

**Lifting all boats: Increasing community organization research capacity and community engaged scholarship through a community/academic research partnership program**

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University/community partnerships have shown promise in having an impact on health disparities as they work together to address critical issues while also building an understanding of the science behind community engaged research. This abstract describes an intensive community/university partnership program, Partners in Education, Evaluation, and Research (PEER). PEER aims to increase community organizations' research capacity and facilitate community-engaged research to improve community health through training research Fellows within the organizations. The program, developed at the request of community organizations, consists of didactic research training coupled with partnership development with university faculty through applied and experiential learning. The program culminates in a jointly developed community/academic research project. The program evaluation employed a mixed methods data collection approach to gather information on both process and outcome measures. Qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques were used, including experiences of the participants assessed through surveys, formal group and individual interviews, phone calls, and discussions. Statistical analysis of the change in fellows' pre- and post-test survey scores were conducted using paired sample t-tests. The small sample size is recognized by the authors as a limitation of the evaluation methods and would potentially be resolved by including more cohort data as the program progresses. Findings indicate the program is succeeding in having an impact on the learning around research and university partnerships for Fellows, working with communities for faculty, and building organizational capacity for the organizations. The findings would be discussed with specific regard to their implications for the potential for similar translational research initiatives.