The mission of the Health Equity Work Group (HEWG) is to advance health equity research in the School of Public Health (SPH) and nationally; develop collaborations with faculty and community partners; and ensure SPH students and faculty are well trained to work in a diverse society. The work of the HEWG is carried out through various subcommittees and events, as described below.

Additionally, Dr. Kathleen Call (HPM, SPH) returned to be one of the co-chairs of the HEWG, joining Dr. Rhonda Jones-Webb (EpiCH, SPH), after her one-year sabbatical. Dr. Rachel Hardeman (HPM, SPH) stepped down as co-chair upon Dr. Call’s return. The HEWG is grateful for all the contributions of Dr. Hardeman and welcomes back Dr. Call.

**General HEWG Meetings**

**Fall 2021: October 14, 2021**
HEWG had the pleasure of hosting Dr. Manka Nkimbeng (HPM, SPH) to discuss her work building community to improve function amongst older African immigrants. The meeting was held virtually. Attendance was up from 2020, with 60 people attending the 2021 Fall General Meeting.

**Spring 2022: February 17, 2022**
For the Spring General Meeting, HEWG invited Dr. Mark Fiecas (Biostats, SPH), Sarah Samorodnitsky (Biostats PhD student, SPH), and Rachel Zilinskas (Biostats PhD student, SPH) to discuss their work with the Saint Paul Public School, where they are exposing students to data science, environmental health science and public health through a co-created curriculum.

The Spring General Meeting was also held virtually. In total, 31 people joined the Spring General Meeting.
Research and Training Subcommittee

Overview
The Research & Training Subcommittee promotes health equity research and health equity content in the curriculum to prepare students and faculty to work effectively in a diverse society. Below are our accomplishments in this area:

Annual Health Equity Research Networking Event
The HEWG and the Program in Health Disparities Research (PHDR) co-hosted the 7th annual faculty health equity networking event. The event was led by Dr. Dana Carroll (EHS, SPH) and Dr. Elizabeth Rogers (PHDR). The two goals of the event were to: (1) provide an opportunity for researchers interested in health equity to network, and (2) share ideas around health equity research funding opportunities.

Given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this year’s networking event was hosted virtually over Zoom. Given the virtual platform, attendees were able to choose between four themed breakout sessions. This year’s event drew 11 faculty and postdocs from the Schools of Public Health, Medical School, and School of Nursing.

Health Equity Minor
The Health Equity Minor (HEM) successfully graduated 21 students. This graduating class is composed of 16 SPH students, one Urban and Regional Planning student, one student from the School of Social Work, one nutrition PhD student, one Pharmacy student, and one Civic Engagement student. This is the largest group we have graduated and one of the most academically diverse. We are very proud of our graduating class and wish them the best in their future endeavors!

We have added several HEM elective course offerings since last spring. These courses include:
- PubH 6392: The Drug Overdose Crisis in America
- PubH 6518: Long-Term Care and Aging
- PA 5022: Stratification Economics and Public Policy
- PA 5281: Immigrants, Urban Planning and Policymaking in the U.S.

Co-Sponsored Seminars/Events with Program in Health Disparities Research (PHDR)
On March 15, the HEWG and PHDR co-sponsored a seminar with Dr. Richard Lee from the School of Psychology. Dr. Lee presented his work in creating a comic book with his brother as a means of radical healing.
Health Equity Journal Club
Drs. Kumi Smith and Anna Hing (CARHE) led the planning for the 2021/2022 Journal Club. Each semester there were two virtual Journal Club meetings. Each meeting was centered around a theme and had at least one invited guest. The fall meetings were:

- **Meeting #1: COVID-19 Vaccine Mandates Through A Health Equity Lens**
  - Date: September 29
  - Invited Guests: Dr. Rachel Widome, SPH

- **Meeting #2: Intersectionality in the Context of Public Health**
  - Date: November 16
  - Invited Guest: Dr. Carmine Logie, University of Toronto, Faculty of Social Work

During spring semester, the Journal Club held two meeting:

- **Meeting #1: White Supremacy and the Core Functions of Public Health**
  - Date: February 7
  - Invited Guest: Dr. J’Mag Karbeah, SPH

- **Meeting #2: What is Happening in the United States? How Social Classes Influence the Political Life of the Country and its Health and Quality of Life.**
  - Date: March 14
  - Invited Guest: Dr. Kathleen Call, SPH

Community Engagement Subcommittee

Overview
The Community Engagement Subcommittee implements and promotes activities that increase community awareness about cutting-edge strategies to reduce health disparities and foster community/university collaborations. The primary activity of the sub-committee is the School of Public Health’s annual Health Disparities Roundtable.

