

**University of California, San Francisco
Community Partnerships**

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UCSF Forms University-Community Partnerships Council

Striving to strengthen UCSF's connection with the community and to empower the community to partner with the University, UCSF has launched the University-Community Partnerships Program.

"If UCSF is to remain a leading university, it is essential that we succeed in our ultimate mission of promoting health and preventing disease," said Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Eugene Washington, MD, MPH, who initially charged the task force that led to the formation of the program. "To achieve this goal, we have formed a council to help us identify needs and develop initiatives to create a more robust, institutionalized community partnership program at UCSF."

The program is directed by a 20-member UCSF University-Community Partnerships Council, a group of passionate public service advocates who gathered for the first time on March 9 at the Mission Bay campus.



Barbara French, associate vice chancellor for University Relations, left, greets Sharon Johnson, youth program director at the Potrero Hill Neighborhood House.

Consisting of 10 UCSF representatives and 10 members of the community, the council is charged with the important task of enabling faculty, staff and students to further improve the University's presence and participation in community partnerships. The council is also charged with assisting the community in partnering with UCSF to address community needs.

Kevin Grumbach, MD, professor and chair of the Department of Family and Community Medicine, who headed the task force, now serves as co-chair of the council. A co-chair from the community will be named at the council's meeting in June.

"I am tremendously excited to see this program in civic engagement taking shape at UCSF," Grumbach said. "Already, from just the first few meetings of the council, it is apparent how valuable it is to have community members as meaningful, empowered partners. It is clear to me that this program is not about window dressing, but about challenging UCSF and the community to find ways to work together more effectively to their mutual benefit."


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Council members were selected after a comprehensive review process — all have extensive track records serving the community. UCSF members come from a cross-section of the campus, representing the schools and medical center, and include experts in social and behavioral sciences and community outreach. Members from the community include representatives from existing UCSF partners, such as Potrero Hill Neighborhood House, and their professions run the gamut from youth guidance counselors to leaders of neighborhood centers.

Community members appreciate the opportunity to share their insights and hope that the partnership will be mutually beneficial.

"I joined the council because I have incredible respect for UCSF and want to help UCSF make stronger and more fruitful connections to my population of students and their communities," said Eric Lewis, a teacher at Mission High School. "The new Mission Bay campus is close to both the Mission and Bay View-Hunters Point, where many of my students reside. I hope that by working with UCSF, we can ensure that these two communities benefit from UC's presence and that UC will benefit from the participation of these communities."

The council was created from recommendations outlined by the Task Force on Community Partnerships that was convened in July 2004 by Washington. Over the next 13 months, the task force evaluated UCSF partnerships in community-based programs, reviewed evidence about the benefits of academic partnerships in community-based programs and considered the key attributes that make for successful partnerships. The task force issued its final report in August 2005. The task force report is posted [online here](#) (pdf).

Among its recommendations, the task force called for:

- Establishing a University Community Partnerships Program to serve as a centralized unit to promote, support and incubate ideas for community partnerships, and
- Creating a University-Community Partnerships Council to guide the operations and serve as an advisory board to the University-Community Partnerships Program.

"Excelling at civic engagement — the collaboration between the University and the community for the purpose of improving community health and well-being, as well as empowering community participation — holds measurable benefits for UCSF and the communities in which we engage," said Paul Takayama, executive director of Community and Governmental Relations at UCSF.

The UCSF University-Community Partnerships Council and program are part of the office of Community and Governmental Relations and are under the jurisdiction of Barbara French, associate vice chancellor for University Relations, who is an ex-officio member of the council. Day-to-day management of the program is spearheaded by San Francisco native Elba Sanchez, who was hired in April as program director. Sanchez comes to UCSF with more than 10 years' experience in building academic and community partnerships.

One of the main challenges facing the newly formed council is looking at how to improve coordination among UCSF's many individual community-based programs. For although many diverse public service programs exist at UCSF, the task force found that poor coordination across individual programs results in duplication of effort, missed opportunities for synergy between compatible programs, and lack of a collective learning and sharing experience.

"We should know what the best practices are and how UCSF, as one of the

greatest health sciences institutions in the world, can improve to maximize its impact in communities," Washington said. "We want to better leverage our expertise and talent."

