

FALL 2017

# THE DORNSIFE CENTER CONNECTOR



**BEING | WELL**

## DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

Warm greetings, friends and neighbors,

The importance of individual health and wellness cannot be overstated. All of us have only one body through which we experience life and the world, and being able to care for our health is part of reaching for our best and most fulfilling life possible.

Further, individual health is a building block for a healthy community. Families who are occupied and overwhelmed with managing illness and health challenges simply don't have the time and personal resources to contribute their care and creativity to their communities.

Recognizing the importance of health care access, the Dornsife Center is proud to host the Drexel College of Nursing and Health Profession's Community Wellness HUB, a place where all are welcome to come for support with health and wellness concerns. This issue of the *Connector* introduces some of the caring people who make the center run. We hope you enjoy their stories and we invite you to stop in at the Community Wellness HUB to hear more about our services and programs.



## PARTNER PROFILE

Name:	Dr. Loretta Sweet Jemmott
Job:	Drexel's Vice President of Health and Health Equity, and Professor in the College of Nursing and Health Professions
Hometown:	Philadelphia's Mantua neighborhood
Current Residence:	Center City Philadelphia
Favorite food:	Pizza
Favorite TV show	<i>Law &amp; Order</i>
Travel destination:	The Caribbean

*What is your role at the Dornsife Center?*

I'm the visionary and connector behind the Wellness HUB: building bridges, partnerships, and trust between all the parts of the university and all the parts of the community around health in a way that is sustainable and supportive. I had an initial hands-on role in developing the HUB and in seeing patients and clients, but now I have an opportunity to step back and let our students and faculty take up important roles in the project.

*Where can we find you at the Dornsife Center?*

In the Wellness HUB, which is on the second floor of the Carriage House.

*What is your favorite thing about the Dornsife Center?*

I appreciate the real community engagement at all levels at the Dornsife Center, how we engage with neighbors in a trusting and warm way, with respect, and being here for our partners and friends, especially when they need us.

*What do you do when you're not at the Dornsife Center?*

I love walking. I take long walks and I love working out. I love reading novels, and my new thing is playing the piano. I also enjoy hanging out with my husband, girlfriends, and my college-age daughters.

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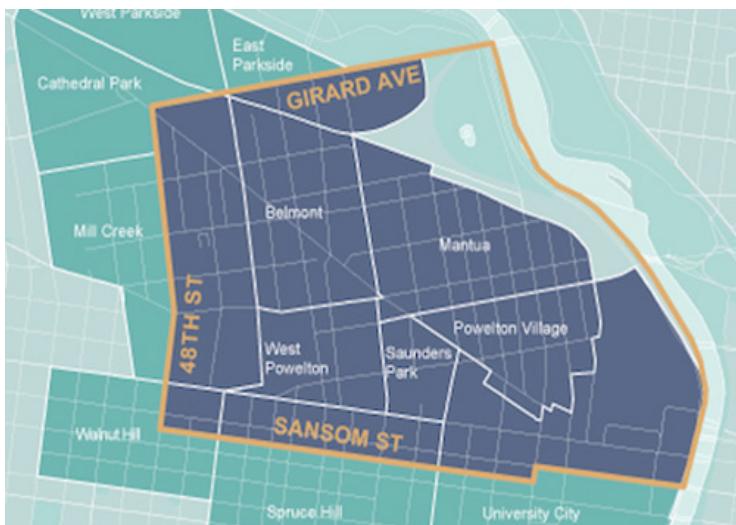
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# COMMUNITY DRIVEN WELLNESS SERVICES

## WE'RE HERE BECAUSE WE CARE

When the Community Wellness HUB began welcoming neighborhood residents to take advantage of its health and wellness programming back in April of 2017, it was the culmination of more than a year of careful community-driven planning. The planning process was led by Mantua native and Drexel Vice President of Health and Health Equity, Dr. Loretta Sweet Jemmott and her team. Known



as *We're Here Because We Care*, the process was made up of call-to-action meetings, community focus groups, and one-on-one meetings with local leaders and residents.

