

SALISHAN COMMUNITY HEALTH ADVOCATE PROJECT

YEAR IN REVIEW 2015

WHO ARE THE COMMUNITY HEALTH ADVOCATES?

THE SALISHAN COMMUNITY HEALTH ADVOCATES began their work in 2011 with the goal of improving the health of their neighborhood from within. The group intentionally chose to identify themselves as “community health advocates” rather “community health workers” to highlight their direct focus on encouraging others to be healthy and promoting systemic, policy and community change to create health for all people. In 2012-2013, a second cohort joined the group, expanding the base of from 11 to 18 advocates. Each year since, as Advocates are out in the community they identify “natural helpers:” neighbors with qualities that would make them candidates to become Advocates. This builds the capacity within the cohort and helps them to expand their work in the neighborhood.

Salishan’s 18 Advocates live and work in the neighborhood. Just like their neighbors, they are Vietnamese, Latino, Cambodian, African-American and Caucasian.



Preparing healthy snacks

They span multiple generations, from teenagers to grandparents. They are trusted sources of social support and authentic, two-way communication resources for residents and organizations alike. This helps to create the conditions at the neighborhood level to transform the health and well-being of the community.

Advocates complete a 3-month introductory training to equip them with skills in community outreach and engagement, coordinating with community resources, and supporting others in making healthy lifestyle changes. They go on to receive additional training throughout the year. In 2015, Advocates received an average of 13 additional core training hours in topics like nutrition, domestic violence, and collecting and using data combined with an average of 35 hours in specialized training on topics like health disparities, living well with chronic disease, insurance enrollment and stomach cancer.



Bike Derby fun!

ADVOCATES HELP MAKE IT THE NORM FOR PEOPLE TO BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE, EAT HEALTHY FOOD, CONNECT WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS, AND ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE IN THE SYSTEMS AND POLICIES THAT AFFECT THEIR COMMUNITY.



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CREATING ENDURING HEALTH EQUITY

2015 SALISHAN CHAS



Age Range	Number of CHAs
18-24 years old	4
24-29 years old	2
30-39 years old	2
40-49 years old	3
50-59 years old	5
60+ years old	2
Total	18

Race/Ethnicity	Number of CHAs
African	1
African American	2
Cambodian	1
Caucasian	3
Iraqi	1
Korean	1
Latina	4
Samoan	1
Thai	1
Vietnamese	3
Total	18

BUILDING COMMUNITY HEALTH

Connect People to Community Resources

Salishan Community Health Advocates are trusted members of the community. Their friends, family and neighbors often go to them as a source for information. The Advocates connect people to the resources they need. This includes helping neighbors get food stamps, apply for low income housing, find a local WIC office or connect with treatment for substance abuse. Assistance with health insurance is still in high demand and the people in Salishan trust the CHAs to help them enroll or resolve issues with their insurance carriers. Although the CHAs chose not to recertify as In-Person Assisters in 2015, they still reported this as a frequent activity.

Provide Healthy Activities for People

Since 2012, the Advocates have been listening to members of their community to identify what the primary health concerns are and what potential solutions might be. One example is residents in the two senior living buildings expressed that isolation was a common struggle for many of them. When asked what activities they would like to engage in, they had several ideas: bingo was the most popular activity mentioned. So, the CHAs worked together with building managers to develop a program and it has been one of the most successful for the last three years. It's been a great way to gather the seniors in person around an activity they enjoy. The



Advocates utilize the opportunity to keep the seniors informed, teach fall prevention exercises and other important health habits.

Engage People in Everyday Health

Through their training and supervision, Advocates are continually learning about health and wellness. They are also being encouraged to engage in healthy behaviors themselves and support those close to them in everyday behaviors that promote good health. Examples of them engaging others in everyday health include taking walks with friends, trying new healthy foods, teaching neighbors how to make kale smoothies and going to medical appointments with a family member

“I am the Bingo Lead. A lady who lived in the neighborhood came to bingo and told me about her diabetes. I had gestational diabetes when I was pregnant and I learned a lot about how to take care of diabetes. I taught her about how to eat. I showed her some pamphlets and some nutrition information. I think she feels better now. She comes out [of her house] to say “hi” to me. This story is significant to me because she trusted me and she took my advice and I think she appreciated the help.”

