



Community Voices:

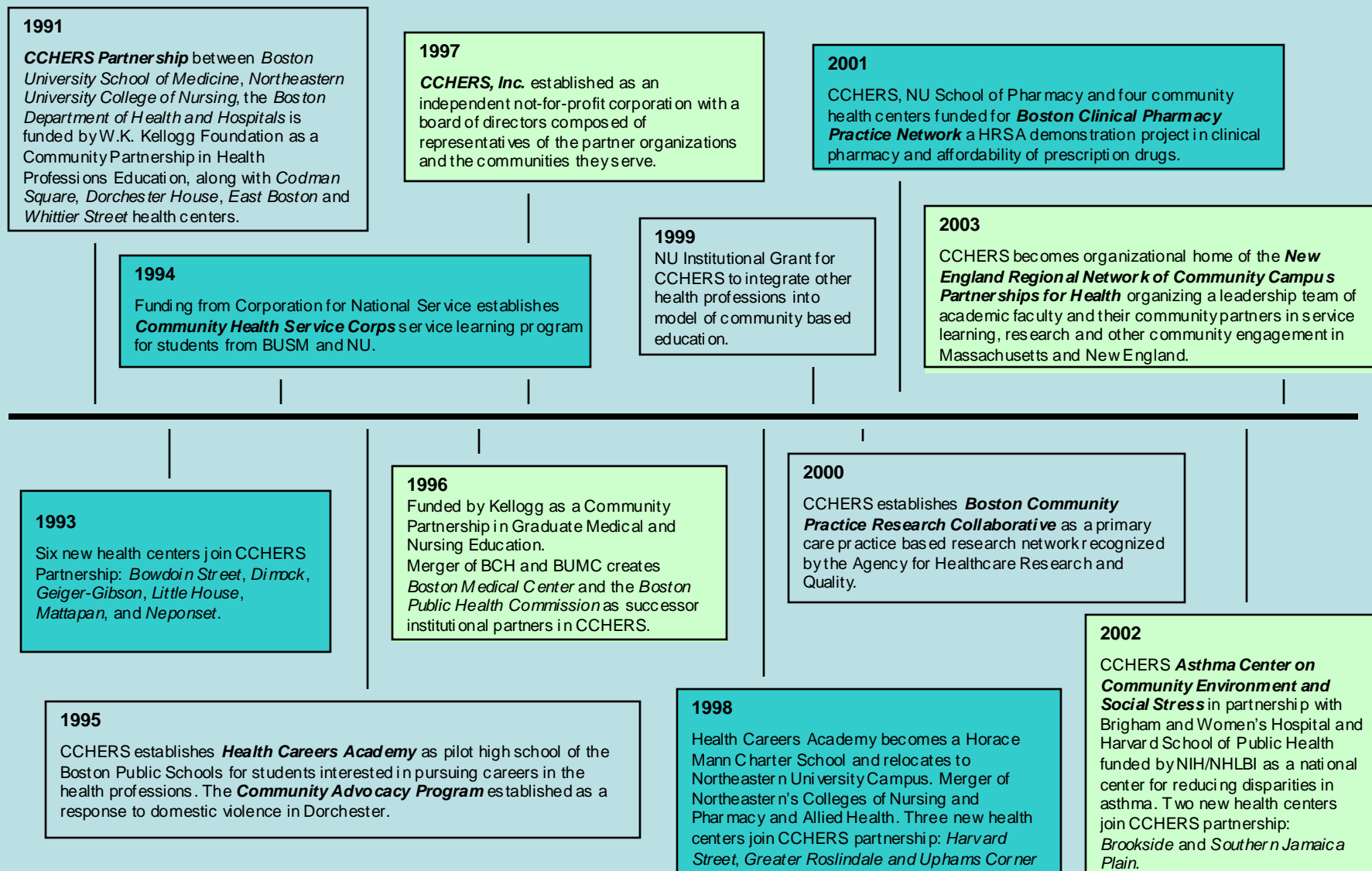
A photo documentary of health disparities in Roxbury

Elmer R. Freeman, MSW
Executive Director
Center for Community Health Education, Research and Service
American Public Health Association
Annual Meeting
Washington, DC
November 5, 2007

CCHERS Mission

The mission of CCHERS is to promote the development of “**academic community health centers**” that integrate service, education and research to influence and change health professions education, improve health care delivery, and promote health systems change, to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in health.

Organizational History and Development



Community Voices Program

Engage high school students interested in health to develop **photo essay documenting racial and ethnic health disparities** in the Roxbury neighborhood of Boston.