The initiative, the strategy and the process were developed and designed by Jemmott and her team, as they noticed community input was missing in many of the local health conversations. Each of the team members came to the table with an expertise that allowed this initiative to flourish. **Andrew Issa, MPH** brought a programming and community partnership lens, **Marcia Penn, MEd** brought her coordinating expertise, and **K. Rose Samuel-Evans** brought her community engagement background. It is this core team that became the think tank behind this health initiative and the Community Wellness HUB.

*We're Here Because We Care* concentrated on the West Philadelphia Promise Zone: Mantua, Belmont, West Powelton, Powelton Village, Saunders Park, Mill Creek, East Parkside, and parts of Spruce Hill, Walnut Hill, and University City. Invitations went to neighborhood residents but also to civic organizations, nonprofits serving the area, faith-based organizations, recreation centers, registered community organizations, community centers, block captains, and town watch groups. Each of these meetings asked participants to identify their top health and wellness concerns and interests, and to talk about the kinds of health care supports they were looking for in the neighborhood. Consensus developed around seven key health issues:

**1. Chronic Diseases:** These are the kinds of diseases that require sometimes lifelong management and support. Heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, asthma, and

cancer are chronic diseases that can be helped with diet, exercise, and medications, but they can also be difficult and confusing to understand.

**2. Behavioral and Mental Health:** Behavioral health stigmas get in the way of people getting the help they need. Participants wanted services to support people dealing with depression, anxiety, emotional pain, intimate partner or child abuse, and trauma.

**3. Sexual Health:** Screening, treatment, and counseling for HIV and sexually transmitted infections, and support for sexual health issues across all ages was a top concern.

**4. Access to Healthy Foods:** Neighborhood residents across the board are interested in workshops on nutrition and healthy food preparation, in how to get healthy food in a food desert, gardening, and mobile fresh food sales.

**5. Environmental Health:** Home environments have a substantial impact on our health, and as such there was an emphasis placed on safe and healthy homes, rodent control, dealing with trash, and aging-in-place.

**6. Access to Care:** Neighbors are especially interested in health services located in the community that are also culturally appropriate and culturally sensitive.

**7. Access to Safe Physical Fitness:** Feeling safe in the neighborhood makes it possible to get outside to walk, run, and play. Participants expressed the need for safe places to move around, programs designed for seniors, and physical fitness programs tailored for all ages.



The team at the Community Wellness HUB has integrated these priorities and ideas into its program planning and invite you to join their upcoming workshops, to visit to make an appointment to talk about your health, or just to drop in to say hello and share your feedback.

As Mantua Civic Association president DeWayne Drummond notes, "Having the Community Wellness HUB in Mantua is a priceless gift to our community. When we work together, poverty stricken areas can receive true equity."

# DR ERICA WILKINS

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Warmth and family atmosphere: that's one of the things Dr. Erica Wilkins thinks sets the Community Wellness HUB apart. "People really feel welcome here" she notes, and in fact the interest and care that Dr. Wilkins takes in her clients is easily evident.

As a clinical professor in Drexel's College of Nursing and Health Professions, Dr. Wilkins finds her academic home in the Department of Couple and Family Counseling. In her research, she considers the residual effects of slavery among African-Americans, the treatment of post-traumatic stress, grief counseling, substance abuse and the family, and the development of culturally sensitive health services. She explores how historical and socio-

Dr. Wilkins welcomes neighbors of any age to come in to see her if they are interested in getting support with relationship issues or behavioral health. She is equipped to work with clients of any age - "cradle to grave" as she puts it - although the majority of the clients she sees at the Community Wellness HUB and at other Drexel service locations are in their early 20s through early 50s.

"It has been a joy working at the Community Wellness HUB," says Dr. Wilkins. She feels grateful for the chance to help people through challenges like anxiety, depression, and trauma." She says that her clients at the HUB are committed and motivated to come in and work on their issues.



