

Healthy Sussex

COMING TOGETHER FOR A HEALTHY SUSSEX COUNTY

January 2021

Skating INTO THE NEW YEAR, BUT WE ARE NOT ON THIN ICE

Reflections COVID 2020? 2021 we must Sustain, Build and Grow?



When looking back at the past year in which our community and world had to shift extensively, it is easy to see what was taken away from us instead of the opportunities and the gifts that may have been given. It is easy to focus on the negative, given there has been so much hardship, loss, and uncertainty.

What I do know is that this has taught us very valuable lessons, facilitated improved community collaboration, and shined a light on areas that we have neglected to address for some time but knew existed.

What did it give us? In speaking to colleagues, friends, and family throughout the pandemic, we have learned three things we were already aware of, but perhaps took for granted: **people matter, relationships matter** and our **basic core values around family-community** should not be taken for granted. We need to champion seeking ways to solidify these lessons, lest we forget post COVID. We must seek to remember that quality time with your family and that moments, not money, create a life. Busy is not always better!

Let us Connect! Connectivity is key. Creating a level and equitable playing field for every Delaware resident is crucial and should not have waited until a pandemic was thrust upon us! In today's society, technology use is critical, however, not every resident has access. Because of this, significant gaps in education, health and quality of life were severely impacted for many of our community members.

Let us Communicate! Set up ways to see and hear what is going on in real time with clients, family,

and community. Creating pathways for the sharing of information is critical to everything we do. Designing clear systems and processes to ensure that information is released on time, with core information and allows for others to engage is key!

Let us Collaborate! Collaboration and non-profit community are critical. We must first meet the basics when an issue is complex. A large-scale need must involve networks of organizations and people working together with all resources brought to bare! We have already begun the hard work of putting critical community-based systems in place and now is a time to reflect on where we have come and where we have yet to go! Review what is working better, put in places strategies that facilitate continued progress, target areas that continue to emerge as a critical need, and foster aligned work, funds, and support to address them.

We have not solved our community's most pressing problems, but I can assure you we are able to see them more clearly. We have and are more likely to have improved systems in place to address them more quickly and effectively. We can continue to foster incremental approaches, changes, and resources to continue this work. In partnership, SCHC will play its role as a connector, foster collaboration, provide support and create opportunity for shared learning! Awareness, Access, Education and Support will be the lanes we serve. Let us know how we can serve you.

Peggy M. Geisler
Executive Director

PHILANTHROPY DELAWARE WELCOMES NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, TYNETTA BROWN



Tynetta Brown

Philanthropy Delaware is pleased to announce that Ms. Tynetta Brown has been hired to serve as CEO, effective November 9, 2020.

Ms. Brown will work to expand philanthropic awareness in

Delaware, assist members and other organizational partners to increase the impact of grantmaking, and ensure members have access to national best practices and philanthropic resources. She will be responsible for the day-to-day administration of the organization, including administrative responsibilities, member services, educational programming, and the implementation of the strategic plan.

“The Board of Directors is thrilled to welcome Tynetta at a crucial time when philanthropy must be at its best and when the organization is better poised than ever to address critical issues and policies that affect Delawareans,” said Board Chair, Vernita Dorsey. “She brings a fresh perspective to the work that we do and has the experience and capacity to lead the organization through the next phase of our 10-year strategic plan. Additionally, I’d like to

thank the search team led by Board Treasurer Regina Alonzo, the entire Board of Directors, and our dedicated staff for successfully managing operations during this interim period.”

Recently, Ms. Brown served as the Director of Development and Marketing/Communications for the WRK Group (The Warehouse, REACH Riverside Development Corporation and Kingswood Community Center). She was responsible for implementation and collaborative oversight of fundraising efforts and the marketing and communications efforts for all three entities.

“I look forward to continuing to leverage opportunities for our organization and members to connect with the members of SCHC. We are willing to roll up our sleeves and share the strategic focus of Philanthropy Delaware and explore how it aligns with meeting the needs and addressing the concerns of Sussex County.”



LITERACY DELAWARE

by Cynthia E. Shermeyer, Executive Director, Literacy Delaware



Cynthia E. Shermeyer

What is your favorite holiday memory from 2020? For eight-year-old Camilla, it was sitting with her mother and listening with delight as her mom read “’Twas the Night Before Christmas” in English.

