

# Foundation for Health Equity™

Supporting the Communities of Northwest Philadelphia

FORMERLY KNOWN AS



# Rooted in Community

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Increasing Health Equity



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for Justice

the more time we spend working alongside these organizations, the more confident we are about moving toward our vision of truly creating "a community where everyone has a fair and just opportunity to achieve optimal health." I can't wait to see what 2022 has in store!

**6** Foundation for Health Equity's six guiding principles

<p><b>Our Mission</b> Foundation for Health Equity™ supports communities in Northwest Philadelphia by building on the assets of organizations that work to address systemic health inequities in order to build healthy, vibrant neighborhoods.</p>	<p><b>Our Vision</b> We envision a community where everyone has a fair and just opportunity to achieve optimal health.</p>	<p><b>Our Guiding Principles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health Equity</li> <li>Community Collaboration</li> <li>Commitment</li> <li>Transparency</li> <li>Dignity</li> <li>Trust</li> </ul>
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**STAY CONNECTED!** Health Equity: increasing opportunities for everyone to live the healthiest life.

**Foundation for Health Equity**  
Growing in Partnership



**Bethany Flood, MNO, LSW**  
Executive Director

**Bonnie Soriano, MSW**  
Editor

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Meaghan Conlisk	

**Grants & Sponsorships in 2021-22**

- Center in the Park
- Chestnut Hill Meals on Wheels
- Covenant House PA
- Face to Face
- FOOD MOXIE
- Friends of Children's Park at Jenks
- Jewish Relief Agency
- Maternity Care Coalition
- North Light Community Center
- Northwest Mutual Aid Collective Inc
- Philadelphia Children's Alliance
- Roxborough YMCA
- Share Food Program
- Small Things Inc
- Starfinder Foundation
- Students Run Philly Style
- Uplift Center for Grieving Children
- Why Not Prosper



Dear Neighbors,

I hope you are enjoying the spring weather! The flowers, new life, and touch of warmth is renewing.

As I think of all the newness spring brings, I thought the Foundation should share more about our new ideas, new events, and new and renewed partnerships. Our last newsletter highlighted the strategic plan and name changes. This newsletter focuses more on our internal process changes. Many of you have had questions like "what does the Foundation actually do?" The next few pages outline our grants initiative - starting with our connection with organizations, then building partnerships and, ultimately, funding work that improves the health of our community. (pages 6 & 7)

Bringing on new board members is another aspect of growth here! We are very excited to announce Keyerra Charles, Meaghan Conlisk, and Brian Jones as our newest additions. See page 3 to get to know them better.

We have new grantees this year (page 2) as well as the renewed partnerships! Students Run Philly Style is the first recipient of our new grant - the multi-year grant - as a result of their commitment both to improve the physical health of youth in our area as well as to change the systems that keep them from improved health over their lifetime.

I hope this newsletter helps you get to know us better. If you have questions or just want to learn more, please feel free to contact me (215-438-8102 or Bethany@F4HE.org).

Sincerely,



Bethany Flood, LSW  
Executive Director

P.S. Join us on May 12 for Designer Bag Bingo! (It's another new thing for us.) Call us or visit the website to sign up. (www.F4HE.org)

# Board Member Announcements

**Meaghan Conlisk** has worked in health care and community development through roles in community health, violence prevention, aging in place, home health and hospital settings. She has lived in Roxborough since 2012 and is invested in supporting a safer and healthier Northwest Philly for her children and neighbors. Meaghan is excited to join F4HE to advocate for a more equitable society so that everyone can achieve their full potential.



**Keyerra Charles** is a public health practitioner with a decade of progressive experience in managing community health strategic interventions. She is a Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) and earned a master's degree in public health from Morgan State University in 2013 and a bachelor's degree in health science from The College at Brockport State University of New York in 2011. Keyerra specializes in using outreach, education, and program development to improve community health outcomes. A firm believer in advocacy, and health equity for all, Keyerra strives to make certain the voices of the community are clearly heard. Keyerra enjoys traveling, solving riddles, and going on hikes.



**Brian Jones** is a lifelong Philadelphian, including 14 years in Roxborough and Germantown before relocating. He currently serves as Grant Administrator at The W. W. Smith Charitable Trust where he coordinates grantmaking activities supporting 150 Greater Philadelphia area nonprofit organizations each year. Brian has worked in the nonprofit sector for the entirety of his career and considers it his mission to assist community-focused leaders with resourcing ideas that make a difference in the community.