*Dr. Erica Wilkins talks in the HUB office with student intern Christma Guilloux (left) and Drexel Community Scholar Ryan Kirker (right).*

cultural factors, including the legacies of slavery, affect the spread of HIV and AIDS in the African-American community. Dr. Wilkins is also working on a community-based participatory action prevention curriculum that will help train African American women to become HIV community educators.

Dr. Wilkins holds a clinical appointment at Drexel, meaning that she both teaches students and provides clinical health services. She spends her Wednesdays at the Community Wellness HUB seeing clients as a couples and family therapist. She says not to be confused about the "couples and families" label, that 99 percent of the time her clients come to her as individuals. "The way I think about somebody and the problems they face is in the context of their relationships," she says, describing her approach. Helping clients strengthen their network of relationships is an important driving force in her work.

Dr. Wilkins notes that her work at the Community Wellness HUB fits neatly into the mission of the program she teaches in: "to take aspects of a person's culture into account in therapy: race and ethnicity but also gender identity, immigration status, and other facets of culture." In her role both in the College of Nursing and Health Professions and at the HUB, Dr. Wilkins is committed to offering culturally competent supports, and to attending to issues of social justice.

Her hopes for the Community Wellness HUB? "That it grows! The great thing is that I'm almost full with clients on my Wednesdays. It's usually back-to-back clients and that's happened in a relatively short amount of time. In Counseling and Family Therapy we're talking about getting more professors involved, and then to start bringing in student support. In a perfect world our therapeutic services could grow into a daily offering."

# STUDENT | POWERED | COMMUNITY | WELLNESS

## MEET OUR TEAM

Anyone who's phoned the Community Wellness HUB at the Dornsife Center has likely spoken with **Maeve Malloy**, the unfailingly cheerful Americorps VISTA who runs the front office. Malloy manages the resident interface at the HUB, setting the tone for this supportive and warm place, and she manages the team of talented and caring students who power the HUB's outreach and programming functions and who make sure that participants, patients, and clients feel welcome.

Malloy recently graduated from Bryn Mawr College and says of her VISTA posting, "I really wanted a post-graduation experience in a nonprofit setting that would give me experience in multiple healthcare realms like research, community engagement, and program development." Her undergraduate degree is in psychology with a minor in health studies, and she is currently applying to graduate schools for clinical social work. "I'd like to be an LCSW and work in Philadelphia. I'm really interested in maternal health, and mood disorders in pregnant and parenting women. The intersections of maternal health and wellbeing are interesting to me."

**Christma Guilloux** is a senior at Temple University studying public health. His role at the HUB is in outreach, "talking to neighbors, hearing them out, and letting them know about the HUB and the services we provide." Guilloux supports programming too, noting that he's managed the senior bingo events, using the opportunity to connect with participants and listening to their ideas about community health services. His career aspirations after the HUB? "My goal is to go back home to Haiti and design a program for people who don't have homes, or money for food, to create supports for people who don't have much. I want to first work with nonprofits to learn as much as I can, and then develop my own organization."

**Ryan Kirker** is a Drexel student in the College of Nursing and Health Professions, studying to become a physician's



Lindsay Martinez (left) and Maeve Malloy (right)

programming. Now I'm working the front desk - making calls and confirming appointments, checking people in, and also starting to re-engage with our other *We're Here Because We Care* volunteers to check back in with what residents want in terms of health supports and to better plan strategies." Kirker is part of the Lindy Center for Civic Engagement's team of Drexel Community Scholars, student leaders who specialize in mobilizing participants in service settings.

A Drexel freshman in biomedical engineering, **Sidney Ortiz** comes to the HUB as a work-study student. "I want to get into biomechanics: prosthetics and pacemakers and tools like that. Some of the people closest to me have had them. My mom got a pacemaker when I was in middle school, and my grandma got a hip replacement. I thought it was really cool." She's in school to learn how to design these life-saving tools herself. Sidney supports the HUB's general operations, helping the front office hum along smoothly.

