

Advocating for the Underserved: Practical Tools for Supporting your Community/Health System

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Health Equity

Health equity implies that everyone should have a fair opportunity to attain their full health potential and that no one should be disadvantaged from achieving this potential.

([World Health Organization](#))

To achieve health equity, we must eliminate social and structural barriers to health and opportunity.

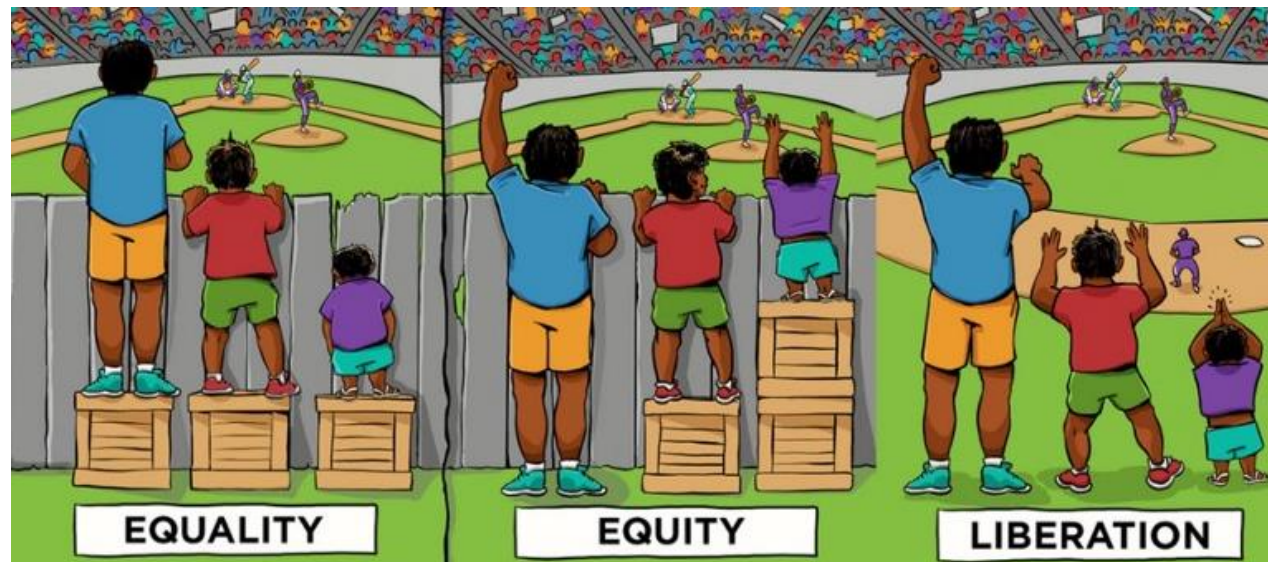


Image source: [Story-Based Strategy](#)

Foster and Invest in Economic Well-Being of Communities

Adopting an Anchor Mission

What is an Anchor Institution?

- Nonprofit or public place-based entities such as universities and hospitals that are **rooted in their local community** by mission, invested capital, or relationships to customers, employees, residents, and vendors.

Components of Anchor Strategies:

- Inclusive, local hiring
- Inclusive, local sourcing
- Inclusive, local construction
- Place-based community and impact investing
- Support for affordable housing

Partners:

- Community based organizations
- Collaboratives
- National thought leaders



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Place Based Investments in Social Determinants (Drivers) of Health

- Place-based investing is an **impactful, yet underutilized, strategy** to improve community health and advance health equity.
- Focus on **community-level factors (SDOH)** that promote health and well-being
- **Impact capital:** investments made with the intent to yield both financial and social and/or environmental returns to address the needs of marginalized communities.

Healthy People 2020 | An End of Decade Snapshot



OFFICE OF THE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HEALTH

Healthy People
2020

Source: [ProMedica/LISC partnership \(HAN\)](#)

Image source: [health.gov](#)