2021 Health Disparities Roundtable
A planning committee of students, faculty, and staff worked throughout the year to determine a topic, select speakers, and promote the event. This year’s theme was *Advancing Health Equity: Public Health Solutions for Climate Change*. Similar to the 2021 roundtable, this event was held virtually via Zoom and was shortened to be an hour and a half, versus a half-day event.

The Roundtable consisted of three keynote speakers: Dr. Niranjali Amrasinghe, Dr. Melonee Montano and Dr. Hyun Kim. Each keynote speaker gave a 10 minute presentation to kick-off the meeting, followed by an hour discussion/Q&A that was moderated by Dr. Jesse Berman. This year’s roundtable had 250 attendees.
Student Engagement Sub-Committee

Overview
The Student Engagement Sub-Committee develops and implements activities that provide leadership opportunities for students in the area of health equity. During the 2021-2022 academic year, the Student Engagement Sub-Committee engaged in several activities.

Fall 2021: Afghan Refugee Supply Drive
The student sub-committee hosted a supply drive to collect much needed supplies for newly arrived Afghan refugees. The supply drive was held for two weeks during fall semester with donation boxes across campus. Students, faculty and staff all donated items. After the items were collected, students organized the items into 50 kits (consisting of various household items) for donation.

Spring 2021: Power to Heal
During the spring semester the student committee hosted a movie screening of the PBS documentary Power to Heal. This movie tells a poignant chapter in the historic struggle to secure equal and adequate access to healthcare for all Americans. Central to the story is the tale of how a new national program, Medicare, was used to mount a dramatic, coordinated effort that desegregated thousands of hospitals across the country in a matter of months.

Dr. Barbara Berney, the film's creator and producer, was the invited special guest for the talk. Participants had access to stream the movie ahead of the discussion, as the event was conducted virtually. The event had 27 participants, ranging from students, faculty, staff and community members.

Health Equity Grant Funding
This was the inaugural year that the HEWG awarded funds to support health equity research.

Health Equity Microgrants
The HEWG awarded four $3,000 microgrants to support School of Public Health junior faculty, postdocs, advanced doctoral students, and Master’s students conducting health equity related research. The HEWG was pleased to receive so many high quality applications from students and faculty. Below are the awardees:

- **Allison Lind**, PhD student, Division of Epidemiology: A Pandemic of Youth Violence—Investing in Hennepin Youth and Communities
- **Bridget Lynn Basile Ibrahim**, PhD, Postdoctoral Fellow, UMN Rural Health Research Center: Birth Equity
- **Manka Nkimbeng**, PhD, Assistant Professor, Division of Health Policy and Management, UMN School of Public Health: Dissemination of the African Immigrant Memory Loss Project Findings
- **Margaret Tait**, PhD student, Division of Health Policy and Management: Exploring the Health Equity-Related Content of Public Service Announcements about the COVID-19 Vaccine
Also, we want to thank the wonderful review committee members:

- **Anna Hing**, PhD, Post-Doctoral Associate in the Division of Health Policy and Management and at the Center for Antiracism Research for Health Equity
- **Kathleen Call**, PhD, Professor, Division of Health Policy and Management, UMN School of Public Health
- **Shekinah Fashaw-Walters**, PhD, Assistant Professor, Division of Health Policy and Management, UMN School of Public Health

The funding for the microgrants was from the generous support of the Farley Family Foundation. Awardees sent notes of gratitude to the sponsors.

**Health Equity Pilot Grants**
The HEWG launched the first health equity pilot grant program in the spring of 2022. The pilot grants were two $25,000 grants to support health equity related research that has the potential to lead to a larger study. This grant is designed to encourage community-engaged and action-oriented research that leads to programs, policies or practice change. The awardees of the 2022 Health Equity Pilot Grants were:

- **Dr. Susan Mason**, Associate Professor, Division of Epidemiology and Community Health, and **Dr. Jaime Slaughter-Acey**, Assistant Professor, Division of Epidemiology and Community Health: *Identifying Policies to Close Maltreatment Disparities*
- **Dr. Dana Carroll**, Assistant Professor, Division of Environmental Health Science and **Dr. Irina Stepanov**, Distinguished McKnight University Professor, Mayo Professor in Public Health, Division of Environmental Health Sciences: *Advancing Health Equity through Traditional Tobacco Knowledge*

We also want to thank our wonderful review committee members:

- **Dr. Rhonda Jones-Webb**, Professor, Division of Epidemiology and Community Health
- **Dr. Sarah Gollust**, Associate Professor, Division of Health Policy and Management
- **Dr. Jennifer Linde**, Associate Professor, Division of Epidemiology and Community Health
- **Dr. Linda Frizzell**, Associate Professor, Division of Environmental Health Sciences
- **Dr. Mark Fiecas**, Assistant Professor, Division of Biostatistics

The funding for the microgrants was from the SPH Dean’s Office.