



The **University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC)** is a leader in research, clinical practice, outreach, and teaching aimed at eliminating disparities in health, education, and economic opportunity. Community engagement is a centerpiece of UIC's urban mission, and the university has achieved national prominence in several areas through collaborations with diverse university-community partners. Health disparities, in areas such as **HIV/AIDS, women's health, and mental health**, as well as **violence prevention and treatment and educational access for underrepresented minorities**, have been a particular focus for UIC as Illinois's principal educator of health science professionals and as a major healthcare provider to underserved communities. **Some examples include:**

The Midwest Latino Health Research, Training and Policy Center (MLHRC) is a partnership of UIC's Jane Addams College of Social Work, the UIC College of Medicine's Hispanic Center of Excellence, and the UIC School of Public Health. MLHRC began with a minority research center on the Medical Treatment Effectiveness Program and has gone on to conduct studies on health and social disparities and developed policy and training programs. In 2007, it received funding from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as a national Center of Excellence in the Elimination of Health Disparities (CEED) with a focus on diabetes and cardiovascular disease among Latino and African American populations in Chicago. Also in the Jane Addams College, Gina Gaston, assistant professor of social work, is researching the influence of healthcare provider cultural competence on medication adherence among blacks, who account for half of the 1 million Americans infected with HIV. Binta Alleyne-Green, assistant professor of social work, is studying why young African American females contract HIV/AIDS at much higher rates than other groups.

The UIC Center for Population Health and Health Disparities, a collaboration of 21 investigators in 14 disciplines that is part of the UIC Institute for Health Research and Policy, is one of 10 sites across the country to receive funding from the NIH to study racial and ethnic disparities in health. The center is studying access to care and health disparities among underserved and minority women with breast cancer in Chicago. The institute is also home to the second CEED at UIC, this one focusing on health disparities in prostate and colorectal cancer, community-based breast cancer initiatives, an examination of local food environments and disparities in ovarian cancer survival, and training and educating the next generation of health disparities researchers.



Joe G. N. "Skip" Garcia, university vice president for health affairs

UIC's Institute on Disability and Human Development is the state's only university center of excellence in developmental disabilities education, research and service. The IDHD conducts research and disseminates information to investigators, government officials, businesses and service providers. It provides an array of clinical and community services, and – through UIC's Disability and Human Development department – service training and interdisciplinary degrees in disability studies. Institute activities emphasize cultural diversity, consumer choice, and self-determination throughout the lifespan.



Marian Fitzgibbon

Over the past decade, a team led by UIC researcher Marian Fitzgibbon developed an obesity intervention called "Hip-Hop to Health" that has been used in Head Start and Chicago Public School preschool programs and was found effective in reducing body mass index in 3- to 5-year-old minority, low-income children. The researchers will integrate obesity-prevention strategies into programs delivered to low-income families through the University of Illinois Extension Cook County, and Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program Education through a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The UIC Midwest Roybal Center for Health Promotion and Translation received a grant from the National Institute on Aging to improve the health of older underserved minority adults, particularly Latinos. One of 13 federally funded Edward R. Roybal Centers for Research on Applied Gerontology, the center creates health promotion programs to improve the functioning and quality of life of seniors.

UIC researchers are conducting a National Cancer Institute study of adult childhood cancer survivors to determine how health status, cultural and ethnic factors influence health behaviors. Little is known about the lifestyle behaviors of ethnic-minority adult survivors of childhood cancers.



Students from the Rural Medical Education program talk with rescuers after a mock accident on a dairy farm. Fire department volunteers helped free the "injured" farmer from under a tractor.



The UIC College of Medicine has many initiatives to address health disparities. The Urban Health Program seeks to recruit, retain, and graduate underrepresented racial/ethnic minority students, specifically African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans, for the health professions, with the goal of eliminating health disparities and advancing health equity. The Hispanic Center of Excellence in Medicine seeks to enrich the education of Latino medical students to produce culturally-competent physicians. The Rural Medical Education program at the Rockford regional campus seeks to recruit and prepare medical students who will practice in rural Illinois as primary care physicians. Humanitarian Projects in Senegal, Uganda, Haiti, Ethiopia, and Guatemala are all focused on improved access to healthcare.



Two programs within the UIC School of Public Health are aimed at increasing the representation of minorities within the health professions. The Bridges to Baccalaureate Initiative for Minority Students, funded by the NIH, is a partnership between the City Colleges of Chicago and the School of Public Health to increase the transfer of underrepresented minorities to behavioral and biomedical sciences at UIC. The Health Careers Opportunity Program, funded by HHS, is a collaboration with Chicago State University and 20 K-12 schools on the south and west sides of Chicago that targets disadvantaged students for careers in the health professions through a six-week intensive summer Public Health Institute and a 30-week Public Health Saturday College.