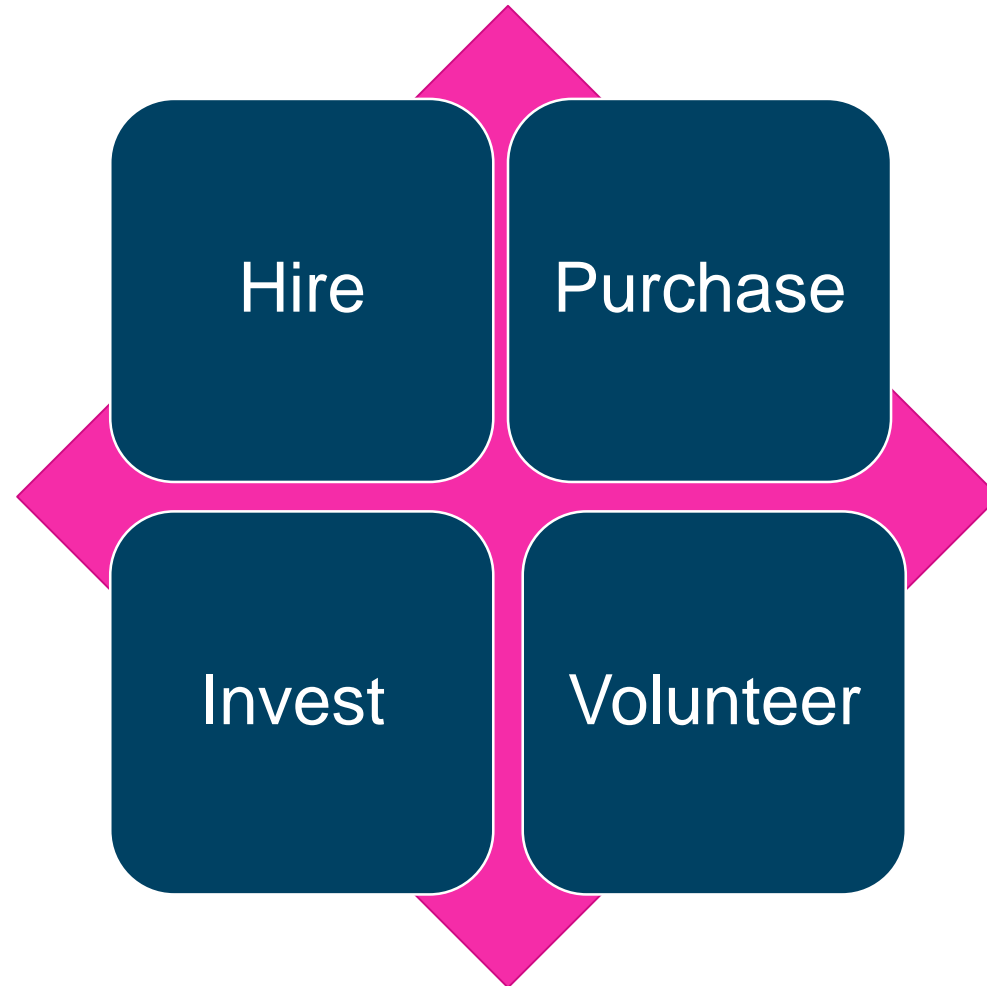
Consider Joining the Health Anchor Network (HAN)

Growing national collaboration of 65+ leading healthcare systems building more inclusive and sustainable economies.

- Achieving **equitable health outcomes** at community level requires addressing structural determinants of health that drive racial and economic disparities
- Focused on **improving access to care** and **eliminating systemic racism**, which contributes to poor health outcomes.
- Improving community health and well-being by **leveraging all our assets**, including hiring, purchasing, and investment for equitable, local economic impact.
- Data and monitoring for accountability!



Anchor Mission Strategies



HIRE LOCALLY: Local hiring initiatives do not end at the moment of hire. The success of programs lies in connecting frontline workers to pathways for career advancement within the institution - ensuring a sustainable, effective program and a pipeline to opportunity for local communities.

KEY STRATEGIES

- Designate geographic focus in high-poverty neighborhoods
- Set aside positions for pipeline cohort graduates
- Offer job coaching for new hires and map out potential career pathways
- Partner with local educational institutions and community organizations
- Provide tuition assistance for training for frontline employees



UH of Cleveland

Workforce development initiatives focused on connecting community residents to jobs and career ladders within the institution.

- ✓ Pipeline: partner with local nonprofit organizations who provides participants with skills training focused on specific positions at UH.
- ✓ Internal worker-training program for current staff providing encouragement & support for internal advancement.
- ✓ Literacy building and skills training initiatives, with supports (e.g. release time) built in, and partners with education and training entities that can provide targeted skills development.

IMPACT

Step up to UH

- 111 hires in 2½ years
- Reduced interview to hire ratio for recruiters
- 1yr retention rate at 80% for pipeline grads, compared with 66% overall

Pathway/Step up to PCA

- 55 total new hires
- 80% retention

Position graduates are hired into

- Environmental services
- Nutritional services
- Patient care assistant
- Operating room assistant
- Medical assistant

PURCHASE LOCALLY: Create Connections (overcoming barriers for local and diverse vendors) & Build Capacity (growing existing businesses and incubating new ones).

KEY STRATEGIES

- Identify top 3 issues through a community forum, then address through community workgroups
- Independent role of Exec. Director (supported 2/3 by CAMC and 1/3 by smaller competitor)
- Connect procurement activities to identified community health needs
- Focus on growing the local agricultural sector
- Partner with existing distributors and contractors
- Engage non-traditional partners



CAMC

Build the base of local growers providing fresh herbs, fruits and vegetables to CAMC.

