



HEALTH  
EDUCATION  
COUNCIL

Health happens together.



# HEC CONNECTS

HEC and partners pictured at a March free tax clinic

## Conveners

Connecting neighborhoods with members of our team and our network of partners to address public health challenges.

HEC is a community-based non-profit fueled by support from community members like you.

ISSUE NO. 5  
SPRING 2024

## Invest Health Roseville Breakfast - Strengthening Partnerships

On March 1, 2024, HEC convened the 5th Invest Health Breakfast, welcoming over 100 participants to receive an update of Invest Health Roseville's journey, milestones and accomplishments to improve community health. The focus of this year's breakfast program was economic development and workforce data that can inform strategies, programs and evaluation. Samantha Breslin, Program Supervisor from NYU City Health Dashboard presented key data metrics for workforce, health and quality of life displaying citywide and neighborhood level data and their disparities. This was followed by an economic development and workforce development panel presentation of local leaders further discussing workforce shortages and opportunities, partnerships existing and needed, initiatives underway and planned and the connection between health outcomes and workforce development efforts in the region.



Adrian Guerrero, Vice President, Union Pacific facilitated the panel of local experts including Melissa Anguiano, Economic Development Director, City of Roseville; Amy Schulz, Dean of Career, Continuing & Technical Education, Sierra College; and Gloria Sterns, Economic Development Director, Placer County. Panelists agreed on the importance of developing comprehensive workforce development strategies, the opportunity for expanded partnerships, discussed the approaches they have implemented and upcoming initiatives in the pipeline underway by their respective organizations.

## OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## MISSION STATEMENT

As a community non-profit, HEC leverages the power of collaboration to improve health outcomes in under-served communities.

For more than 30 years, HEC has made addressing the social drivers of health in under-served communities the foundation of our work.

We support this foundation by tapping into the power of collaboration. By partnering and connecting with residents, businesses, organizations, leaders, and influencers already living and working in priority neighborhoods, we have the best chance of improving health outcomes in those neighborhoods.

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Thank you to our event sponsors; Kaiser Permanente, Sutter Health, Placer County Air Pollution Control District; and the Invest Health Roseville core team; Carol Garcia, Bonnie Gore, Debra Oto-Kent, Aldo Pineschi, Mark Wolinski, and Gina McColl. Thank you also to many of our Invest Health partners, residents and organizations who have been engaged in Invest Health since 2016. Your engagement is having a positive impact on community health.

The Health Education Council has served as the backbone and convening organization for Invest Health Roseville since 2016 convening residents, city and county leadership, business, non-profits, education, health care and others with a goal of improving health outcomes for Roseville's core neighborhoods. What started as a \$60,000 investment from Invest Health has evolved into over \$11 million in investments from public and private partners.

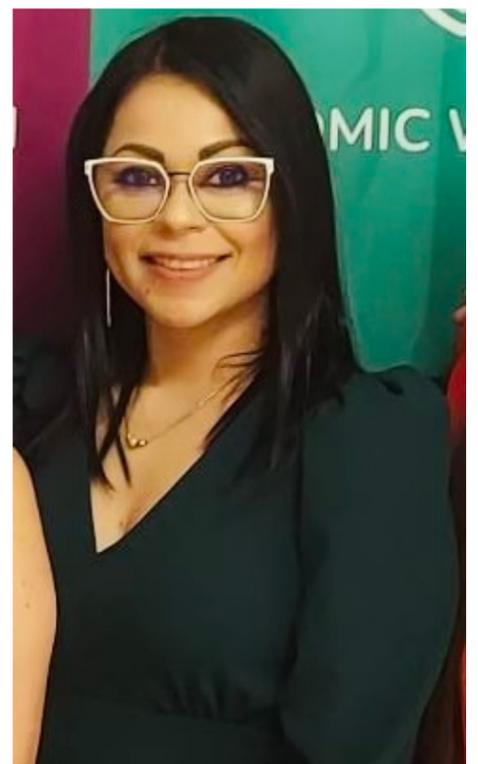
**To learn more about Invest Health Roseville visit [bit.ly/Invest-Health-Roseville](http://bit.ly/Invest-Health-Roseville) . Learn more about the national Invest Health network by visiting [investhealth.org](http://investhealth.org).**



## STAFF HIGHLIGHT

**Vanessa Vazquez**  
**Social Connection Team**  
**Program Administrator**

Vanessa is the Program Administrator for the Social Connection team where she helps led program reporting, manages key components of programs, and provides crisis counseling. She's a native of Colima, Mexico and enjoys brutal workouts, dancing, and watching TV when she's not at work. Vanessa has been with HEC for 3 years and started as a Program Coordinator. In August 2023, she was promoted to Program Administrator.





