

## Environmental exposures across urban and rural communities in the Deep South

### CAB Meeting

Feb 9 2018 1-2pm Central

Phone Call

### Draft Meeting Minutes

**Attendees:** Keisha Brown, Courtney Chmielewski, Mary Evans, Julia Gohlke, Emily Ingram, Michael Milazzo, Molly Richardson, Sheryl Threadgill-Matthews, Sheila Tyson, Anna Scott, Steve Wood, and Connor Wu

Meeting Agenda: We added introduction of new collaborator Courtney Chmielewski, a senior in the field of nutrition sciences at Virginia Tech. We added a discussion of upcoming conferences APHA American Public Health Association meeting and Birmingham NUSA to the agenda. We adopted the Meeting Agenda.

Announcements: In April, Connor will present his research relating to associations between heat waves and adverse health outcomes at the American Association for Geographers Annual Meeting. Sheila has invited the group to assist in her presentation at the Birmingham NUSA (Neighborhood USA) meeting May 25<sup>th</sup>. She will discuss how to develop successful partnerships between community organizations and leaders with academic institutions. She will reach out to us to further this discussion, but incorporating the River of Life may be helpful.

#### Review of Summer 2017 Preliminary Results:

Michael presented his preliminary results relating to the VOC monitoring, which are summarized in the file *BTEX Presentation and Pamphlet*. They used monitors at homes and parks to sample for compounds called BTEX (Benzene, Toluene, Ethylbenzene, and Xylene). Their main sources are from car exhaust and other sources like factories. All BTEX levels were within the normal range observed in the US and below EPA Reference Concentrations. Exposure to BTEX was low and had low risk for negative health effect. BTEX in all sites are mostly from nearby roads, but there is another significant source of benzene in North Birmingham and Harriman Park.

Michael also led a discussion on how to communicate these results with the community. He suggested mailing the pamphlet that he created to the residents who participated by having monitors on their front porches. We could also incorporate discussing results at the Spring workshop and distribute flyers then too. Mary suggested adding the ENACT logo to the outside of the envelope; calling the participants so they will look out for the results in the mail; including the PDF versions of the resources listed (*NIOSH Pocket Guide* and *ATSDR: Benzene, Toluene, Ethylbenzene, or Xylenes*) for more information; adding the results, pamphlet, and resources to the ENACT website; and following up at the Black Belt Institute. Anna also suggested asking Sheila to post the overall results (not individual home results) to her social media platforms. Michael will continue to analyze his results under the guidance of Drs. Marr and Gohlke before enacting a distribution plan.

Connor presented on his work with Steven, which compares temperature measurements from the participant iBUTTONs, the community iBUTTONs, and the weather stations. The community monitors

and weather station monitors showed higher temperatures than the participant monitors. The Wilcox County participants experienced higher temperature exposure than the Birmingham participants according to the participant iBUTTONs. This aligns with the results from the study conducted in 2012.

Potential Workshop Participants: We have the budget and anticipate a workshop in each community of 30 participants. Potentially 20-25 of those individuals could be participants from the 2017 summer study and 5 to 7 could be additional community members who could help disseminate it to the rest of the community.

Potential Topics: Sheryl suggested something around the River of Life. This was an activity that Sheila, Mary, Julia, and Sheryl did at the Engage for Equity Workshop tracking the relationship between UAB/VT and the community organizations and partners. Molly reviewed the previous workshops where we briefly presented results and then had guest speakers on topics of interest like safety during weather events and lung health as related to air pollution. Molly also reviewed topic interests from the 2016 focus group survey and discussions that are in the file on *Basecamp called Review of 2016 Focus Group\_Topic Brainstorming*.

Potential Dates/ Times/ Locations for Workshops:

Birmingham: Thursday April 12<sup>th</sup>. Sheila suggested the general area of Lawson State Community College as there is the college campus or there are 2 community centers in the area.

Wilcox County: Tuesday the 10<sup>th</sup> or Wednesday the 11<sup>th</sup> during the daytime

It would be ideal to be consistent with the time of day for these workshops—having either both during the day or both in the evening.

APHA: There is interest in submitting individual abstracts to this conference as the special session deadline has passed and our session at the previous conference was not very well-attended. The deadline is Friday Feb 23 for the environmental section.

Follow Up After the CAB Call:

Ben, Anna, Connor, and Julia are discussing the pros and cons of whether to place monitors in the communities to measure temperature this coming summer.

A series of Follow-up Phone Calls between Sheila, Ethel, Keisha, Sheryl, Mary, Julia, and Molly led to finalizing **May 7<sup>th</sup> Birmingham Workshop and May 9<sup>th</sup> for the Wilcox County Workshop**. We are also continuing discussions on topics. Potentially doing short presentations on the temperature monitor study, the focus group results from 2016, and presenting on the River of Life. We could do a short written questionnaire and then divide into small groups. Leaders in the community could lead small groups in drawing where they would like to see the river flow next (an action plan to continue progress on their priorities in the communities). This general potential plan may communicate our results with the community, validate the focus group results and get insight into participants' opinions, and actively engage participants in an activity to move forward. Discussions are ongoing.