The Wisconsin Partnership Program is committed to supporting community, education and research partnerships to improve health and advance health equity. Pictured left to right: Black Men Run, Brown Boys Read; Wisconsin Center for Infectious Disease (WisCID); UW School of Medicine and Public Health medical students, Photo by Todd Brown/Media Solutions
DEAN GOLDEN’S MESSAGE

I am pleased to present the Wisconsin Partnership Program’s 2019-2024 Five Year Plan. It has evolved from 15 years of experience in grantmaking, intensive planning, assessing a wide range of outcomes and ongoing conversations with our community partners — all driven towards improving health and health equity in Wisconsin through investments in community partnerships, education and research.

The enhanced understanding gained over the last fifteen years has helped us define a renewed approach to our work based on a broader view of health, with an explicit focus on health equity.

The Wisconsin Partnership Program defines health equity as the attainment of the highest level of health for all people.* This requires addressing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination and their consequences (including lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments and health care.) ** These concepts are strongly aligned with the goals of public and private organizations and funders seeking to improve health.

The Wisconsin Partnership Program’s approach to achieving health and well-being for all Wisconsinites has evolved over the years in concert with both the science that illuminates new pathways, as well as the values and goals you will find in the pages of this plan. We are excited to bring this new vision to our work and hope this plan illustrates our strong commitment and enduring drive to improve health throughout our state.

Sincerely,

Robert N. Golden, MD
Robert Turell Professor in Medical Leadership
Dean, UW School of Medicine and Public Health
Vice Chancellor for Medical Affairs
University of Wisconsin-Madison


“I shall never be content until the beneficent influence of the University reaches every family of the state.”

- Charles R. Van Hise, President, University of Wisconsin - Madison 1903-1918

INTRODUCTION

A New Perspective on a Century-Old Pledge:

UW President Van Hise’s famous 1904 statement became the basis for the Wisconsin Idea and remains the foundation for the missions of the University, the School of Medicine and Public Health and the Wisconsin Partnership Program.

The Wisconsin Partnership Program is committed to improving the health of every family of the state by supporting community partnerships, education and research that fuel knowledge, scientific discovery and innovations in health and healthcare delivery.

We know that communities across our state experience health in different ways, and have different paths towards achieving health. To improve health for all, we must expand our definition of health to include health equity—and recognize factors such as race and toxic stress, healthy food environments, safe and stable housing and community safety—all of which have significant impacts on health and well-being over the course of a lifetime.

If we are to improve the health of every family of the state, the Wisconsin Partnership Program cannot always take the lead—whether it is in the design of research questions or community-based interventions, or the instruction of our students who will be the next generation of health care providers in a complex world. Doing this work successfully requires bridging the expertise of the university with the lived experiences and expertise of the communities we serve.

With the framework provided in this plan, over the next five years we will continue to seek and develop meaningful partnerships and strengthen our approach to addressing all the factors that influence health and advance health equity.
FIVE-YEAR PLAN FRAMEWORK 2019-2024

THE VISION
Everyone in Wisconsin will live healthy and full lives.

OUR MISSION
To bring about lasting improvements in health and well-being and advance health equity in Wisconsin through investments in community partnerships, education and research.

OUR VALUES
- Academic Leadership
- Community Voice
- Creativity and Flexibility
- Multi-Sector Partnerships
- Sustainability

OUR GOALS
- Promote Innovation
- Advance Health Equity
- Build Capacity and Leadership
- Catalyze Systems Change

OUR STRATEGIES
- Generation of new ideas
- Encourage collaboration
- Address social determinants of health
- Engage multiple perspectives
- Invest in broad range of initiatives
- Increase diversity in health and health care
- Invest in community-led ideas
- Cultivate new relationships to achieve health equity
- Use data to catalyze systems change

OUR FOUNDATION
- Community Partnerships
- Education
- Research
FIVE-YEAR PLAN FRAMEWORK

The 2019-2024 Plan is the fourth since the Wisconsin Partnership Program’s inception. It is based on a set of core values that form a foundation for all of our efforts. Our goals address what we believe are the critical elements to achieving greater health in our state. Each strategy directly connects to one or more of our four main goals.

