



The Resident Leadership Academy (RLA) is the result of nearly 20 years' experience in community-based public health work combined with a passion for seeing it done more effectively. Taking lessons learned from this experience, CHIP created RLA to serve as the foundation for building healthy communities which leads to impactful and lasting results in community health.

In a very short period of time, participants learn about topics ranging from social determinants of health to obesity prevention, community planning and advocacy. RLA is characteristic of public health Master's degree programs. The topics covered provide a holistic view of public health, and the methodology facilitates the empowerment of residents to affect change in their own neighborhoods."

– Dana Richardson, Vice President of Community Health & Engagement, CHIP

Our Model

We believe that real community change will only occur when local residents and policymakers become equal partners in the process. Authentic Community Engagement (ACE) is the cornerstone of the RLA methodology, which leads to concrete public health improvements in local communities as well as community and systems-level change.



How RLA Works

RLA develops knowledge and new skills among residents in every day communities while engaging them in the very processes that affect community change. In this way, RLA strengthens and legitimizes coalition work, leading to improvements in public health projects and initiatives already underway. Developed with the guidance of an expert external review committee, RLA is a 10-session curriculum-based program that guides local residents from high-need communities through a short-term process that empowers them to make positive changes in their respective communities. Changes can include (but are not limited to) improvements in public safety, walkability, health food access and community/civic engagement.

Session topics provide a holistic look at community health and include: *Community Building Principles, Social Determinants of Health, Safe Walkable Communities & Crime Prevention through Environmental Design, Healthy Food Systems, Land Use & Community Planning and Leadership, Advocacy & Policy Development.*



In addition to the aforementioned sessions, the Academy culminates in one or more **Community Improvement Project(s)** developed and implemented by the resident leaders who are encouraged to engage with others in the community to see these plans through to fruition. Actual projects underway in San Diego County as a result of RLA include a community garden in National City, the addition of circuit training equipment in a newly formed health & fitness zone in Lemon Grove, enhancements to the Peoples' Produce Farmers

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Market in Southeastern San Diego, and safety and walkability improvements in front of an elementary school in Oceanside.

For communities and organizations that desire to make lasting improvements in community quality of life, CHIP can help in four ways:

- provide training on Authentic Community Engagement (ACE) methodology
- facilitate the Academy in its entirety
- provide customized train-the-trainer workshops
- provide sessions or support specific to your needs

What Sets Us Apart

Trainings today are rarely customized to meet specific, local community needs in a way that participants (local leaders, residents and community-based organization representatives) come away with additional knowledge, hands-on tools/products and a plan for full implementation of community-driven campaigns that are identified by residents. CHIP offers all of these things and more.

- RLA leads to lasting change—community improvements are sustainable because the resident groups that develop these plans either remain intact or become integrated into what is already happening in their communities (e.g. neighborhood associations, coalition work)
- The process itself leads to numerous outputs tailored to the local community in almost every session from start to finish (e.g. community needs’ summary, health policy analysis, group organization chart, comprehensive action plan, community presentation, etc.)
- RLA is highly customized to address the needs of each community
- RLA has proven success working with diverse groups, including individuals of various ages, genders, socioeconomic backgrounds and cultures
- CHIP’s team has extensive experience in community-based public health projects on issues including (but not limited to) community organizing, environmental justice, youth violence prevention, childhood obesity prevention, and public health systems change. They are expert facilitators that have worked in the trenches on community organizing as well as at the highest levels of policy advocacy in CA and Washington, D.C.



About Community Health Improvement Partners

Established in 1995, CHIP is a voluntary collaboration of individuals and organizations deeply involved in health care improvement. Members include hospitals, health plan providers, community clinics, community-based organizations (nonprofits), physicians, universities and the County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency. We believe that saving and improving lives is linked to the power of an effective collaboration. For seventeen years, CHIP has partnered with the community from the grassroots to treetops levels and everyone in between to tackle some of the most pressing issues facing our region (e.g., obesity prevention; suicide prevention; access to care; health literacy and worksite wellness). CHIP has changed the definition of healthcare stakeholders with the recognition that health is a part of everything. While our work is anchored in San Diego County, the RLA model and curriculum can be applied to any community working to combat childhood obesity or other major health concerns.

The Resident Leadership Academy was developed in partnership with the County of San Diego and through funding from the Center for Disease Control

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