

WORKSHOP 3

Innovations in Population Health
Wednesday, June 21, 2017

Department of Population Health, Dell Medical School



Alex Garcia, Director of Community Engagement and Health Equity

Alexandra A. Garcia, PhD, RN, FAAN is an Associate Professor in the Family and Public Health Nursing and Nursing Administration Division in the School of Nursing and the inaugural Director of Community Engagement and Health Equity for the Department of Population Health at Dell Medical School, with dual appointments in both schools of nursing and medicine. She has taught courses for undergraduate and graduate students in research, public health and global health. Her research focuses on Mexican Americans with type 2 diabetes and the exploration of social, cultural and economic influences on their health promotion practices, diabetes-related symptoms, self-management strategies, mental health and quality of life. She is past president of the Texas Public Health Association and serves as Chair of the Public Health Nursing Section of the American Public Health Association. As Director of Community Engagement and Health Equity at Dell Medical School, Dr. Garcia partners with community members, community-based organizations, and public agencies to develop, implement and evaluate strategies that will transform the community health infrastructure and serve the varying needs of diverse populations — especially low-income and uninsured residents across the community. Dr. Garcia received her Diploma in Registered Nursing from The Union Memorial Hospital School of Nursing; her Bachelor of Science from The College of Notre Dame of Maryland and her Master of Science from The University of Maryland at Baltimore. She earned her PhD in nursing from The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing.

Community Strategy Team



Paula Rojas, Community Equity Strategy Consultant

Paula X. Rojas is a community organizer, licensed midwife and social justice trainer. For more than 20 years, she has worked on issues of gender violence, racial justice, women's reproductive health, childcare access, healthcare access and police brutality. Rojas was a national trainer for INCITE! (Women of Color Against Violence) and co-founded a number of community-based organizations including Mamas of Color Rising, Refugio-Center for Community Organizing and the New York Organizing Support Center. Born in Chile, Rojas grew up in Houston and later worked in Chile and New York City. Currently, Rojas is a trainer with the national organization Embody Transformation and works with the local organization Mama Sana/Vibrant Woman. She joined the Department of Population Health in April 2016 as a consultant to help develop and implement a strategy to meaningfully engage communities that are underrepresented within institutions and most directly impacted by health inequities.

Center for Place-Based Initiatives



Lourdes Rodríguez, Director of the Center for Place-Based Initiatives

Dr. Lourdes Rodríguez serves as Director of the Dell Center for Place-Based Initiatives and Associate Professor of Population Health at the University of Texas at Austin Dell Medical. She works on community-engaged research and practice projects that build on ideas elicited from community colleagues. Previously, as Program Officer at the New York State Health Foundation, she supported neighborhood-level interventions to increase healthy food options and improve the built environment; advance public policies that promote healthy living; and increase access to resources and programs that address social determinants of health. Prior to that, Rodríguez served as Associate Director of Community Partnerships for the Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative at City Harvest where she oversaw community engagement activities to help address the epidemics of diabetes, cardiovascular disease and other diet-related diseases in five low-income neighborhoods of New York City. From 2004–2012, she served as faculty of the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health where she co-directed the Urbanism and the Built Environment track in the Department of Sociomedical Sciences which trained public health and urban planning graduate students. She co-edited a book examining community mobilization for health, and has authored publications on the subjects of violence prevention, health of vulnerable populations, mental health, community mobilization and active living. Dr. Rodríguez received a BS in Industrial Biotechnology from the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez, an MPH from the University of Connecticut and a DrPH from Columbia University.