over 84,000 employees and >80% of engaged sites adopted or updated their lactation accommodation policies/procedures. Other project accomplishments of note include collaboration with San Diego’s Lindbergh Field to create lactation rooms for nursing mothers as well as an LSE-sponsored report exploring breastfeeding metrics in the outpatient electronic health record. Distributed statewide and nationally, the report is presently a support document toward passage of CA Assembly Bill 2589 and is included as a resource in the CA Department of Public Health/CA WIC Association/California Breastfeeding Coalition’s 9 Steps to Breastfeeding-Friendly Clinics Online Toolkit for Implementation.

With additional funding from First 5 San Diego, the LSE project’s newest activities will continue to champion families and the community as they promote and enhance breastfeeding-friendly environments in the early childcare setting. The transition back to work is a time when many mothers opt to discontinue breastfeeding. With assistance from the LSE team, both home- and center-based childcare providers throughout San Diego County will be able to better support nursing mothers at this challenging time to meet (or exceed!) their breastfeeding goals.



LSE accomplishes its mission through a team of professionals recognized for their expertise and dedication to breastfeeding support and accommodation. Project Director Anne Kashiwa has been a leading force of the group since its inception under the CPPW grant and has been awarded the San Diego County Breastfeeding Coalition's highest honor of Breastfeeding Champion for her efforts. Shana Wright Bruno, Senior Project Manager has extensive experience with county-wide initiatives related to obesity prevention and the project's newest team member, Nancy Saavedra, is an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant with community-based home visitor experience.

In addition to the LSE staff team, community collaborations are key to the project's ongoing success. The team works closely with partners including:

- San Diego County Breastfeeding Coalition
- San Diego Childhood Obesity Initiative
  - Early Childhood Domain
  - Healthcare Domain
- County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency
- First 5 San Diego
- San Diego YMCA
- California School Boards Association
- California WIC Association
- American Red Cross (ARC) WIC
- North County Health Services

Project learnings have been shared at the local, state, and national levels through presentations at the CA Breastfeeding Summit, Childhood Obesity Conference, American Public Health Association (APHA), and numerous workshops and conferences within the UC San Diego community.

## FUTURE EFFORTS & VISION

# Discovering, learning, connecting & transforming

UCSD CCH is unique in that it provides San Diego County HHS with a comprehensive, integrated and coordinated solution to implement and sustain SNAP-Ed programs across the entire social ecological model, from individual one-on-one intervention to policy, systems and environmental change solutions at the institutional, community and societal levels. We are constantly working to discover new partners, strategies and opportunities to promote and develop a healthy and thriving community. As a learning institution, UCSD CCH is in a unique position to utilize institutional resources across the School of Medicine, Graduate and Undergraduate campuses to inform and guide efforts. UCSD CCH is also able to connect a variety of programs and resources to the targeted school, retail, worksite, clinics and faith-based organization due to the depth and breadth of relations with which the CCH staff brings to the effort. It is also able to amplify impact, increase efficiency of resources, and drive alignment at the community and County level at a scale that few other institutions are capable of doing. Health and wellness are adaptive systemic problems that require that large-scale social change come from better cross-sector coordination rather than from the isolated interventions of individual organizations and/or focused interventions with one community or group. It requires a systemic approach to social impact that focuses on the relationships between organizations and the progress toward shared objective. UCSD CCH looks forward to continuing and strengthening our work and partnership with HHS, by reaching retail, worksite, school and faith-based institutions across the county in a coordinated and well defined and evidence based manner, as we work together toward **transforming** the health of every County resident.