# Growing in Partnership, Achieving Health Equity Together

By: Bonnie Soriano, MSW

## What an exciting year to join Foundation for Health Equity (F4HE)! 2021 surely proved to be a year of transitions and growth and I'm excited to share a first hand account of the rewarding work being done.

After a long period of strategic planning, led by Bethany Flood, Executive Director and the Board of Trustees, along with community members, the Foundation was poised and ready to put words to action. With our new name outwardly highlighting the essence of the Foundation's mission, values, and commitment to health equity in NW Philadelphia, Foundation for Health Equity turned inward and applied our six guiding principles (**Health Equity, Stewardship, Community Stakeholders, Dignity, Commitment, and Transparency**) to our grant making practices. Here's where my journey began!

Focused on increasing opportunities for everyone to live the healthiest life possible, as defined by the community, I have had the great privilege of building partnerships with various organizations and individuals over the past year through our grantmaking process. Along with Bethany, I listened during our community convenings and learned through a diversity of lenses about the greatest needs in our community - some of which include food insecurity, senior health, women's health, resources for children, and more. This feedback informed the Foundation's decision making about our investments in community health in NW Philadelphia, with the greatest outcome being changes to our 2022-23 grants cycles. Looking forward, the Foundation will hold 2 grant cycles, one focused on food insecurity and the other on community health at large. Both of these cycles will highlight our commitment to improving the health and wellness of our community through challenging,

impacting, and shifting the larger systems that perpetuate the health inequities in our communities. You may still be asking yourself, "How will we truly reach health equity in NW Philadelphia?". The Foundation did a great deal of homework through the strategic planning process in 2020. As a result, difficult decisions were made to restructure the Foundation's footprint directly into Northwest Philadelphia. For our grantmaking strategy, July 1, 2021 marked the shift from a lengthy written application process with a site visit, to a shortened Letter of Intent (LOI) with an in person interview. The Foundation committed to giving multi-year, unrestricted funding to organizations and advanced our work in being transparent, reflective, and responsive to our work. As mentioned above, Bethany and I held several convenings over the course of the past year, have surveyed grant applicants post application, and continue to work closely with partnering organizations to identify areas of growth. We know that partnerships beyond grant funding are key to reaching our mission. While we continue to support nonprofit organizations through grant funding, which enables the leaders of these organizations to utilize their knowledge, experience, and expertise to make informed decisions on the direction of services provided to the community, we will continue to focus on building meaningful and mutual partnerships with organizations in NW Philadelphia. Recognizing the inherent value of each organization and person we work with, we will continue to practice clear, open communication and will conduct ongoing evaluation of our role in the process.

We are excited about the work we are doing, as guided by our mission, vision and guiding principles. Even more, we are excited about the relationships we have built throughout our footprint in NW Philadelphia. The organizations we have spent time with, talked to, and provided grant funding for are nothing short of incredible! We value the willingness and trust of the organizations we work with to jump in with us; if not for

them, health equity would be a farther reach. The more time we spend working alongside these organizations, the more confident we are about moving toward our vision of truly creating "a community where everyone has a fair and just opportunity to achieve optimal health." I can't wait to see what 2022 has in store!

## 6 Foundation for Health Equity's six guiding principles

### Our Mission

Foundation for Health Equity™ supports communities in Northwest Philadelphia by building on the assets of organizations that work to address systemic health inequities in order to build healthy, vibrant neighborhoods.

### Our Vision

We envision a community where everyone has a fair and just opportunity to achieve optimal health.

### Our Guiding Principles



Health Equity



Community Stakeholders



Commitment



Stewardship



Dignity



Transparency

## STAY CONNECTED!

### FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

-  Facebook @GreenTreeFnd
-  Instagram @healthequityphilly
-  Check out our new website: <https://f4he.org/>

 Sign up to receive email updates, digital newsletters, and event invitations on the website - just scroll to the bottom of any page and submit our email list form!

 Make a donation: <https://f4he.org/support/>

### INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?

Email Bonnie Soriano at [Bonnie@F4HE.org](mailto:Bonnie@F4HE.org)

### HAVE QUESTIONS OR THOUGHTS TO SHARE?

Reach out via email at [info@F4HE.org](mailto:info@F4HE.org).

**We look forward to hearing from you!**

**Health Equity:** Increasing opportunities for everyone to live the healthiest life possible, no matter who we are, where we live, or how much money we make.