For 38 years Literacy Delaware has worked tirelessly to empower adults like Camilla’s mom to reach their goals and improve their lives AND the lives of their families. For Camilla’s mom, her goal was reading this famous Christmas poem to her daughter. For other learners, it is filling out a job application in English to obtain employment or getting their driver’s license to expand their opportunities. Our services have helped many

adults in need reach their goals, yet there are still many in Delaware who face the challenge of low literacy.

Literacy in the 21st century involves more than just reading and writing. It is “the ability to read, write, and speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society, achieve one’s goals, and develop one’s knowledge and potential.”(National Coalition for Literacy) Proficiency in reading, writing, math and speaking English facilitates making informed choices, advocating for one’s needs, holding a living-wage job, improving health outcomes, and engaging as citizens. (ProLiteracy) Literacy impacts every societal problem: health, education, success, justice, housing, racism, poverty. Children whose parents have low literacy, have

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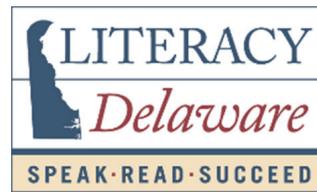
a 72% chance of having low literacy themselves. How is it possible that 130 million (54%) adults in the U.S. lack proficiency in reading, essentially reading below the 6th grade level? (<http://map.barbarabush.org/>).

Many residents right here in Sussex County face these same challenges. Over half (58%) lack proficiency in literacy while two-thirds (69%) lack basic numeracy skills. Our state feels the effects of lost tax revenue, increased healthcare costs, recidivism, and children not reading at grade level.

Literacy Delaware offers a path forward for these adults in need in Sussex County. We offer one to one individualized instruction by trained volunteer tutors. We pride ourselves on measuring outcomes and ensuring success, with over 90% of learner goals achieved each year.

We are excited to announce that we are expanding our reach and role throughout the state, especially in Sussex County. New community partnerships will generate an increase in services to adults and an increase in volunteer tutors. With our new strategic plan, newly expanded and committed board of directors, and the passion and dedication of staff and volunteers, we are poised to make an even greater difference in the lives Sussex County families.

Nelson Mandela once said, "Education is the greatest weapon we have to change the world". Join us -as a partner, donor, or volunteer-to help us change the lives of adults and families in need in Delaware one word at a time!



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE CENTER FOR DRUG AND HEALTH STUDIES

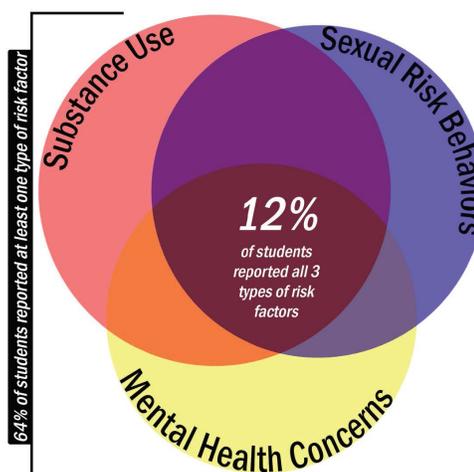
by M. J. Scales, Research Associate, University of Delaware Center for Drug and Health Studies

The State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW) is a network of statewide stakeholders that promotes the health of Delawareans through identification, collection, use, and dissemination of behavioral health data. The University of Delaware Center for Drug and Health Studies (CDHS) facilitates the SEOW and delivers on the mission by developing a wide range of data products including the annual Delaware Epidemiological Profile, hosting two network meetings per year, responding to data requests, and building stakeholder capacity through technical assistance.

An individual may face a circumstance that is brought about, or influenced by, several risk factors. For example, risk factors that can contribute to the development of lung cancer include environmental toxins, genetics or family history, smoking, and the combination of these factors. Equally as important when we consider a person's health is the intersection of all aspects of health – mental wellness, physical health, and health behaviors. As visualized in the diagram, 2017 Delaware Youth Risk Behavior Survey data was analyzed and found that:

- **41% of high school students reported past month substance use;**
- **32% of high school students reported past year mental health challenges; and**
- **37% of high school students reported engaging in a sexual risk behavior at least once in their lives (YRBS, 2019).**

Further review also found that 35% of students reported two of these risk factors and 12% of youth reported experiencing all three types of risk factors. While accumulated risks are challenging to address, they also highlight the importance of comprehensive screening,



programming, interventions, and partnerships across sectors. Examples of this can be seen in the offices of primary care doctors that use a universal depression screening tool or reproductive care providers that take the opportunity to discuss substance use with patients.