THE VISION

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OUR MISSION

To bring about lasting improvements in health and well-being and advance health equity in Wisconsin through investments in community partnerships, education and research.

OUR VALUES

In our pursuit of health, well-being and health equity for everyone in Wisconsin, the Partnership Program will prioritize:

• Academic Leadership – We hold ourselves to high standards and strive for excellence and rigor in research and education.

• Community Voice – We partner with communities and collectively make decisions based on knowledge and lived experience.

• Creativity and Flexibility – We challenge ourselves to stay nimble in our approaches, curious in our thinking, and open to opportunities that lead to sustainable improvements in health.

• Multi-Sector Partnerships – We know the best solutions to our most challenging issues come from drawing on diverse perspectives and the knowledge and assets of interdisciplinary teams.

• Sustainability – We understand that to be impactful, our work must endure beyond any specific investment.

Dr. Dustin Deming is using a New Investigator Program Grant from the Wisconsin Partnership Program to further his research on developing treatments for subtypes of colorectal cancer. Through his research, Dr. Deming is striving to advance the treatment of colorectal cancer and to develop innovative, personalized treatment for patients with cancer.
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**OUR GOALS**

The Wisconsin Partnership Program’s investments in community partnerships, education and research efforts will focus on the following goals:

- **Promote Innovation** – To address complex health challenges, we will invest in new and evolving ideas and discoveries and their successful introduction into practice.

- **Advance Health Equity** – To achieve health equity, we will address the root causes of health inequities and the roles played by social determinants of health.

- **Build Capacity and Leadership** – To meet emerging health and health care needs, we will enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities of our community partners, applicants and grantees as we learn from them as well.

- **Catalyze Systems Change** – To improve the health and well-being of the people of Wisconsin, we will work to improve policies and practices within the many diverse systems influencing health.

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**Social Determinants of Health**

are the conditions and environments, in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning and quality-of-life outcomes.

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*Transforming Medical Education (TME) is an innovative education model supported by the Wisconsin Partnership Program. Funding for TME supported the development of the ForWard Curriculum, which infuses public health principles and practices into the School of Medicine and Public Health medical curriculum. The result is graduates who are better prepared to think beyond the exam room and consider how social, economic and policy issues influence the health of the patients and populations they serve.*
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OUR STRATEGIES

In alignment with the Wisconsin Idea, the Partnership Program will extend its resources—funding, expertise, staff and relationship building—to our partners across communities, health systems and campuses through the following strategies:

- We will support the generation of new ideas and discoveries and their successful introduction into systems and practice.
- We will continue to invest in a broad range of programs and initiatives that cover the spectrum from basic science to clinical, translational and applied public health research and education.
- We will encourage collaboration across disciplines and communities to stimulate innovative approaches to health challenges.
- We will support the development of health and public health professionals from underrepresented populations and communities that lack access to care and/or experience health care shortages to increase diversity in our health professions and build capacity in underserved communities.
- We will address the social determinants of health and root causes of complex health challenges.
- In all our efforts, we will seek to engage multiple sectors and perspectives with a common focus towards health, health equity and sustainable systems change.
- We will invest in community partnerships, education and research led by or in authentic collaboration with communities experiencing health inequities.
- We will identify and cultivate relationships with community-based organizations committed to achieving health equity in order to support grassroots capacity and leadership.
- We will invest in generating, organizing, applying and disseminating health and health-equity related data to ensure that our staff, leadership, grantees and partners have the information needed to advance health equity, innovate and catalyze systems change.
- We will objectively measure the results and outcomes of our projects and programs and adjust our tactics accordingly.