**Tom Ferrier** is another Temple University public health student, now a senior and getting his 200-hour internship requirement done at the HUB. "I help with outreach and work with Christma to distribute flyers in the neighborhood. We talk to community members about the resources we have, letting people know that we're providing the services they asked for during the *We're Here Because We Care* process." Ferrier's goal is to become a nurse, and his next step in the healthcare field is, after he graduates, to work in public health long enough to put money away for nursing school.

Also a work-study student, **Lindsay Martinez** is a third-year nursing student at Drexel. Considering the work-study positions available, she chose the HUB because she wanted something more engaging than the average work-study job. She's worked at medical offices, in a hospital, and now in a public health setting. "Here at the HUB I help out with events and phone calls, reaching out to neighbors to make sure they're aware of what we're doing. West Philadelphia feels like it's been taken over by college students and I want to make sure people know there are still resources here for them, and that we haven't forgotten about them."



Left to right: Sidney Ortiz, Christma Guilloux, Tom Ferrier, and Ryan Kirker

assistant in the dual bachelors-masters degree program. "Initially I was a volunteer with *We're Here Because We Care* and then I worked on getting some of the data we needed to build the HUB, made flyers, and helped create

# COMMUNITY WELLNESS HUB

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The Community Wellness HUB is a place-based, community-driven health promotion partnership between Drexel University and the residents of the West Philadelphia Promise Zone. The Community Wellness HUB seeks to **HEAL** the community through preventative care, **UNITE** the community around better health, and **BRIDGE** the community to health services and health education programming. The Community Wellness HUB is designed to create a respectful, warm, inviting, and engaging environment to support health and wellness in the community. The Community Wellness HUB is located on the second floor of the Carriage House at the Dornsife Center.

### Services and programs include:

- Health screenings for cholesterol, glucose, blood pressure, height, weight, BMI, and more, Tuesdays through Thursdays 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. Behavioral health counseling services for individuals, couples, and families, Wednesdays 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- Confidential and free HIV testing, Tuesdays 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.
- Clinical breast exams Tuesdays 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.
- Clinical treatment for uninsured residents on Thursdays 2:00 - 7:00 p.m.
- Health and disease management counseling

### Scheduled workshops include:

- Health education, awareness, and prevention
- Healthy cooking demonstrations
- Mind and body workshops
- Diabetes Awareness Month programs in November
- Brother Building Better Brothers: Men's Health Initiative
- Strengthening Child and Family Health Together

### In partnership with UConnect we provide:

- Insurance assessments and information
- Assistance applying for health insurance
- Understanding Medicare and Medicaid
- SNAP application help

### HOW TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

Call: 215.571.3241

or

Email: [wellnesshub@drexel.edu](mailto:wellnesshub@drexel.edu)

### Hours of Operation

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays:  
10:00 AM - 7:00 PM

The Community Wellness HUB is for everybody. **You can see one of our clinicians even if you don't have health insurance.**

The Community Wellness HUB is here for everybody, no matter your health insurance status. Service hours on Thursdays are set aside specifically for patients and clients who do not currently have health insurance, though if you are not insured you can get an appointment with a health care provider during any of our open hours. Fees for behavioral health counseling are on a sliding scale based on income for those who are uninsured, and for those who do have insurance, the fee is based on that plus income.

Come and see us if you'd like to get an HIV screening, or if you are worried about a chronic health condition. You can make an appointment to see our behavioral health specialist if you are facing challenges in your relationships, or you are just feeling blue and don't know what to do. You can just walk in during our operating hours for a free health screening, no appointments necessary. Look out for our schedule of educational workshops and programs.

We will help you get access to community resources that can help improve your health and health outcomes. And if there is something you need that we can't offer, we'll help you with a referral. We're here because we care, and we're looking forward to meeting you.