- ✓ Participating as part of the Local Foods Value Chain project, encourage regional wealth creation by supporting the local agricultural economy while providing hospital patients and employees with healthier food.
- ✓ Continued to prioritize the project after the funding period was over (“stick & stay”) to address CAMCs Community Health Needs Assessment (unemployment and poverty and related illnesses connected to poor diets)

IMPACT

- 23% of the food budget was spent with local producers
- History of innovatively advancing community engagement and the community health needs assessment process
- CAMC viewed as convening force (bring together supply chain actors to identify the barriers for local farmers and gaps in the chain, and then work with partners to fill those gaps)

INVEST LOCALLY: Create healthy and thriving communities by increasing available capital for positive social, economic, or environmental impact.

PROGRAM IMPACT QUICK NUMBERS

(as of 2021)

- Commitment to deploy 1%, or \$7.5 million, of their investment portfolio to place-based investments
- \$6 million deployed by Rush, \$2 million of which will be reinvested in 2021 and 2022
- \$9.1 million coordinated by West Side United for impact investing since 2017
- 296 loans distributed, 366 construction jobs created, 45 other jobs created, 117 jobs preserved, and 690 housing units created in the West Side as a result of an investment pool that WSU contributed to (of which their funding constituted 31%)

Rush University committed to allocating 1% (or \$7.5M) of their investment portfolio to place-based investments

- Initial investments made through intermediaries (CDFIs: community development financial institutions)
- Measure social impact via four focus areas (tied to Rush's mission):
 1. Economic vitality
 2. Health and healthcare
 3. Education
 4. Neighborhood and physical environment

Community Investments:

- **Corner Store Deli** (addressing food dessert and safe space to gather)
- **La Orquidea** (flower shop and event planning)
- **Foundation for Homan Square** (community development area)
 - Community centers, Office space for small biz and non-profits, affordable housing, and schools
- **Nichols Tower** (restoration of the original Sears Tower – 14 story building)
 - Hub for nonprofit arts, multimedia education, youth leadership development, job training

Source: [Rush University](#)

VOLUNTEER LOCALLY: Health systems are rich in human resources & talent (budget/finance, strategic planning & operations, HR, communications & marketing, and philanthropy).

KEY STRATEGIES

- Assess the needs of your community & coordinate with your business objectives
- Create purposeful partnerships
- Secure support from top executives and boards
- Encouraging and allowing paid time off for team members to share their skills and expertise with local community organizations
- Include volunteerism across all levels as an organizational goal that is tracked and incentivized
- Tie to Health Equity and DEI mission / vision

IMPACT

- Helps fulfill organization's mission
- When companies integrate volunteer programs with their corporate giving plan, it's good for business. Research shows:
 - Improve employee satisfaction
 - Foster employee engagement
 - Boost retention
- “Employees, potential hires, and especially younger workers increasingly want to work at companies that pursue equity, diversity, and community. Meaningful employee volunteer opportunities are an often overlooked part of that equation”

—[Harvard Business Review](#)

Food for Thought

- How are you leveraging your position/privilege and resources to advocate for and advance community-level health and well-being?
- What more can you do to push your organization/institution to adopt their role as an anchor institution?
- How would our patients', their families, our students/trainees and our lives (as clinicians) change if our organizations/institutions were more intentional about investing in the social and economic conditions within the local communities we serve?



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References and Resources to Learn More

- [A Different Kind of Leader](#) (podcast)
- [Building bridges with place-based partnerships and anchor institutions](#)
- [Closing the gap in a generation](#) (World Health Organization)
- [Communities in action: pathways to health equity](#)
- [Dr. Camara Jones Explains the Cliff of Good Health](#)
- [Health Anchor Network](#) (HAN) case studies:
 - [CommonSpirit Health Community Investment Program](#)
 - [Intermountain Healthcare Local Impact Investing](#)
 - [Kaiser Permanente Thriving Communities Fund](#)
 - [Rush University System for Health Impact Investing Fund](#)
 - [UMass Memorial Health Community Investing Program](#)
- [Healthy People 2020](#) (health.gov)
- [Healthy people: a 2020 vision for the social determinants approach](#)
- [North Carolina passes a ban: the box law](#)
- [Quantifying health systems' investment in social determinants of health, by sector](#)
- [Reimagine Your Corporate Volunteer Program](#) (HBR)
- [Stories from across the nation](#) (healthypeople.gov)
- [Story-Based Strategy](#)
- [Why North Carolina might be the most innovative health care state in America](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)