—Community Health Advocate

Empower People in Systems & Policy Change

An independent evaluation found that the Advocates are (1) trusted by neighbors to provide them with advice and resources to improve their health and (2) recognized by organizations as being uniquely able to communicate health-related policies and practices. Advocates are trusted by residents, Salishan governing bodies, and local organizations to share information accurately. Advocates have been able to use their two-way trusted-communicator role to surface resident voice and communicate policy.



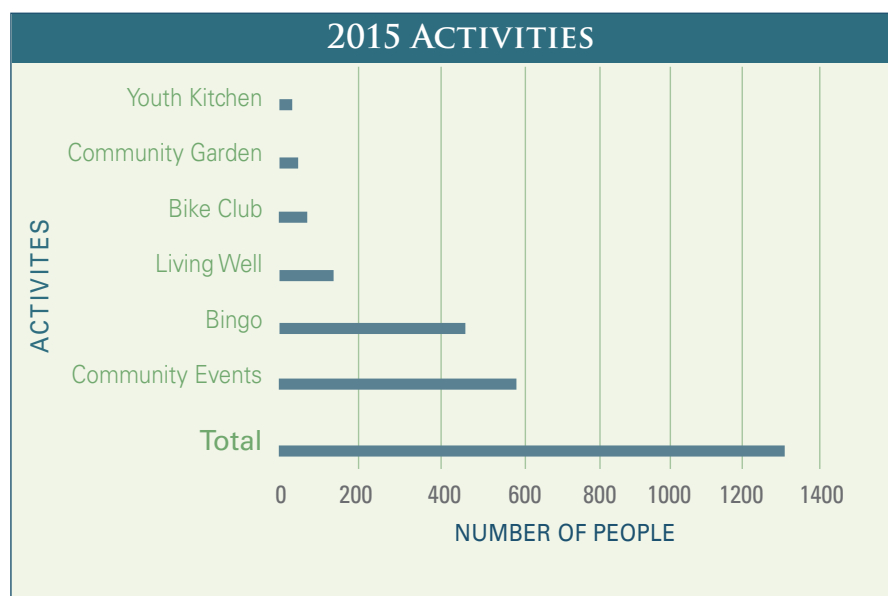
Bingo night at Salishan

2015 Specific Systems & Policy Work

- Farmer’s Market
- Salishan CHAs participated in the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), partnering with Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department and many local community organizations

continued

Other activities the Advocates provide in Salishan for residents of all ages



- Dept. of Health in planning & implementing CHW work
- CHAs testified to Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health about how E-Cigarettes are dangerous, more prevalent in their neighborhood, and are marketed to children.
- Hosted a town hall meetings to build relationships between senior citizens, Tacoma Housing staff, security management and building managers to address safety concerns.
- CHA selected for State Wide Community Health Worker Task Force – she became a leader during the process.

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Vaelupemaua “Lupe” Anitema Talamoni represented the Salishan Community Health Advocates on the state-wide Community Health Worker Task Force, convened by Washington Secretary of Health John Wiesman, and Director of the Health Care Authority, Dorothy Teeter. As a member of the Task Force, Lupe served on the CHW Roles & Skills and Finance Considerations Task Force workgroups, and was a strong voice and advocate for community-based CHW roles and impact. In addition, Lupe was an advocate not only for the breadth of work Community Health Workers do in community, but was a strong presence and example of the power in bringing the wisdom of lived experience to the work of connecting across sectors for policy change.

“..we CHWs are the connectors on the frontlines... we are partners with the community and step with them together, comfort, and stand with them, offer a firm shoulder, and say, step this way, let’s cross this bridge.”

—Vaelupemaua “Lupe” Anitema Talamoni

YEAR 2015 IN REVIEW

Special thanks to key collaborators:



For more information on Salishan Community Health Advocates, contact
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For the past 40 years, the Foundation for Healthy Generations has been working to create enduring health equity.

Our strategic focus is to create the conditions for health at the local grassroots level by uniting community wisdom, effective policy, and proven and emergent practices.

One expression of this focus is the Salishan Community Health Advocates Program, which we implemented in 2011 in partnership with The Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma, Tacoma-Pierce Health Department, and the Salishan Community Association.

Foundation for Healthy Generations

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