While the task force uncovered areas for improvement to strengthen public service programs, what struck Washington the most after reading the report was learning about the extensive breadth and depth of UCSF's community-based activities. An initial inventory of the UCSF community partnership activities found more than 60 programs, involving more than 28 different UCSF departments and units.

"It is amazing how broadly and deeply engaged we are in Bay Area communities through our current education, research, clinical care and community development programs," Washington said. "We have an opportunity to build on that foundation and to continue to show that we value our relationship with the community."

Council Members

UCSF members of the University-Community Partnerships Council are:

- Charles Alexander, associate dean, UCSF School of Dentistry
- Patricia Caldera-Munoz, academic coordinator, UCSF Science & Health Education Partnership
- Gerri Collins-Bride, clinical professor and vice chair, UCSF School of Nursing
- Christine Des Jarlais, assistant dean, UCSF Graduate Division
- Kevin Grumbach, chair and professor, UCSF School of Medicine
- Dixie Horning, executive director, UCSF Center of Excellence in Women's Health
- Cindy Lima, director, UCSF Medical Center administration
- Howard Pinderhughes, associate professor and vice chair, UCSF School of Nursing
- Lorie Rice, associate dean, UCSF School of Pharmacy
- Naomi Wortis, assistant clinical professor, UCSF School of Medicine

Community members of the University-Community Partnerships Council are:

- Tavi Baker, manager, Boys and Girls Club of San Francisco
- Lynda Boyer-Chu, health coordinator, Gloria R. Davis Academy
- Larry Del Carlo, executive director, Mission Housing Development
- Gwen Henry, director, Parent and Family Resource Center, and associate director, Florence Crittenton Services
- Eli Horn, executive director, Visitacion Vally Community Beacon Center
- Sharon Johnson, youth program coordinator, Potrero Hill Neighborhood House
- Dwayne Jones, director, Communities of Opportunity
- Eric Lewis, teacher, Mission High School
- John Nickens, clinical director, Progress Foundation
- Nora Rios Reddick, executive director, Horizons Unlimited of San Francisco.

For more information, contact [Elba R. Sanchez](#), program director, University Community Partnerships, UCSF Community and Government Relations, at 415/502-4966.

Photo by Elisabeth Fall

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University of California
San Francisco

Report of the Executive Vice Chancellor's

Task Force on Community Partnerships

August, 2005

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The UCSF Task Force on Community Partnerships was convened by Executive Vice Chancellor Washington in July, 2004. Dr. Washington's charge to the Task Force was to:

- Perform an inventory that describes and categorizes UCSF partnerships in community-based programs within California in which UCSF faculty and staff participate as part of their University responsibilities;
- Review what is known about the benefits to the community and university of academic partnerships in community-based programs, and about the key attributes of successful partnerships between communities and academic institutions; and
- Make recommendations for improving the success and impact of UCSF's engagement in community-based programs and partnerships.

The Task Force was chaired by Kevin Grumbach, MD, Professor and Chair of the UCSF Department of Family and Community Medicine, and included 20 members representing diverse sectors of all four UCSF schools as well as the UCSF Medical Center. Between September 2004 and July 2005, the Task Force held a series of meetings of its members, sought consultation from two national experts in community partnership programs (Barbara Holland, PhD, and Joan Reede, MD), held a forum with San Francisco residents and representatives from local community based organizations, and conducted two major investigations to inform development of Task Force findings and recommendations. These investigations consisted of:

- A web-based survey to compile an inventory of existing community partnership programs at UCSF, and
- Examination of community partnership initiatives at other leading universities in the United States to identify "best practices" in organizing and administering community partnership initiatives at the institutional level.

The Task Force on Community Partnerships arrived at the following Findings and Recommendations:

Findings

1. **Community partnerships are not only in the public's interest; civic engagement is in the interest of UCSF to achieve excellence as an academic institution.**