This diagram and other data products, such as interactive heat maps, can be found at <https://www.cdhs.udel.edu/seow/what-is-seow>.

DELAWARE TECH'S RAPID WORKFORCE TRAINING PREPARES DELAWAREANS FOR IMMEDIATE EMPLOYMENT



Phlebotomy students Rytasia Briddell and Angela Melo inspect the labeling and integrity of several phlebotomy tubes during one of Delaware Tech's Rapid Workforce Training and Redeployment Initiative courses.

On Aug. 3, 2020, Gov. John Carney signed Executive Order #43 (E043) creating the Rapid Workforce Training and Redeployment Initiative to assist Delaware workers and their families who have lost jobs and income due to the COVID-19 crisis. Delaware Technical Community College was awarded the statewide grant for free healthcare training and started classes in October 2020.

"It was important to the College to react to the governor's order quickly and provide the type of high-quality training many Delawareans and the workforce needed," said Paul Morris, associate vice president of Workforce Development and Community Education.

The initiative has provided certificate training for 370 Delawareans in the following 11 different short-term health care programs: certified nursing assistant, patient care technician, certified medical administrative assistant, hemodialysis technician, pharmacy technician, phlebotomy technician, dental assistant, medical assistant, medical insurance billing, ophthalmic assistant, and home health aide.

Delaware Tech offered seven of the programs statewide at the College's four campuses across the state. The College also worked with Polytech Adult Education in

Kent County and Sussex Tech Adult Education in Sussex County as subcontractors to offer the remaining four programs. All programs will be finished by the end of March 2021.

"All of our graduates from this initiative will be highly trained and skilled and prepared to enter the workforce immediately," Morris said. "We are actively connecting these individuals with local employers."

The Delaware Office of Work-Based Learning (DOWBL) is taking the lead on employer

engagement and helping facilitate job-placement for program graduates. Interested employers should fill out the Healthcare Employer Survey https://dtcc.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_clyHrtrwhevCoyp to help the DOWBL identify the greatest needs and connect program graduates with employers.

If you are an employer interested in more information, email Bryan Horsey, director of DOWBL, at bhorsey7@dtcc.edu or visit <https://deowbl.org>.



Delaware Tech -- the First State's only community college -- offers academic, technical, community education, and workforce development comprising more than 100 associate degree, diploma and certificate programs. The College is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Delaware Tech has four campuses across Delaware in Georgetown, Dover, Stanton and Wilmington. For more information about Delaware Tech, visit <https://www.dtcc.edu>.



Pete du Pont

Pete du Pont



Freedom Foundation



EQUITABLE ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEMS: **CREATING OPPORTUNITY DURING COVID-19**

by Stephen Sye, Executive Director, Pete Dupont Freedom Foundation

Former Delaware Governor Pete Du Pont's public life was spent pushing government to advance our economy. The Pete Du Pont Freedom Foundation honors Pete Du Pont's legacy of innovation and enterprise by fostering private sector economic growth. Each year, the Foundation holds the Reinventing Delaware event — which invites participants to propose a bold for-profit or nonprofit idea that creates jobs to make Delaware a better place to live, work and raise a family. Through Reinventing Delaware, the Foundation cultivates and facilitates a process to empower those who have a vision for the Delaware of tomorrow.

In 2020 as a direct response to the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on entrepreneurs and small business, the Pete du Pont Freedom Foundation created a new program; the Equitable Entrepreneurial Ecosystem (E3).

E3 complements the Foundation's Reinventing Delaware program by establishing teams of organizations willing to step up as ecosystem partners to support ideas from conception to launch and beyond.

The E3 program is designed to leverage the expertise and experience available in Delaware's private and public sectors to grow opportunities for businesses and related employment.

E3 ecosystems implement a process that continually feeds entrepreneurs into pipelines that provide access to

necessary resources and connections to accelerate the launch or growth of their businesses. The E3 network was developed to engage entrepreneurs at any stage! E3 will look at conceptual opportunities (ideas with potential that warrant additional research), development opportunities (ideas in place or where there is a strong market potential), existing business opportunities (where the initiative needs guidance to reach the next step), and expansion opportunities (where an existing initiative is ready to scale up) in order to help businesses at various stages.