 SOCIAL CONNECTION

## Painting with Purpose: Healing Through Creativity



Imagine having a consistent place where you could make friends, learn a new skill, and improve your overall mental wellness in a nurturing environment. This is the environment that the Health Education Council and painter/ instructor Gaby Flores created through Painting Through Healing, a weekly painting group for Spanish-speaking women. Flores completed our Spanish language Peers Helping Peers cohort in Fall 2021 and has hosted five, six-week painting groups in conjunction with HEC.

Approximately 12 residents meet weekly at our office in South Sacramento, while other residents join by Zoom. The classes opened with meditation exercises and included discussions for participants to explore mental wellness and build connections. Community Health Leader Aracely Garcia welcomed them with refreshments and set up a cozy, calming space. Many residents started unfamiliar with meditation and were worried about their limited experience painting, so creating the comfortable space and having Gaby's calming, reassuring presence was critical. "By the end we had people who had never lifted a pencil to draw tell us that they were confident artists and wanted to continue painting and learning new ways to be creative," added Garcia.

They share with us that they had started using meditation and other wellness practices to disconnect while experiencing challenges. "People are looking for a community where they can meet people, be creative and learn a new skill, and HEC is grateful that we can create that space for countless women in the community" added Program Director Lupita Rodriguez.



 WELLNESS EDUCATION

## Creating a Nurturing Environment for Youth Participating in Ramadan



Ramadan, for Muslims, is the month in which the Holy Quran was revealed. Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, is observed by Muslims through fasting, prayer, reflection, and community building. Typically, individuals who have reached puberty are expected to observe the fast, which includes many of the students attending local schools that we work with. During the month, Muslims refrain from food, drink (YES, including water) from dawn till sunset. To build on the equity work that HEC's Schools Team has led, we partnered with The Council on American Islamic Relations, Sacramento Valley/Central California (CAIR – SV/CC) to host a webinar to educate school partners and raise awareness about the significance of the Holy Month of Ramadan and how they can accommodate students who observe Ramadan.

Program Administrator Hibatallah Eltahir, MPH (Masters in Public Health) said "I initially connected with CAIR when my colleague and I presented at a Twin Rivers Unified School District board meeting to discuss HEC's halal foods advocacy and have developed a strong partnership with them over time, so this was a great opportunity to collaborate." Facilitators Lina Mokeddem and Mohammed Bello provided a thorough, broad range of ways that adults, school staff and community members, can implement to create a welcoming place for students, including providing space for prayer and alternative lunch time activities. They also emphasized the importance of providing accommodations and flexibility for activities such as recess and physical education.

A key takeaway was a brief video that they shared where youth spoke candidly about what they're feeling and experiencing during the month, including the school day. It provided insight that made the importance of schools being a welcoming space critical. Eltahir says there are many ways for families and community members to show support for students observing the fast, such as cooking a meal for a fasting family, fasting for a day, educating themselves on Ramadan, and celebrating Eid al Fitr (end of Ramadan), providing opportunities and spaces for rest while fasting.

To become involved with HEC's school equity please contact us [Healthyschools@healthedcouncil.org](mailto:Healthyschools@healthedcouncil.org).



# Mindful Hustle – Mental Wellness for Entrepreneurial Minded Youth

COMMUNITY SAFETY



While embarking on the journey of creating a business, it's crucial that people prioritize their mental well-being, especially young people. Mindful Hustle brought together transitional aged youth, 16-24 years old and organizations that support youth's mental wellness, including Health Education Council. Community Health Leaders Taejon King and Edgar Yanez and Communications Coordinator Ruben Moody

shared resources from Cal HOPE, a platform of free mental wellness resources and services, as well as more information about the programs that HEC leads to support youth.

The event was kicked off by a student who participated in our Safety, Health, Opportunity and Practice (SHOP) program last summer. Yanez added, "It was an amazing feeling to see one of the students we work with confidently stepping into his element as a leader. He became a leader right in front of us." King and Yanez also presented to attendees, approximately 100 people, about the services and programs available to youth at no-cost.

Attendees were thrilled to learn about Cal HOPE as many of them are constantly seeking resources for themselves and community members. Upon learning about SHOP, one of our flagship programs, many were impressed that a 6-week program could be as comprehensive and as effective as it is and were interested in participating and eager to share it with youth in their networks.

