Jim Bloyd, MPH, (Left above) was drawn to public health because of its foundation in social justice. His practice at the Cook County (Illinois, USA) Department of Public Health and dissertation research at the University of Illinois at Chicago focus on the social determinants of health inequities and policy change. Jim is active with the National Collaborative for Health Equity, Cook County Place Matters, and the Public Health Equity Cohort of Human Impact Partners.

Maxx Boykin (Center above) is the Community Organizer with AIDS Foundation of Chicago and a member of Black Youth Project 100 in Chicago, Illinois. Originally from the suburbs of Atlanta, Georgia, Maxx has organized for a wide range of issue-based, political and union organizing over the last few years in Georgia, Virginia and in the last year and a half in Illinois.

Rachel Rubin, MD, MPH, F.A.C.P. (Right above) is a practicing internist and occupational medicine physician. Currently she is a senior public health medical officer with the Cook County Department of Public Health with a faculty appointment at the UIC School of Public Health. Dr. Rubin trained at Cook County Hospital and has worked for the Cook County health system for most of her career. In addition, she worked in Mozambique for two years as a Public Health specialist and district medical chief.

**Forces of change:** environmental forces – factors, trends, or events, that are or will affect the community and the local public health system

**Social determinants of health:** resources necessary for social and physical environments for good health for all

Housing * Money * Wealth * Education * Transportation * Health Care * Community Design * Food & Agriculture * Social Services * Employment * Working Conditions * Social Inclusion vs. Exclusion * Public Safety * Daily Living Conditions

**Health:** a dynamic state of complete, physical, mental, spiritual, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO 1998)

**Health equity:** the realization by all people of the highest attainable level of health (Troutman)

**Questions to identify forces of change:**

- What has occurred recently that may affect our local public health system or community?  
  - What may occur in the future?  
  - What specific threats or opportunities are generated by these occurrences?
- What patterns of decisions, policies, investments, rules, and laws affect the health of our community?  
  - Who benefits from these patterns?  
  - Whom do these patterns harm?
- Who or what institutions have the power to create, enforce, implement, and change these decisions, policies, investments, rules, and laws?  
  - What interests support or oppose actions that contribute to health inequity?

**Figure:** A Forces of Change Assessment framework emphasizing the social determinants of health, and questions for focus groups.