The E3 initiative began with Wilmington as a pilot program. The three businesses chosen to receive full support from the Foundation include NerdiT Now, Kpelle Designs, and Spekcion Biosciences. This process is well underway and has begun looking for development opportunities in the landscape. Dover E3 is completing the scoping process for their chosen organizations, First State Hood & Duct and Before & After Thought Lifecoaching LLC. E3 Sussex is still looking for nominations of businesses with promising opportunity for economic growth.

If you know any entrepreneurs that may benefit from the support of the E3 program, would like to know more, or become a part of the E3 network, please feel free to contact Executive Director, Stephen Sye, at stephen@petedupontfreedomfoundation.org

TIDALHEALTH: AN UPDATE AND LOOK AHEAD

by Sharon R. Harrington, Director of Strategic Communications, TidalHealth Nanticoke



“At TidalHealth we are looking forward to a time when we can again meet with our community where they live and work,” said Penny Short, President of TidalHealth Nanticoke. “And, though 2020 has been a challenging year like no other, TidalHealth has much to be thankful for as we continue to expand access to care for EVERYONE across Delmarva.”

In case you missed it and were wondering who is TidalHealth, in 2020 the healthcare teams of Peninsula Regional Medical Center, Nanticoke Memorial Hospital and McCready Health came together to form a strong partnership, focused on people. “All that we do is centered on quality, service and community,” said Steven Leonard, President and CEO of TidalHealth. “Other larger systems may attempt to take care of the problem, but at TidalHealth we take care of the person.”

Alongside the integration of the two hospitals and many outpatient locations, healthcare providers from the Nanticoke Physician Network, the Peninsula Regional Medical Group also came together. This medical partners group has more than 30 primary and specialty care locations.

“Better together, this team has thrived during a year dominated by a global pandemic,” said Ms. Short. “We provided compassionate care; supporting families in a time when they could not always be with those they loved.

We celebrated victories and supported them as they grieved. Our team has endured a year of exhausting work, but has been there caring for our community every step of the way. And they will continue to be there for the health needs of this community.”

The TidalHealth team has worked hard to begin the first phases of system integration. At TidalHealth Nanticoke, management systems including information technology, employee management systems and others have been completed. Integration of the website, internal communication systems such as email, shared network drives and project management systems are well underway. All while maintaining quality, with the system receiving numerous quality and safety awards for services in both Seaford and Salisbury.

“While the community may not have had the opportunity to see all that happening, there has been a tremendous amount of work done,” said Mr. Leonard. “And we are excited to continue this journey and the many projects scheduled for 2021.”

At TidalHealth Nanticoke, plans are being made for expanding surgical services including investments in additional technology. Across the system, TidalHealth is welcoming additional specialty practices to its provider network, including in Seaford. TidalHealth has also purchased property and begun planning for an expanded location in Millsboro.

An exciting integration will be the conversion to the EPIC Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system across the entire health system in July 2021. For patients from TidalHealth Nanticoke, it means one health record regardless of where you received care at any TidalHealth location. It will also allow Delaware patients to use the EMR to schedule provider appointments.

Among other projects is a focus on health equity and the expansion of mobile health services in Sussex County. “Planning for the expansion of Population Health in Sussex is still in the early stages but I am thrilled that we are moving forward with this critical work in our community,” said Ms. Short. As a part of a Highmark grant already received, TidalHealth will be purchasing a second mobile to provide services in Sussex County.

“So much is ahead for us over the next several years that I couldn’t begin to cover it all here,” said Mr. Leonard. “What is important to share is that TidalHealth is committed to all those living on the Delmarva Peninsula — whether you live in Delaware, Maryland or Virginia — we are better together.”

MEET THE FUNDER VIRTUAL UPDATE



April Birmingham, Vice President and Charitable and Community Involvement Manager for M&T Bank

April serves as Vice President and Charitable and Community Involvement Manager for M&T Bank in the Delaware region. In this role, she manages the M&T Charitable Foundation function for our region, working closely with local nonprofits to understand the needs in the community and to connect employees to the community in impactful ways. April is a member of the board of Food Bank of Delaware and serves on

its Coalition to End Hunger. She also serves on the DCF Strategic Fund Council and Delaware Business Roundtable Education Committee.

The M&T Charitable Foundation strives to strengthen our communities by providing support for a diverse range of civic, cultural, health and human service organizations through grants, employee volunteerism and in-kind services.