In closing, King added, "It was empowering to meet so many driven young men and women that are actively seeking opportunities, mentorship, and community. They reinforced my "why" and proved to me that our efforts to positively impact the youth in our community are not only necessary but effective." To learn more about Cal HOPE, please visit [calhope.org](http://calhope.org).

## HEC in the Community



Yanira and Aracely from the HEC team sharing resources at Steps to College, the largest bi-lingual college fair in Northern California. The Mexican Consulate hosts the annual event.



HEC was awarded the Shine Grant from SMUD. The funding will help us continue developing a sustainable, accessible space for community members to utilize.



Sal and Kim leading a diabetes education and awareness workshop for South Sacramento residents.



ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

## Unlocking New Career Opportunities for Residents



Workforce development plays a pivotal role in helping low-income, underserved community members thrive, for which reason in the past two years, HEC has provided job training opportunities for transitional age youth and older adults in construction and forklift operation.

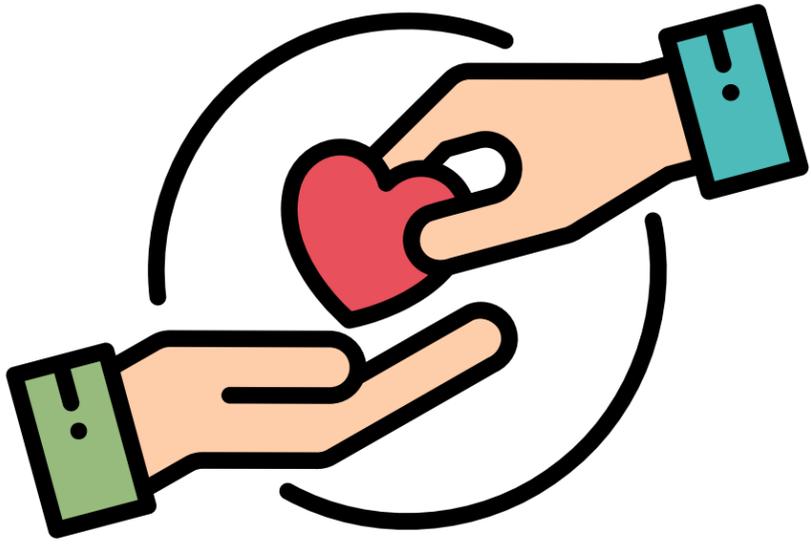
When HEC launched its first Forklift Training, we received more than 465 applications and only had the capacity to fill 24 spots. The two-day forklift training program provided participants with training and certification on the operation of a forklift, followed by job readiness workshops that included: creating a resume, interview preparation, dressing for success, building healthy workplace relationships, and financial literacy. When they completed the program, they received a \$100 gift card, along with their forklift certification card.

For some participants, the program helped them pivot into a career in forklift operation, while others had previous experience and now the formal certification will help them secure a higher paying, permanent forklift job. The program consisted of a very diverse group, including residents who were previously incarcerated, some in transitional housing, and almost half were women, who are often underrepresented in this industry.

**Keep up with HEC on social media!**

**@healthedcouncil**





# Big Day of Giving

Big Day of Giving is the Health Education Council's largest annual fundraiser and is completely virtual, making it easier for people to support and share with their friends and family. Last year, we raised nearly \$32,000 from 146 donors and our goal is to raise \$40,000.

**This year's Big Day of Giving is on Thursday, May 2nd.**

As a community-driven non-profit, our programs are made possible through the generosity of donations of \$25, \$50, \$100, \$250, and \$1000+.



To see make your donation to the Health Education Council starting on April 18th, scan the QR code with your smart phone or visit <https://bit.ly/bdog-2024>

# Support HEC's Work Today!

## The Impact You Can Help Us Make

Your donation made on Big Day of Giving will directly serve community members with important health-supporting activities.

For example:



Increase physical activity through walking groups



Teach healthier food choices to moms



Improve mental wellness through the arts.



Develop strong, well rounded women leaders.



Create business opportunities through micro-lending.

The Health Education Council is a 501(c)3 nonprofit.  
Tax ID # 680249296

## HEC'S IMPACT IN 2023



**4,300 residents** received preventative health services through our partnerships with the Mexican Consulate.



Distributed **236,348 pounds of produce** to residents in low income communities.



More than **13,000 residents** received financial and work readiness education and support.



Over **1,000 community members** received lay mental health support.



At-risk youth received **2,280 hours** of mentorship and programming.