

Season's Greetings

from the **HERCULES Community Engagement Core!**

As we near the end of 2018, we wanted to share with you our accomplishments from this past year, and thank you for your support of our efforts!

The HERCULES Community Engagement Core (CEC)

The CEC aims to enhance and expand existing relationships between HERCULES and community partners to resolve environmental health issues in the community using exposome principles. We do this by:



1

Creating conversations between the Atlanta community and HERCULES



2

Increasing the capacity of local communities to address their environmental health concerns



3

Guiding and supporting HERCULES scientists in community engagement

As you may be aware, the HERCULES Community Engagement Core aims to create bi-directional dialogue between Atlanta communities and HERCULES scientists, enhance community capacity to address their environmental health concerns, and support HERCULES scientists to engage communities in their research. To do this, we pursue a variety of activities, guided by our Stakeholder Advisory Board.

And we've been busy! Check out our updates below:



Stakeholder Advisory Board

We maintained an active [Stakeholder Advisory Board](#) made up of local residents, non-profits, government agencies, and academic partners. Our SAB determines and guides our activities, one highlight being the design and launch our new Exposome Roadshow and Community Grant Program, detailed below.



Exposome Roadshow and Community Grant Program

After a pilot period, we officially launched our new [Shaheed DuBois Exposome Roadshow and Community Grant Program](#), a new and (we think) improved version of our past Community Grant Program. We're very excited about this new model, which lasts 3 years and allows us to share the exposome concept with communities, learn about their exposome-related concerns, and provide them with financial and technical support to address those concerns.



Supporting Community Engaged Research

We have been busy supporting community-engaged research! Two highlights:

New [CEC Services for HERCULES Investigators](#): Investigators can request support services on the HERCULES website, including, for example, facilitating partnerships and consultation on reporting-back and clearly communicating research results.

Facilitating partnerships: we connected a HERCULES SAB member with researchers Eri Saikawa and Sam Peters, which has resulted in a HERCULES Pilot Grant leading to actionable results around soil contamination within a local Atlanta community.

New [Community Engagement Awards](#) for HERCULES partners and Faculty: Congratulations to our inaugural award recipients, Karla Blaginin (SAB Member) and Dana Boyd Barr (HERCULES Faculty)!



Research Translation and Communication

We strive to translate HERCULES research into language and formats that is clear and relevant to local Atlanta communities. We now have 7 research translations available on the [HERCULES website](#), and we offer research summary and infographic creation as one of our [CEC Services](#)!



Additional Community Outreach

In addition to our planned activities, we participate in outreach activities that pop up throughout the year. One particular highlight was our support of a local community who came to us with air quality concerns.

In partnership with that community and Dr. Dana Boyd Barr, we were able to systematically document the community's odor concerns, borrow VOC air monitoring equipment and train the community members to use it, and compile the VOC data into a report that the community could use.

We also co-planned and hosted a community conversation for [WonderRoot's Off the Wall initiative](#), joined the newly designated [Greater Atlanta UN Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development](#), and presented on the importance of community engagement at the Georgia Environmental Conference, to name a few!

We are fortunate to have so many supportive partners that help us address these real environmental health concerns in Atlanta communities. Wishing you all a wonderful holiday season, and we look forward to expanding these efforts with you in 2019!

- *Melanie, Michelle, and Erin*