2. **UCSF has many existing assets for successful community partnerships. These assets form the substrate for developing a more robust, institutionalized community partnership initiative at UCSF.**
 - a. *Institutional mission and commitment:* Leaders committed to community engagement hold influential positions on campus, including positions in the Chancellor's Office and the Offices of the Deans of the UCSF Schools, Department Chairs, and Directors of major academic units.
 - b. *Experiences and a track record in successful community partnerships:* The Task Force's initial inventory of UCSF community partnership activities found over 60 different programs, involving more than 28 different UCSF departments and units, with focus areas including community-based research, clinical training and service-learning education, among other areas. Many of these programs are exemplary models of academic-community partnerships characterized by sustained relationships between partners, sharing of leadership and power, and lessons humbly learned.
 - c. *Resources and infrastructure:* UCSF has tremendous resources to contribute to community partnerships, including the "intellectual capital" of the institution's scholarship and expertise in health care and science; experienced and motivated faculty and staff; and more. These resources are matched by the assets of local communities that are activist in orientation, sophisticated and knowledgeable, culturally competent, and, in many instances, favorably disposed to collaboration with UCSF.
 - d. *Timely opportunities:* Events such as the development of the UCSF Mission Bay campus present timely opportunities for renewed efforts in civic engagement, particularly with the southeast communities neighboring Mission Bay.
3. **A parallel set of barriers and liabilities also exist at UCSF impeding successful community partnerships.**
 - a. *A culture not conducive to civic engagement:* The biomedical research culture of UCSF overshadows and depreciates the valuing of community engagement, faculty members do not receive significant recognition and support for community engagement, and there is no explicit requirement for service-learning program participation for all UCSF students and residents.

- b. *Insufficient institutional competence in community partnerships:* Some community members, particularly those in vulnerable communities, distrust UCSF. Although it has many partnership programs that have achieved high credibility and respect among the community, the University also has been perceived to be exploitative of the community.
 - c. *Lack of greater and more formalized resources and infrastructure for community partnerships:* The absence of a more centralized infrastructure remains a limiting factor for more robust civic engagement at UCSF. There is poor coordination across individual UCSF partnership programs, resulting in duplication of effort, missed opportunities for synergy between compatible programs, and lack of collective learning and sharing of experiences. Community members seeking UCSF partners and resources face a largely impenetrable institution without an obvious entry for developing academic-community collaborations. UCSF lacks an internal grants program to provide start-up or other funding support for community partnership projects.
 - d. *Lack of sufficient academic incentives and acknowledgement of the value of community partnerships within the campus setting*
4. **Although no academic institution in the United States has a model of a community partnership infrastructure that will serve as a perfect blueprint for a UCSF initiative, a number of “best practices” at these institutions can be modified and adapted as a base for such an endeavor.**

Recommendations

1. **Create a formal University-Community Partnerships Program that will serve as the campus infrastructure for community partnerships.** This Program should support—not supplant—the diverse ecosystem of organically developed, grass-roots community partnerships that exist at UCSF by “fertilizing” and facilitating community partnerships, incubating new initiatives, and otherwise helping to overcome a number of institutional barriers and liabilities impeding civic engagement.
2. **Designate a leader within the Chancellor’s Office who is responsible for assuring that the functions of the University-Community Partnerships Program are performed.**

3. **Appoint a University-Community Partnerships Council empowered to work with the Chancellor's Office to guide the operations of the Partnership Program.** The Council should consist of UCSF members and community members in approximately equal balance, and have a meaningful decision-making role in the planning and operation of the University-Community Partnerships Program.
4. **Formally adopt explicit principles of civic engagement and community partnerships for UCSF as an institution.**
5. **Prioritize the implementation of the following components of the University-Community Partnerships Program:**
 - a. *Information clearinghouse and coordinating center:* Both the campus and the community need a centralized information clearinghouse that maintains an interactive, updated computerized database on individual UCSF community partnerships. A core staff is needed to administer the inventory, maintain the database, and serve as the human liaison to the public and members of the UCSF community, performing outreach and facilitating and coordinating projects.
 - b. *Faculty development and support:* UCSF requires an infrastructure to assist faculty members to become more adept in civic engagement and to overcome the institutional barriers to successful faculty careers in community service. A centralized infrastructure for community partnerships should provide such a service on a campus wide basis in support of faculty members devoted to community-engaged scholarship.
 - c. *Service-learning curricular development:* UCSF needs to develop a more coherent approach to service-learning for students, residents, and other learners on campus. The campus should support a process for bringing together faculty, staff and learners in disparate community-oriented educational programs to explore shared service-learning curricular needs, clarify expectations for learners, and strengthen processes for enhancing the competence of learners to work effectively with communities.