

**IMPROVING THE HEALTHCARE OF CHICAGO:  
A COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH TO REDUCING ASTHMA DISPARITIES**

**Town Meeting Community Bios**

**ALBANY PARK**

**Town Meeting Host Site – Healthy Albany Park**

Healthy Albany Park is a community-based coalition working to improve the overall quality of life and well-being of the Albany Park community area. Convened in April 2004, the coalition undertook a strategic planning process in which coalition members gathered data and resident input to identify resources, gaps and priority issues in the community. The coalition, working with the Albany Park Community, then developed strategies to address these issues in Albany Park. Coalition members now work in Action Area groups (Wellness, Positive Youth and Communities Development, Community Safety, Employment, and Housing) to implement these strategies. The Healthy Albany Park Coalition envisions an inclusive, community-driven process that works to nourish and enrich this diverse neighborhood's capacity to achieve a healthy Albany Park.

**Town Meeting Facilitator – Radhika Sharma-Gordon, MPH**

Radhika Sharma-Gordon has been staffing the Healthy Albany Park Coalition since February 2008. Prior to that, she was a consultant to various area non-profits, providing training design, meeting facilitation, and Board Development. Ms. Sharma-Gordon earned her Masters in Public Health from the University of Michigan in 1989 and has worked as a prevention educator for the Cook County Department of Public Health, Apna Ghar South Asian Women's Domestic Violence Shelter, and the Illinois Center for Violence Prevention. She serves on the Boards of the Asian American Institute and Global Explorers Kids.

**Albany Park Community Area Data<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Community Information</b>	<b>Albany Park</b>
Number of Residents	57,655
Percent of Households Where Language Other than English is Spoken	70
Percent of Population Foreign Born	52.2
Percent Living Below Poverty Level	17.7
Percent Living Below Twice Poverty Level	42.0
Predominant Race	Hispanic 46.4% White 27.5% Asian 17.7%
Mean Income	\$40,711
Asthma Hospitalization Rate (All)*	17.6 per 10,000
Asthma Hospitalization Rate for >18**	17.4 per 10,000
Top Three Causes of Hospitalization	Heart disease (10.3%) Non-Drug/Alcohol Related Mental Disorders (6.7%) Injury (3.9%)

\* City of Chicago average is 31.6 per 10,000

\*\* City of Chicago average is 28.8 per 10,000

<sup>1</sup> Information from the Chicago Department of Public Health's Chicago Community Health Profile, April 2006.

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**Town Meeting Community Bios**

**ENGLEWOOD**

**Town Meeting Host Site – Pastors of Englewood**

The Pastors of Englewood is a God centered organization that provides pastoral care services to men, women, children and youth in the Englewood community. The mission of the organization is to serve and improve the quality of life for the residents of Englewood by providing resources that address their spiritual, physical, and emotional needs. Their goal is to develop relationships with spiritual, healthcare, political, and business leaders to focus on providing excellence in all educational and resource development opportunities for their community members.

**Town Meeting Facilitator – Pastor Gay Chisum, RN**

Ms. Gay Chisum is an ordained minister and the Co-Pastor of Gifts From God Ministry in the Englewood Community. Ms. Chisum serves as the chair of the Health and Seniors Committee for the Englewood Unity Coalition and previously worked as a Parish Nurse for the Englewood Community. Currently Ms. Chisum is employed by the Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago as the Asthma Project Manager for the Addressing Asthma in Englewood Project. The project provides Englewood families asthma education, help in identifying triggers, and case management for one year. She is a registered nurse and has worked in health education for twenty-eight years.

**Englewood Community Area Data<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Community Information</b>	<b>Englewood</b>
Number of Residents	40,222
Percent of Households Where Language Other than English is Spoken	3.8
Percent of Population Foreign Born	1.0
Percent Living Below Poverty Level	43.8
Percent Living Below Twice Poverty Level	67.5
Predominant Race	Black 97.8%
Mean Income	\$18,955
Asthma Hospitalization Rate (All)*	60.2 per 10,000
Asthma Hospitalization Rate for >18**	58.3 per 10,000
Top Three Causes of Hospitalization	Non-Drug/Alcohol Related Mental Disorders (11.0%) Heart disease (10.1%) Drug/Alcohol Related Mental Disorders (6.2%)

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**HUMBOLDT PARK**

**Town Meeting Host Site – Greater Humboldt Park Community of Wellness**

The Greater Humboldt Park Community of Wellness is a broad coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to improving the health of the Chicago Community Areas of Humboldt Park and West Town. Their work is focused around eight health priorities: Asthma, Active Lifestyles, Behavioral Health, Diabetes, Health Careers, HIV/AIDS, Oral Health, and School Health. The mission of the Greater Humboldt Park Community of Wellness is to facilitate a comprehensive vision of wellness by working collaboratively with a broad array of people and organizations to leverage their complementary strengths and capabilities to solve community health problems.

**Town Meeting Facilitator – Juana Ballesteros, BSN, RN, MPH**

Ms. Ballesteros received her Bachelor’s of Science in Nursing in 1999 and Master’s in Public Health in 2005 from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her graduate coursework focused on community health sciences with an emphasis on behavioral health and health promotion. Ms. Ballesteros has spent most of her professional career working in Chicago’s Latino communities addressing several health disparities including HIV/AIDS, prenatal and postnatal health, oral health, and asthma.

Ms. Ballesteros is currently the Executive Director of the Greater Humboldt Park Community of Wellness. Ms. Ballesteros is also a Steering Committee member of the Alliance for Research in Chicagoland Communities (ARCC) based out of Northwestern University’s Community-Engaged Research Center. ARCC’s mission is to grow equitable and collaborative partnerships between Chicago area communities and Northwestern University for research that leads to measureable improvement in community health.

**Humboldt Park Community Area Data<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Community Information</b>	<b>Humboldt Park</b>
Number of Residents	65,836
Percent of Households Where Language Other than English is Spoken	46
Percent of Population Foreign Born	18.8
Percent Living Below Poverty Level	31.1
Percent Living Below Twice Poverty Level	57.5
Predominant Race	Hispanic 48.0% Black 47.4%
Mean Income	\$28,728
Asthma Hospitalization Rate (All)*	60.2 per 10,000
Asthma Hospitalization Rate for >18**	63.8 per 10,000
Top Three Causes of Hospitalization	Heart disease (9.8%) Non-Drug/Alcohol Related Mental Disorders (8.6%) Drug/Alcohol Related Mental Disorders (7.2%)

\* City of Chicago average is 31.6 per 10,000

\*\* City of Chicago average is 28.8 per 10,000