SEAFORD COMMUNITY OF HOPE

by Kathryn Burritt

The Seaford Community of Hope project continues to make great strides in supporting the residents of Seaford and inspiring communities and similar initiatives across the state. We built this project on relationships and partnerships, existing to be a trusted support network with multifaceted ways to serve and support, and we intend to maintain this position as we enter 2021. Using strong partner linkages, like the ones we share with the Sussex County Health Coalition and First State Community Action Agency, as well as proven methodology and strategies, we have been awarded additional funding to strengthen our impact and wraparound service support to those in-need. We are thrilled with the receptivity and traction this project continues to gain and cannot wait to share more of our rollout plan soon.



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION'S WORKSITE WELLNESS INITIATIVE, **DELAWARE FIT BIZ**

Helps Delaware Worksites Improve Employee Health

by Nancy Mears, Extension Agent, University of Delaware

According to *Healthy People 2020*, most Americans do not eat a healthful diet and are not physically active at levels needed to maintain proper health. Across age and gender, American's average daily fruit and vegetable consumption does not meet intake recommendations. Compounding this is the fact that most adults (81.6%) do not get the recommended amount of physical activity.



The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recognizes that everyone has a role in helping support healthy eating patterns and physical activity in multiple settings nationwide, specifically where people live, learn, work, play, pray and shop. Policy, systems and environmental (PSE) change strategies can be implemented across a continuum and may be employed on a limited scale as part of a multi-level intervention through community and public health approaches.

Strategies are normally community-focused, population-based interventions aimed at preventing a disease or condition or limiting death or disability from a disease or condition. Using a three-tiered approach focusing on direct education, PSE change strategies and marketing/promotion, conditions are created where people are encouraged to act on their knowledge and awareness.

According to the CDC, more than 156 million full-time workers in the U.S. spend most of their daily waking hours in the workplace, making them an ideal location to implement supportive approaches for health and wellness.

Delaware Fit Biz (DFB) is a worksite PSE initiative, funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP, that implements PSE strategies in two worksites in Kent and Sussex Counties. Promoting health and wellness in the workplace can reduce absenteeism, lower health care costs, improve employee morale, reduce employee turnover and enhance employee recruitment.

Delaware Fit Biz is not just another worksite wellness program, but a menu of health behavior change strategies designed to create a culture of health. Through the implementation of policy, systems and environmental changes (PSEs), supported by technical assistance, marketing and coordinated educational programming, Delaware Fit Biz will ensure that the healthiest choice is the easiest choice for employees!

**MAKING SMALL CHANGES AT
THE WORKPLACE GREATLY
IMPROVE EMPLOYEE HEALTH**

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DELAWARE FIT BIZ STRATEGIES

After the initial assessment, Worksite Wellness Coordinators, with support from a Delaware Fit Biz Coach, will choose three PSE strategies to implement at their worksites:

- Worksite Wellness Committees
- Healthy & Productive Meetings
- Dining & Menu Guidelines for a Worksite Cafeterias
- Healthy Vending
- Hydration
- Farm to Work (using locally sourced foods in worksite cafeterias)
- Worksite Farmers' Markets (Video Example: <https://youtu.be/AQCjL2Agrfk>)
- Community Supported Agriculture Programs (CSAs)
- Worksite Community Gardens
- Breastfeeding-Friendly Worksites
- Physical Activity Integration & Clubs
- Tobacco Cessation
- Mental Wellness



For a short video about the Delaware Fit Biz program, please visit <https://youtu.be/nz1O357Os8I>. For more information about Delaware Fit Biz, please contact Nancy Mears, Extension Agent, University of Delaware, mears@udel.edu.

Please also follow the new Delaware Fit Biz Facebook group page, DE Fit Biz!



EXCELLENCE AWARD



Honoring **Megan McNamara Williams** for her service as the Sussex County Health Coalition Board President

Thank you for believing in our mission, offering invaluable leadership and support.

SCHC MISSION

The Sussex County Health Coalition exists to engage the entire community in collaborative family-focused effort to improve the health of children, youth and families in Sussex County.



SCHC VISION

We envision a community in which our citizens and institutions (public, private, and not-for-profit) are actively engaged in community health promotion as a shared community good, and working together to create a cultural and physical environment which supports healthy lifestyles for our children and their families.