**Public Health & Parks and Recreation Summit: For the Sake of Health**

**February 20, 2015**

**Speaker Biographies**

**Rose Chavez, MPH** holds a Master's in Public Health from the UNM School of Medicine. Currently she is serving the City and community of Arvada as the Healthy Places Initiative Coordinator.  The Healthy Places Initiative is a $1M, 3-year grant from the Colorado Health Foundation that aims to reduce obesity by fostering a [built environment](http://www.coloradohealth.org/landing.aspx?id=5782#builtenvironment) where it is easier, safer and more appealing to walk, play and engage in daily activities that encourage movement, connection and fun.  Her most recent past appointments include Healthy Kids, Healthy Community Coordinator for Denver Public Health, and Health Program Specialist for Jefferson County Public Health.  Rose is rewarded when her efforts result in increased health and economic equity, and is known as someone who is dedicated to the health, welfare and resilience of communities.

**Louise Chawla, PhD** is a Professor in the Environmental Design Program at the University of Colorado Boulder and an editor of the journal *Children, Youth and Environments*.  She has written widely on children and nature, children in cities, and the development of active care for the environment.  As an Executive Committee member of the Growing Up Boulder project, she works with an alliance of organizations that include CU, the City of Boulder, and Boulder Valley School District to integrate child and youth voices into the city’s planning processes.

**Margaret M. DeKoven** is a Physician Assistant for Kaiser Permanente in Lakewood where she has worked since 1983.  She is also an Associate Clinical Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Colorado School of Medicine.  Margaret holds a Master's of Science in Pediatrics from the University of Colorado School of Medicine and a degree in Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology from the University of Colorado Boulder. Her interests include connecting children and families to nature, physical and mental health benefits of nature, and school/community gardens.

**Andrew Freeman MD, FACC, FACP** joined National Jewish Health in Denver, CO after completing his training in Philadelphia at Temple University. Prior to that, he completed his internal medicine training at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. He completed medical school at SUNY Buffalo after graduating summe cum laude from Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. He is board certified in internal medicine, cardiovascular disease, nuclear cardiology, cardiac CT, and echocardiography. His clinical and research interests are in imaging heart disease, women's health, cardiac sarcoidosis, and nutrition. Dr. Freeman also hosts a monthly Walk with a Doc program <http://www.njhealth.org/walkwithadoc> in the Denver area where he volunteers his time to walk with patients on a Saturday morning to teach key health concepts, but also to explore using exercise as medicine for the greater good of the public. At National Jewish Health, Dr. Freeman serves as the director of clinical cardiology and operations. Finally, Dr. Freeman holds some key leadership positions in the Colorado chapter of the American College of Cardiology as well as at the national level. He has published scholarly manuscripts on patient-centered care, plant-based diets, and cardiac sarcoidosis. An avid teacher and educator, Dr. Freeman teaches medical and pharmacy students regularly, and has hosted many community lectures and CME programs. Finally, Dr. Freeman's dedication to the care of this with less resources is made evident by regular participation in the local MCPN Free Community Cardiology clinic.

<http://www.nationaljewish.org/Providers/Physicians/Andrew-M-Freeman>

**Heidi Fritz** is a Registered Dietitian at Tri-County Health Department.  She has worked with the WIC program, serving low-income Women, Infants, and Children, and is the former director of Tri-County’s accredited dietetic internship program.  In her new role as Community Nutrition Manager, she coordinates healthy eating/active living efforts at Tri-County and works with community partners to prevent obesity and chronic disease.

**Maripat Gallas, B.S., Therapeutic Recreation,** has over 30 years of community-based experience in developing adult programs in Wellness, Leisure Education and Community Services. She has worked on numerous community collaborations to design sustainable partnerships that focus on quality of life in the community. Currently, as the Director of Implementation at COAW, her focus is on evidence-based programs that bridge clinic to community and she enjoys sharing her passion with audiences both small and large.

**Barbara Joyce, PhD, RN, CNS** role models the practice of community/public health nursing in nursing academia as evidenced by collaboration and teamwork for development of successful partnerships. Her teaching team, represented by joint appointments and contractual agreements, work collaboratively to plan service-learning experiences that reflect community needs and influence community change. As recipient of a National Leadership Academy for Public Health Award she has worked collaboratively to form the Colorado Community Center Collaborative to bridge parks/recreation and public health. She serves on the Public Health Nursing Practice Council of the Public Health Nurse Association of Colorado and as a member of the Board of Directors of the Association of Community Health Nurse Educators. Her role as an international consultant with the Universidad of Juarez has provided opportunities for influencing international nursing educational outcomes.

**Brian Kates** serves as a Parks Operations Administrator for the City of Colorado Springs and has served as director of Meadows Park Community Center since 1998. Efforts including the establishment of a community garden, incorporation of 5210 Let’s Go! and OrganWise Guys evidence-based curricula within programs and services offered to center customers and support from local and national academic and health-based organizations has helped to showcase the direct benefits of Parks and Recreation services on the health and well-being of underserved populations.

**Jill Litt, PhD** is an Associate Professor of Environmental Health at the Colorado School of Public Health (CSPH) and the Environmental Studies Program at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Dr. Litt received her PhD in environmental health and public policy from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She has experience in the area of urban environmental health working over the past decade in the neighborhoods of Baltimore, Philadelphia, Boston and Denver on a variety of issues related to the built environment and health including urban brownfields cleanup and redevelopment, lead poisoning, residential demolition, environmental justice, chemical risk assessment, and most recently, housing, community gardens, and local food systems. As an interdisciplinary researcher, Dr. Litt utilizes the methods of community-based participatory research, epidemiology, risk assessment, and ethnography to study the relationships between residential environments and health. She has served as the principal investigator for several federally-funded grants including a CDC-funded K01 award on community design and health; a HUD-funded healthy homes technical study to evaluate environmental health and injury risk among monolingual Spanish-speaking families in Commerce City, Colorado; and a CDC-funded national study of community-based collaboratives’ effectiveness to promote active living. Dr. Litt is currently the Concentration Director for Master’s in Public Health and the Doctor of Public Health programs in Environmental Health at the CSPH. She is active in the American Public Health Association and will serve as a Governing Councilor for the Environment Section beginning in 2015. She also a member of the Denver Urban Gardens Board of Directors and the Governor’s Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council.

**Sheila Lynch, MCP, AICP** is the Land Use Program Coordinator for Tri-County Health Department (TCHD) where she leads the department’s efforts to promote policy change in local communities related to healthy eating and active living. Sheila began her career as a community organizer learning the fundamentals of community engagement. After completing her masters of City Planning degree at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, Sheila applied her community organizing roots and planning education developing neighborhood plans and small area plans in Minneapolis and St. Paul. She gained valuable knowledge of the development process as a development review planner at the City of Lakewood working with property owners and developers on complex land use applications including transit-oriented projects and brownfield redevelopment. In her current position, Sheila manages a program within the local health department that is bringing Health Impact Assessment to local land use and transportation planning processes.

**Emily Patterson** is the Parks for People Program Manager in the Colorado office of The Trust for Public Land.  She leads the organization’s community outreach, planning, design, and construction of parks in Colorado including the creation of new parks and the renovation of existing parks in underserved lower income neighborhoods in Metro Denver.  Emily came to The Trust for Public Land in 2012 after ten year of practice in the private sector working for local landscape architecture firms that specialized in park, trail, and recreation planning. Ms. Patterson earned a Master’s Degree in Landscape Architecture from the University of Georgia. She resides in Longmont, Colorado where she is the Vice Chair of Longmont’s Art in Public Places Commission.