**Stewardship:** Careful and responsible investment in community health

**Community Stakeholders:** Diversity of thought, perspective and experience are imperative to successful outcomes.

**Dignity:** Recognizing the inherent value in every person

**Commitment:** Dedicated to improving the health and wellness of our community

**Transparency:** Practicing clear, open communication and ongoing self-evaluation



# Students Run Philly Style

By Andy Kucer, Executive Director at Students Run Philly Style

## Increasing Health Equity through Sports-Based Mentorship



Since 2004, Students Run Philly Style (SRPS) has met its mission to transform lives through mentoring and long-distance running. SRPS pairs students, in grades 6-12, with adult, volunteer Mentors to train for the ultimate challenge - completing a long-distance race. Youth train with Mentors 3 times weekly, run in seasonal races and participate in activities designed to develop leadership and strengthen community. The organization utilizes its strengths-based approach as a platform to address the lack of access to safe and inclusive physical activity and the adversity and isolation often experienced by youth living in marginalized communities.

SRPS remains a free program, bringing sports-based mentoring opportunities to over 1000 students and nearly 60 schools annually. In NorthWest Philadelphia, SRPS partners with local schools including Green Woods Charter, Charles W. Henry, Walter B. Saul and Mastery Charter Pickett Campus where volunteer Mentors and students run 3 times per week together after school and on weekends to train for either the Blue Cross Broad Street 10-mile Run in May or the Philadelphia half, or full, marathon in November (13.1, 26.2 respectively). SRPS supports over 400 volunteer Mentors - the majority of whom are also teachers - each year. Mentors and youth train together for 9 months, and run up to 600 miles per year, to cross the finish line together.

SRPS continues to move from an out-school time program to one of systems-based change. With support from the Pennsylvania Department of Health, SRPS offers OUTPace,

a program focused on increasing positive behavioral health outcomes in LGBTQ+ youth. OUTPace partners with organizations like the Attic Youth Center to host teams of students, and trains volunteers and staff on how to best support youth that identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. OUTPace offers drop-in sessions where youth and peers can build community and hosts group runs so students have a chance to learn about local LGBTQ+ history and the contributions of local LGBTQ+ leaders. All SRPS youth are excited to now participate in the annual Philly Pride Run each June.

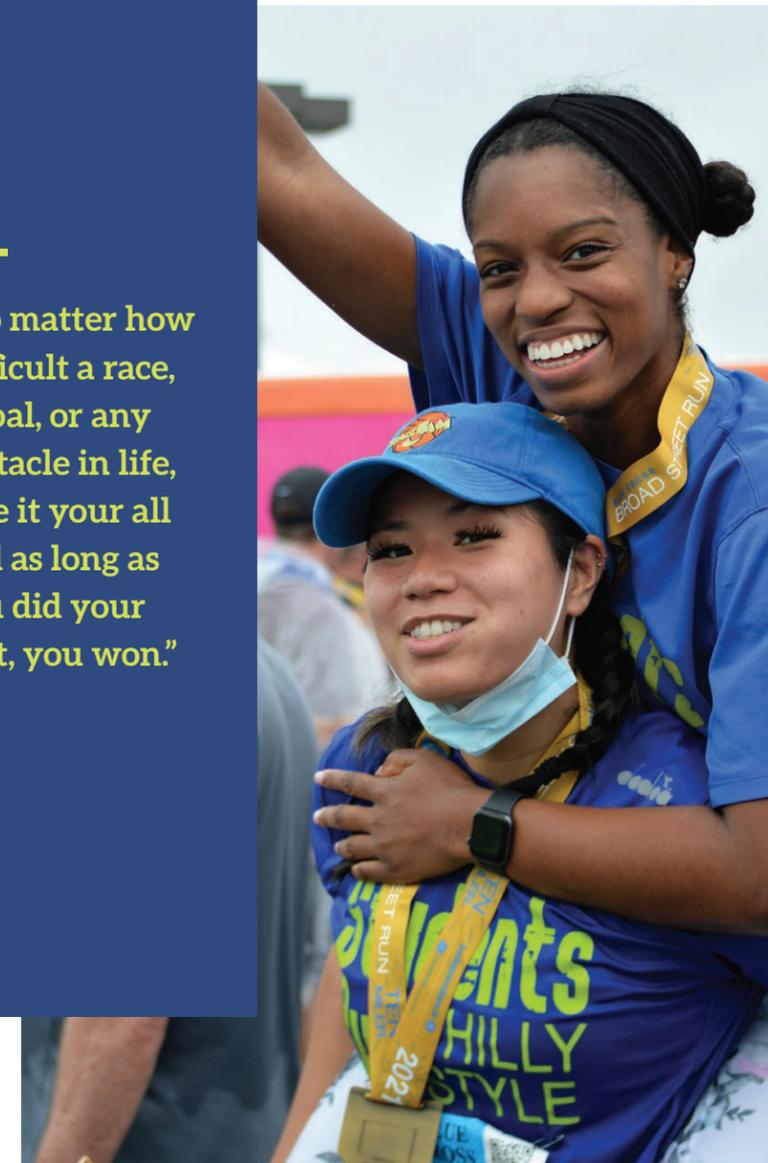
SRPS' MileUp program, initiated in 2020, is an innovative partnership with the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office that uses SRPS' mentoring model to offer diversion programming to youth formally ineligible due to the seriousness of their crimes. MileUp provides youth facing felony charges (such as robbery or aggravated assault)