- Developed in partnership with
 - ACT (Arts, Culture, Trade) Roxbury
 - Health Careers Academy (HCa)
 - Boston Area Health Education Center (BAHEC)
- Funded in Fall 2006 by Johnson & Johnson and Society for the Arts in Healthcare
- Other funders

Program Goals

- Address and increase awareness of persistent racial and ethnic health disparities in target neighborhood.
- Encourage students of color to pursue careers in health professions and research.
- Further develop use of Photovoice in public health research, practice and policy.

Program Activities

- Classroom Experience
- Community Health Center Placements
- Photovoice Methodology

Classroom Experience

- Built upon HCa and BAHEC Health Disparities curriculum
- Students educated by fourteen experts
 - Health Disparities
 - Chronic Disease
 - Qualitative Research Methods
 - Photography
 - Creative Writing
 - Journalism and Interviewing
 - Community Advocacy



Community Health Center Placements



- Students placed at three Roxbury CHC
 - Dimock
 - Roxbury Comprehensive
 - Whittier Street
- Primary site of field work and other summer work experience
- Learned how CHC and health workers can reduce health disparities

Photovoice Methodology

Community-based participatory research method that combines **photography, writing and social action**

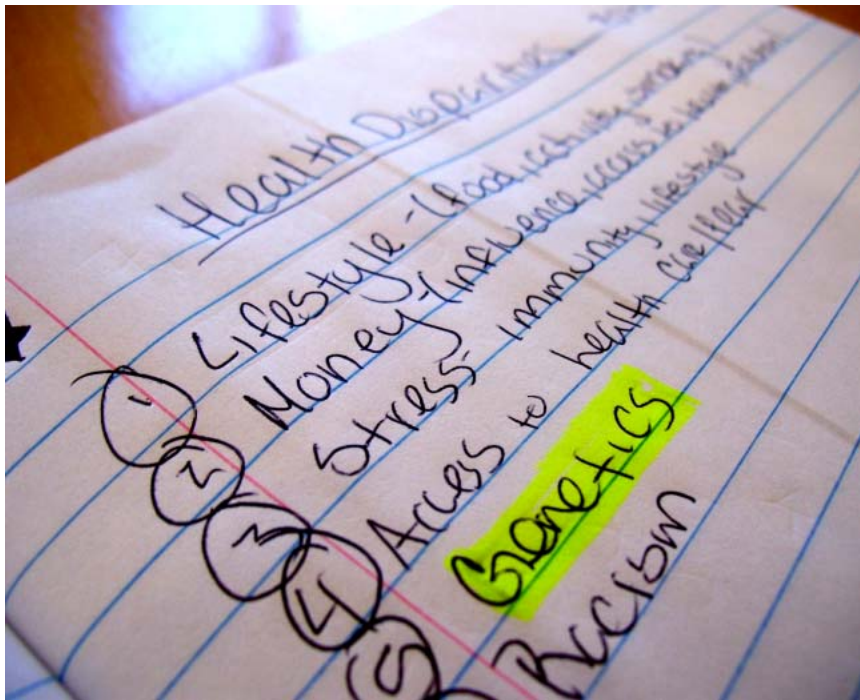
Three objectives

- o To enable students to record and reflect their community's strengths and health concerns
- o To promote critical dialogue and knowledge of health disparities through discussions of photographs
- o To reach community members, health care professionals and policy makers through public display



From www.photovoice.com

Outcomes: Health Disparities Awareness



- All students report:
 - Increased awareness of health disparities and chronic disease
 - Desire to continue with Community Voices program to educate community
- Photo essay booklet will be available in students' schools, participating CHCs and community centers

Outcomes: Pursuit of Health Careers

- All students report:
 - Increased understanding of role of healthcare workers and CHCs
 - Increased commitment to pursuing health careers
 - Increased commitment to ending health disparities



Outcomes: Photovoice in public health research, policy and practice



- Research during project
Develop and conduct community surveys, interviews, etc.
- Health policy advocacy
Statehouse Lobby Day for the Disparities Action Network
- Photo essay displays
For community members, healthcare workers, public health workers

Photos courtesy of Health Care for All

The Future of Community Voices

- **Expanding**
 - Develop year-round activities
 - Recruit more students and community partners
- **Developing**
 - Broaden scope of health topics
 - Increase potential for health reform advocacy



Contact Information

Elmer Freeman

Executive Director

CCHERS

617-373-5179

e.freeman@neu.edu

Katherine Rushfirth

Project Coordinator

CCHERS

617-373-5787

k.rushfirth@neu.edu

