

MCGW ENGAGE

Connecting and Collaborating for Community Health

9th Annual Community Engagement Spring Conference

May 7, 2026

Milwaukee County War Memorial Center, Milwaukee





Welcome to MCW Engage 2026!

Welcome to the 9th Annual Community Engagement Conference. We are honored to have you join us for a day centered on this year's theme, Connecting and Collaborating for Community Health. This annual gathering convenes community engagement practitioners who share a commitment to strengthening the relationships that are essential to improving health and well-being.



Throughout the conference, we invite you to deepen your understanding of community engagement, its definition, and reflecting on how it shows up in your own work. During the day you will be able to apply and evaluate key principles of community engagement across diverse settings and encouraged to build and strengthen connections with each other.

We are grateful to have a wide array of speakers and attendees who will bring unique perspectives and insights to community-engaged practices. We hope the sessions inspire you to connect and collaborate as an opportunity to enhance your own work.

Thank you for being here and for your commitment to building stronger, healthier, and more connected communities.

In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Staci Young".

Staci Young, PhD

Senior Associate Dean for Community Engagement
Director, Office of Community Engagement
Professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine
Inaugural Faculty Director, ThriveOn Collaboration
Associate Director, Community Outreach and Engagement, Cancer Center
Director Emerita, Center for Healthy Communities and Research
Medical College of Wisconsin



8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

Registration and Light Breakfast by Antigua

Enjoy a light complimentary breakfast and meet other attendees.

9:00 a.m. - 9:05 a.m.

General Welcome

Yesica Desarden

Program Coordinator III, Office of Community Engagement, MCW

9:05 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.

Welcome to the Milwaukee County War Memorial Center

Brian Winski

Executive Director, Milwaukee County War Memorial Center

Otis Winstead

Executive Director, Dryhootch

9:15 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

Community Engagement: Setting the Context

Staci Young, PhD

Senior Associate Dean for Community Engagement; Professor, Family and Community Medicine, MCW

9:30 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

Morning Keynote: Leading with Character in Turbulent Times

Cheryl Maurana, PhD

Provost; Professor, Bioethics and Medical Humanities; Senior Vice President for Strategic Academic Partnerships, MCW

10:15 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.

Panel: The Evolution of Partnership: From Initiation to Impact

This panel will explore how meaningful partnerships grow from initial connection to sustained, impactful collaboration. Featuring insights from collaborations with Special Olympics Wisconsin and the Great Lakes Native American Research Center for Health, panelists will reflect on the opportunities and challenges that shape partnerships over time.

Great Lakes Native American Research Center for Health

Brooks Boyd Sr., *Chairman, Forest County Potawatomi*

Brian Jackson, MS, EdD, *Assistant Professor, Institute for Health & Humanity, MCW*

Special Olympics Wisconsin Partnership

Brittany Hoegh, *Senior Director of Health Programs, Special Olympics Wisconsin*

Corina Norrbom, MD, *Associate Professor, MCW-Central Wisconsin*

Brittany Wilson, *Athlete Leader, Special Olympics Wisconsin*

Moderator: Toni Whitaker, *Program Manager, Radiology, MCW*

11:15 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

Networking Session

During this fun and flexible networking session, participants will make connections across the community, clinical, and academic spaces. This is a space to be curious while seeking conversations, learn who is in the room and what matters to them.

Facilitator: Laila Azam, PhD

Research Scientist II, Emergency Medicine, MCW

11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

- **Lunch by Antigua**
- **12:30 p.m.: Introduction of Pathfinders, 2026 Donation Drive partner**
 - Jessica Burch, *Volunteer and Community Engagement Manager, Pathfinders*

12:45 p.m. - 12:50 p.m.

Transition Time

12:50 p.m. - 1:35 p.m.

Afternoon Keynote: Belonging: Creating Spaces Where Community and Institutions Come Together

Tatiana Maida

Founder, Rising in Community

1:35 p.m. - 1:40 p.m.

Transition Time

1:40 p.m. - 2:35 p.m.

Concurrent Breakout Sessions

SESSION 1: Introduction to Deliberation as a Community Engagement Tool (Memorial Hall)

Eric R. Giordano, PhD

Executive Director, Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service

During this workshop, individuals will be introduced to deliberative dialogue, a nationally recognized best practice for engaging people in healthy conversations around complex issues. Deliberation allows participants to surface different perspectives, work toward a shared understanding of values, and seek common ground where possible. Audience members will participate in an abbreviated demonstration of a deliberative dialogue, facilitated by the Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service (WIPPS) with support from a Wisconsin-based network of trained moderators.

