Hey Community Engagers,

Congratulations to two of our esteemed PACT Council members, Ned Calonge and Tim Byers, for their recent accomplishments! Ned, current president and CEO of the Colorado Trust, was recently elected to the Institute of Medicine -- "a very big deal" stated PACT Chair Larry Green. Election to the IOM is considered one of the highest honors in the fields of health and medicine, recognizing individuals who have demonstrated outstanding professional achievement and commitment to service. Tim, current Associate Dean for the Public Health Practice at the Colorado School of Public Health, was elected to 1st Vice President of the American Cancer Society, the largest voluntary health organization in the United States. Tim has been an American Cancer Society volunteer for about 30 years. You can read both stories in CU Connections at: http://connections.cu.edu/people/high-honor-for-colorado-trust%27s-calonge/ http://connections.cu.edu/people/byers-elected-to-post-at-american-cancer-society/

Perhaps yesterday you were in the audience at University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Center listening to Michael Bird, MSW, MPH, past president of American Public Health Association and current public health consultant, speak about health disparities among Native Americans. His inspiring presentation challenged "everyone to work together and step up" to change today's health care in all of America. Ask what a community needs and "how can I help?" To leave a living legacy, one must open the door and reach out. "Raising the public's awareness of health disparities is vital," he says. "Our task is to reach and educate people and organizations and all branches of the federal, state, and local governments. We must help them understand who we are and how we have been affected. We must assume that bringing together the data and political process with wisdom and heart is a do-able task." Five recommended groundbreaking monographs that focus on health disparities in different communities (Blacks in America, Latinos, Asian Americans, American Indians and Alaska Natives, and Pacific Islanders) can be downloaded for FREE at http://pub.etr.org/docpages.aspx?pagename=health_disparities.

November is American Diabetes Month
Diabetes is a serious disease that leads to potentially life-threatening complications such as heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, blindness and amputation. It's also a disease that is particularly hard-hitting in the African-American community. Join the Center for African-American Health, the American Diabetes Association, and others in a nationwide effort to "Stop Diabetes." To learn more about programs, classes, and health education materials available through the Center for African-American Health, visit their Web site at www.caahealth.org.

Creating Healthy, Vibrant Communities
A new policy brief from Health Affairs and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation highlights current initiatives and further potential for the community development and health sectors to work together more effectively.
According to the brief, there is a wide body of evidence showing that people’s health is significantly affected by where they live, learn, work and play. Addressing these factors is important to shaping effective public policies and private actions. Healthy People 2020, the federal government’s 10-year plan for improving the nation’s health, emphasizes social determinants of health and encourages the use of health impact assessments as a strategy to address them. Read "Community Development and Health" at http://www.rwjf.org/healthpolicy/product.jsp?id=73559&cid=XEM_688678.

If you haven’t already seen the October issue of Health Affairs, the theme is “Agenda For Fighting Disparities.” Check out the table of contents at http://content.healthaffairs.org/content/30/10.toc.

The AAMC Reporter has an editorial of interest, entitled “Eliminating Health Disparities to Improve the Health of All.” It is available at: https://www.aamc.org/newsroom/reporter/october2011/262412/word.html.

Have a great weekend and Happy Thanksgiving to All,
Jack Westfall