The Wisconsin Partnership Program’s community grant programs support innovative, community-led approaches to achieve health and health equity throughout Wisconsin. Black Men Run, Brown Boys Read is a component of the Black Men’s Wellness Sustainable Initiative, a Community Collaboration Grant, which is taking innovative approaches to address and improve the health of African American men in Dane County.
The Wisconsin Partnership Program's community grant programs support innovative, community-led approaches to achieve health and health equity throughout Wisconsin. Black Men Run, Brown Boys Read is a component of the Black Men's Wellness Sustainable Initiative, a Community Collaboration Grant, which is taking innovative approaches to address and improve the health of African American men in Dane County.
The Wisconsin Partnership Program’s grant programs, the primary mechanism for achieving our goals, include:

**Community Catalyst Grant**: Two-year grants to support community-driven, innovative health equity approaches, designed to reduce gaps in access, outcomes or opportunities.

**Community Collaboration Grant**: Four-year grants that provide training and technical assistance to applications addressing health inequities stemming from the social determinants of health. Grantees receive support as they strengthen and expand assets and partnerships, develop community-driven plans and take action towards systems change.

**Community Impact Grant**: Five-year grants to support large-scale, evidence-based, community-academic partnerships designed to achieve sustainable systems change that will improve health, health-equity and well-being.

**Collaborative Health Sciences Program**: Three-year funding to support collaborative teams that propose novel ideas and new approaches to interdisciplinary research or education to advance health, health care and health equity.

**New Investigator Program**: Two-year funding to support early-career faculty in initiating innovative research and/or educational approaches that address Wisconsin’s health issues. The program seeks innovative proposals from new faculty to support efforts to acquire external funding.

**Opportunity Grants Program**: Designed to be strategic, flexible and timely, these two-year grants provide start-up funding to support high-risk, high profile, high-impact, state-of-the art education and research projects.

**Strategic Education and Research Grant Program**: Typically three-year renewable grants, the Wisconsin Partnership Program supports novel education and research infrastructure and programs vital to advancing population health and healthcare delivery in Wisconsin and beyond.

**HOW WE WILL ACCOMPLISH OUR STRATEGIES**

Since its beginning in 2004, the Wisconsin Partnership Program has primarily used grant funding to improve health; however, we are committed to doing more than simply funding good work. As the program has grown in experience, knowledge and partnerships, we better understand the importance and potential impact of offering more options to our grantees and partners. This evolution will also help us achieve our goals of advancing health equity, building capacity and leadership, catalyzing systems change and promoting innovation.

- Continuous Quality Improvement in all Grant Programs
- Expansion of Partnerships and Collaborations
- Expansion of Communications and Outreach
- Convening Foundations and Other Funders
- Enhanced Technical Assistance and Collaborative Learning
- Increased Staff Training
- Continuous Evaluation of all Programs and Outcomes
- Increased Training and Support for Review Panels and Oversight Committees
- Organizing Conferences and Convening Stakeholders
MEASURING PROGRESS AND SUCCESS

The Wisconsin Partnership Program deeply values evidence as a way to ensure we are meeting our goals. The Program’s core beliefs rest on testing and assessing theories and outcomes. While assessment and accountability have always been pivotal to the work of the Partnership Program, we are placing increased emphasis on sharing our findings with a larger audience.

We are one of many organizations that influence health in Wisconsin, and our unique placement within the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health offers significant university resources, talent and expertise that enhance our impact. Healthcare systems, government, public health, schools, non-profits, and faith institutions are just some examples of the organizations we partner with to improve health, well-being and health equity.

To measure our impact over short, medium and long terms, we will be asking ourselves the following questions—and collecting and analyzing associated data—as we move forward.

ORGANIZATION-FOCUSED EVALUATION: MEASURING IMPACT FOR OUR FOUR OVERARCHING GOALS

- Promote Innovation: Have we successfully invested in new and evolving ideas and discoveries, and their successful introduction into practice?
- Advance Health Equity: Have we funded efforts that address the root causes of health inequities and the roles played by social determinants of health?
- Build Capacity and Leadership: Have we learned from and enhanced the knowledge, skills and abilities of our community partners, applicants and grantees?
- Catalyze Systems Change: Have we worked to improve policies and practices within the many diverse systems influencing health?