a chance to build a path out, and away, from the juvenile justice system. Using restorative-based practices, MileUp youth are referred by the DA's office to train with a team of peers, Advocates and Peer Mentors to run a long-distance race. As youth meet program milestones, they earn paid restitution, have their charges dropped and names submitted for expungement. Since inception, 92% of MileUp youth have completed the program and earned over \$30,000 in paid restitution fees. (Paid restitution, particularly for low-income families, decreases the risk of future system involvement and adult incarceration.)

With multi-year, general operational support, SRPS can continue to support Philadelphia students, even as the pandemic continues to create challenges for local schools, students and families. Through mentoring, running and goal-setting, SRPS is creating a community that helps youth build character, confidence and the tools for a healthy future. As one recent MileUp student stated, "No matter how difficult a race, a goal, or any obstacle in life, give it your all and as long as you did your best, you won."

For more information about Students Run Philly Style visit: [studentsrunphilly.org](https://studentsrunphilly.org)

"No matter how difficult a race, a goal, or any obstacle in life, give it your all and as long as you did your best, you won."





# Maternity Care Coalition

## Spotlight

Maternity Care Coalition (MCC) is a community-based non-profit serving pregnant and postpartum women, children, and families living in historically marginalized and under resourced communities in Southeastern Pennsylvania. MCC envisions a future where parents impacted by racial and social inequities in Southeastern Pennsylvania can birth with dignity, parent with autonomy, and raise babies who are healthy, growing, and thriving.

Since 1980, MCC has worked to center the needs of babies and families. To achieve a more equitable and just future, we work at the client, community, and policy level. We have served over 145,000 families since our founding through supporting, referring, educating, researching, and advocating. We support clients & families in recognizing their strengths and developing self-determined health, development, and wellbeing goals for themselves and their babies. This past year, we served over 4,000 families and grew our direct services by over 7% offering two new programs. We have a variety

of programs across the region. In Northwest Philadelphia, for example, families can receive safe sleep education and a free portable crib through our Cribs For Kids Program. We also offer parenting education courses and home visiting services through our MOMobile® program.

MCC strengthens communities by leveraging strategic partnerships to connect our clients to resources and services that address the social determinants of health. For example, MCC recently launched Montco Mamas, which aims to improve the health and well-being of Montgomery County-based Black pregnant women, infants, and their families through data-driven community action plans.

Finally, MCC promotes systems-level change by advocating for policy and legislative transformation to address the systemic causes of racial and social inequities. We believe that the individuals most impacted by a problem hold the solution, so we consider it our



To Learn more,  
please visit our  
website at



[maternitycarecoalition.org](https://maternitycarecoalition.org)

responsibility to center the experience and expertise of the communities we serve as we promote policies and legislation. To this end, MCC hosted a statewide Perinatal Health Townhall in March 2021 where we convened over 300 moms, birthing people, legislators, and key stakeholders. Lived Experience Experts directly addressed policymakers about their experiences using Medicaid as their health insurance during pregnancy to shift attitudes and impact legislation. Looking ahead, strengthening, and expanding our grassroots capacity will be critical, as the act of political capacity-building-- particularly in low-income and marginalized communities-- plays an essential role in shaping policies.

Collectively, Maternity Care Coalition's client, community, and policy level services work together to address the racial and social inequities experienced by parents and their babies in Southeastern Pennsylvania.





Join us at Attic Brewing Company for:

*Designer Bag*



*B I N G O*

*Thursday, May 12<sup>th</sup> @ 5:30pm*

Tickets on sale now, RSVP on our website ([www.F4HE.org](http://www.F4HE.org))!

\$30 in advance; \$35 at the door

Contact [Bonnie@F4HE.org](mailto:Bonnie@F4HE.org) with any questions.