

Release

UAlbany's Center for the Elimination of Minority Health Disparities Launches Arbor Hill Community Immersion Project

Area High School students attend 3-day program aimed at raising health awareness

Contact: Catherine Herman (518) 437-4980

ALBANY, N.Y. (February 24, 2006) -- The Education Core of the University at Albany's Center for the Elimination of Minority Health Disparities (CEMHD), directed by Blanca M. Ramos, has unveiled a cultural immersion project aimed at informing young adults of available health-related services within the Arbor Hill community. The project recently involved a 3-day program in which UAlbany faculty and graduate students from various ethnic groups chaperoned black area high school students on a bus tour through Arbor Hill. The students were enrolled in UAlbany's Liberty Partnership Program, an after-school project designed by the Center for Women in Government and Civil Society.



Students from the Liberty Partnership Program embark on a guided tour of Arbor Hill as part of a new cultural immersion project developed by the UAlbany CEMHD Education Core. [Click to enlarge.](#)

The project began with volunteers from the American Red Cross and Mothers Against Drunk Driving providing information on emergency preparedness, baby sitting, fire safety and drivers education classes. Students were provided with materials that helped them to understand the dangers of lead, asbestos, pesticides and radon - chemicals that have been linked to allergies and even cancer from a team of professionals including Edwina Dorch, research scientist with UAlbany's Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy and director of the Mentoring and Training Core at CEMHD; Dwight Williams, clinical associate professor at UAlbany's School of Public Health; and Barry Walston, director of the Community Coordination and Planning Section AIDS Institute, NYS Department of Health.

Students later boarded a school bus and received a tour of the Arbor Hill health community, including a tour of the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Health Center and site-seeing commentary on the YMCA's Complete Fitness Center, the Equinox's Youth At-Risk Drop-in Center, the Northeastern Association of the Blind and Crest View's vocational rehabilitation center for the mentally ill. Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) members provided pamphlets on the educational requirements for the healthcare professions and answered student questions on working in the healthcare field. Aaron Mair, president and founder of the Arbor Hill



Area high school students taking part in CEMHD's Arbor Hill Community Immersion Project visit the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Health Center. [Click to enlarge.](#)

[Search News Website](#)

Search

Environmental Justice Corporation and the W. Haywood Burns Environmental Education Center served as tour guide.

"We launched CEMHD with a very important focus - the health of our communities," said University at Albany President Kermit L. Hall. "The center holds no greater responsibility than educating our younger community members to promote life-long healthy living. I congratulate all of the Education Core members, our community partners, and Dr. Ramos for piloting this important initiative."

The goals of the project are to raise student awareness of community environmental health, acknowledge community health care agencies and their employees; emphasize the importance of health advocacy and showcase local advocates; and to facilitate cultural awareness and communication.

The Arbor Hill Community Immersion Project is the second program aimed at engaging the minority community through CEMHD's Education Core. Under the direction of Ramos, an associate professor at UAlbany's School of Social Welfare, the Education Core aims to implement health related activities such as the cultural immersion programs through collaborative partnerships with educators and community representatives from both Latino and African American groups. The first immersion project organized by the Education Core focused on Latino families in Amsterdam hosting graduate students from another ethnic group, promoting cultural awareness and sensitivity.

The Liberty Partnership Program (LPP) at the University at Albany's [Center for Women in Government and Civil Society](#) (CWGCS) is a drop out prevention program targeted at young adults in grades 7-12 who are at risk of leaving school prior to graduation. The program is designed to provide a comprehensive range of services that support and encourage young people to obtain their diploma, pursue higher education and begin workforce preparation. The center works collaboratively with businesses, academic institutions, community-based organizations and state agencies as well as the students' school and family to advance educational achievement, enhance self-esteem, develop job-seeking skills and attitudes and promote public policy leadership skills. For more information, visit [CWGCS](#).

As an NIH EXPORT (Excellence in Partnerships for Community Outreach, Research on Health Disparities and Training) center, UAlbany's Center for the Elimination of Minority Health Disparities will identify health problems and seek ways to reduce and eventually eliminate, minority health inequities by building the University's health disparities research capacity and by strengthening community partners' ability to collaborate on research and intervention programs. Under the direction of Lawrence Schell, professor of anthropology and epidemiology at the University at Albany, CEMHD seeks to make a significant difference in the health of our communities by facilitating university-community partnerships to determine local causes of health disparities and then to determine the best, most community-relevant solutions. For more information, visit [CEMHD](#).

The University at Albany's broad mission of excellence in undergraduate and graduate education, research and public service engages more than 17,000 diverse students in nine degree-granting schools and colleges. For more information about this internationally ranked institution, visit <http://www.albany.edu/>. For UAlbany's extensive roster of faculty experts, visit www.albany.edu/news/experts.shtml.

Please send questions or comments about the UAlbany News site to: mediarelations@uamail.albany.edu

[▲TOP](#)

[University at Albany Home Page](#)

[Contact UAlbany](#) | [Directories](#) | [Calendars](#) | [Visitors](#) | [Site Index](#) | [Search](#)
[Admissions](#) | [Academics](#) | [Research](#) | [IT Services](#) | [Libraries](#) | [Athletics](#)