PROGRAM-FOCUSED EVALUATION: MEASURING THE IMPACT OF OUR EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAMS

- Has Partnership Program funding resulted in new research partnerships designed to create innovative solutions to complex health challenges?
- Have funded efforts led to peer-reviewed publications and the dissemination of knowledge? Have new discoveries been translated and introduced into practice?
- Have our grantees leveraged other funding to sustain and expand their work, indicating recognition of the merit of their work?
- Have we increased the capacity of grassroots organizations to address the root causes of poor health?
- Do our students better reflect the demographics of all Wisconsin’s communities?
- Do our community grantees better reflect the diversity of Wisconsin’s communities?

GRANTEE-FOCUSED EVALUATION: MEASURING THE IMPACT OF THE INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS THAT LEAD TO LARGER IMPACTS ON HEALTH

- Has support from the Wisconsin Partnership Program led to positive impacts within the context of individual grantee goals?

One way we inform our work is through annual rankings reports. For example, the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps program, a collaboration between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, illustrates how our state and counties are faring.
FIVE YEARS FROM NOW

Striving to improve the health of a state is a bold and daunting undertaking. Health, by its very nature, is complex and there is no one causal path to achieving it. We are confident that if our expanded approach is successful, in five years:

- We will have answered our evaluation questions in the affirmative.
- We will have found and implemented new ways to bridge the “beneficent” influence of the University with the voices, perspectives, and leadership of those living in communities throughout Wisconsin who are also striving to achieve health and health equity.
- We will continue to evolve in our understanding of how to improve health and health equity.
- We will become a leader in addressing and answering questions about how to improve the health and well-being of a diverse array of communities.
- We will have contributed to the understanding and acceptance that to achieve sustainable and lasting improvements in health, we must do more than simply fund good work.

The Wisconsin Partnership Program is more than a transactional funder of projects and programs. We exist to create change. Our role is to spearhead innovation, share expertise, build bridges and catalyze partnerships—between the university and Wisconsin communities, visionary experts who look at health challenges from different perspectives, and among government and private sector entities with shared missions to improve health.

We believe that by maintaining existing partnerships and forging new ones, by bringing together people with diverse backgrounds and viewpoints, by closely monitoring where we have succeeded and where we have not, we can improve health in our state. We consider this an ongoing goal, one requiring vision, energy and purpose, for the benefit of the people of Wisconsin.

FIDUCIARY AND STEWARDSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

The Wisconsin Partnership Program was created in 2004 as a result of the conversion of Blue Cross/Blue Shield United of Wisconsin to a for-profit enterprise. The Partnership Program expresses its continued appreciation and gratitude to Blue Cross/Blue Shield United of Wisconsin for these resources to benefit the people of the state and for its foresight in allowing the Wisconsin Partnership Program to put forward the remarkable resources, talent and expertise within the University and extend that to a network of partners working to improve health in Wisconsin.

In its stewardship of the endowment, the Wisconsin Partnership Program has closely adhered to its foundational documents—the Insurance Commissioner’s Order, the grant agreement, and the Five-Year Plan. Two committees govern the program’s compliance and allocation of resources, the Oversight and Advisory Committee (OAC) and the Partnership Education and Research Committee (PERC), which ensures that our efforts are aligned with the mission and vision of the Partnership Program.
HIGHLIGHTS: 2014 - JUNE 30, 2018

The Wisconsin Partnership Program at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) supported a broad range of health and healthcare initiatives under the previous five-year plan. The following highlights reflect the Program’s success in supporting the creation of new research and discovery, innovative educational models and community-driven health improvement.

2014 – JUNE 30, 2018
AWARDS SUMMARY

$208 Million
Funded Projects

456 Grants Awarded

RESEARCH

152 Research Grants

$114 Million
Grants support research to prevent, diagnose, treat and cure disease and prevent injuries. Projects focus on cancer, infectious disease, diabetes, maternal and child health and more.

EDUCATION

32 Education and Training Grants

$29 Million
Investments in education and training prepare health professionals to meet the unique health needs of Wisconsin in the 21st century.

COMMUNITY

272 Community Partnership Grants

$65 Million
Community grant programs and community academic partnerships address critical public health issues including maternal, infant and child health, drug and alcohol use, smoking, nutrition, obesity, health equity and more.

Funded work in every county in Wisconsin

72 counties
**1750 students** have participated in the Transforming Medical Education curriculum, which prepares the next generation of physicians to care for both patients and populations.

With support from the Wisconsin Partnership Program, the Survey of the Health of Wisconsin (SHOW) has gathered data from **6000+ individuals** across 62 counties to inform research on antibiotic resistance, pesticides, diabetes, cancer and more.

**400 people** participated in Advancing Health Equity, a statewide conference hosted by the Partnership Program in 2016 to explore and address health disparities in Wisconsin.

Grantees have supported or produced **3600 peer-reviewed publications** to share knowledge and impact.

**RETURN ON INVESTMENT**

$600 Million leveraged from organizations and funders outside the UW System to sustain grantees’ efforts and impacts.

Grantees have sustained their projects through awards from external funders by almost three times the Partnership Program’s investment.

**Education initiatives** have improved the workforce capacity of more than **3000 health professionals**.
ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Expanding Nursing Education
*Increasing Cultural Congruence Among Nurses in Wisconsin* was a collaborative partnership, led by The Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council with the UW-Madison School of Nursing, UW-Stevens Point and the UW SMPH to improve the quality of nursing care received by Native American patients in Wisconsin. They accomplished this by improving cultural competence and establishing a support system and pipeline for Native high school students interested in nursing. The researchers have since obtained $1.6 million in federal funding to expand the enrollment of Native American nursing students at UW-Madison.

Improving Health in Latino Communities
Led by leaders and teachers at the United Community Center (UCC) in Milwaukee, and in partnership with faculty from UW SMPH, this initiative improved healthy eating and physical activity habits among its Latino youth, a community where more than 50 percent reported obesity or overweight. The team provided educational activities and physical activity opportunities to families over a three-year period. The project was extended through a collaboration with students at Carroll University’s Health Sciences Program.

EDUCATION

Transforming Medical Education
From 2014-2019, the Wisconsin Partnership Program supported the third and final phase of *Transforming Medical Education*, an education initiative that fully integrates the school of medicine to include public health. The innovative curriculum ensures that graduates are prepared to work in both complex health systems and communities across the state to meet Wisconsin’s evolving health needs.

Training Future Public Health Workforce
The *Wisconsin Population Health Service Fellowship Program* trains a new generation of public health leaders by combining workforce development with community service. The program deploys early-career professionals to community-based organizations across the state. Since 2004, 72 fellows have provided service to more than 40 organizations to address a diverse range of public health issues.

RESEARCH

Weighing in by ZIP codes
In 2018, health researchers from the *Obesity Prevention Initiative (OPI)* (2014-2019) released a detailed ZIP code-level obesity map based on electronic health record data, meaning it is based on height and weight measurements taken when people are at their doctors’ offices, rather than self-reported heights and weights. Wisconsin is the first state with a detailed ZIP code-level obesity map, which is an important step in identifying communities most affected by obesity and will allow for better targeting of resources for health improvement.

Combatting Infectious Disease
*The Wisconsin Center for Infectious Disease (WisCID)* (2014-2019) created a cross-campus effort to address the alarming rise of drug-resistant infections and helped leverage a five-year $16 million National Institutes of Health grant at UW-Madison to find new sources of antibiotics. To date, the research team has discovered more than 400 compounds. They are moving rapidly to determine which compounds could be developed as clinical drugs.