SESSION 2: Community of Practice: A Tool for Transformative Change (Rm. 415)

Ann McCullough, MA

Program Manager, Comprehensive Injury Center, MCW

Gary Zajc

Statewide Project Director, Alma Center

This interactive session will increase awareness of communities of practice as a tool for transformative change through interactive facilitation of evidence informed content and experiential activity. Drawing on lessons from the Wisconsin Community Safety Fund, at the end of the session participants will have a clear understanding of:

- The term “community of practice” and how it relates to community engagement.
- Key components and tools for facilitating an effective community of practice.
- Common outcomes that can occur because of participating in a community of practice.
- How communities of practice pertain to transformative change.

SESSION 3: Social Connection: Addressing the Epidemic of Social Isolation & Loneliness in Wisconsin (Rm. 413)

Jill Renken, MPH, CHES

Executive Director, Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging

During this roundtable discussion, participants will explore the role of social belonging in community health and community engagement. Participants will discuss strategies for encouraging participation in community programs and building trust and how to create environments where individuals feel valued and connected.

2:35 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

Transition Time

2:45 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.

Interactive World Café Session

Moderator: Debra Nevels, MSHCM

Program Director, Community Outreach and Engagement, Cancer Center, MCW

Café Topics:

- Community Health Workers
- Community-Based Clinical Care
- Working with local health departments
- Rural Health Needs
- Philanthropy and Health
- Translational Research and Policy

(continued on next page)

- Veteran Health Needs
- Community Health Assessment
- Open discussion-led by OCE faculty
- Mechanisms for community-academic exchanges of info and input

This World Café session invites participants into facilitated, small-group conversations designed to spark shared learning and cross-sector collaboration across key areas of community and population health. Guided by five core questions, these conversations will aim to surface practical insights, strengthen relationships, and identify actionable strategies for advancing equitable community health partnerships.

3:45 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Closing Remarks

Sarah O'Connor, MS

Program Director, Office of Community Engagement, MCW

Sherill Knezel

Founder, Meaningful Marks



WELCOME TO THE MILWAUKEE COUNTY WAR MEMORIAL CENTER!

Please connect with conference staff for help with wayfinding or for any individual needs.



Restrooms - A family restroom is located on the 1st floor near the elevator. Additional restrooms are available on the 3rd and 4th floors. A water fountain is located on the 1st and 3rd floor.



Self Guided Tour - Registered conference guests may enjoy a self-guided tour of the building. Simply scan the QR code on the 1st floor to begin the full tour, or scan the QR codes on the 3rd and 4th floors for tours specific to those areas.



*Network: WMC Guest
No access code needed.*





KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Cheryl Maurana, PhD

*Provost and Senior Vice President for Strategic Academic Partnerships,
Medical College of Wisconsin*

Dr. Maurana serves as MCW's Provost, Stephen and Shelagh Roell Endowed Chair, Professor of Bioethics and Medical Humanities, and Senior Vice President for Strategic Academic Partnerships responsible for expanding inter-institutional academic efforts. She provided collaborative leadership for the development of MCW's Green Bay and Central Wisconsin medical education campuses and creation of the School of Pharmacy.

She is known for her strategic and innovative thinking, her work in building community-academic partnerships and her commitment to women's leadership. She served as the Senior Associate Dean and Founding Director of Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment for its first twenty years and is currently its Interim Executive Director.

Dr. Maurana is also Founding Director of the Kern National Network for Flourishing in Medicine (KNN) created as part of a generous gift from the Kern family and Kern Family Foundation. As a national movement, the KNN focuses on integrating four foundational elements within the profession of medicine: caring, character, practical wisdom and human flourishing.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Tatiana Maida

*Founder and Principal Consultant,
Rising in Community*



Tatiana Maida, founder of Rising in Community, is a public health leader with over 20 years of experience advancing equity, community leadership and systems change. Rising in Community is a consulting practice committed to centering lived experience, shared power, collective healing and long-term transformation.

Tatiana has worked with local, statewide and national initiatives, including Community Initiatives, healthTIDE, Share Collaborative and Sixteenth Street Community Health Centers.

Throughout her career, she has advocated for community voice in decision-making, authentic partnerships between institutions and communities, and root-level solutions that create the conditions where people can truly belong and thrive.

Born and raised in Bolivia, Tatiana began her career supporting leadership development with Indigenous communities in rural areas before moving to the United States in 2002.

**Brooks Boyd Sr., Chairman, Executive Council,
Forest County Potawatomi**

Chairman Brooks Boyd brings a deep-rooted commitment to service, culture, and community to his leadership. Before being elected as Chairman, he served for ten years on the Executive Council of the Forest County Potawatomi Community, following years of work across multiple areas of tribal government. His path reflects a steady progression of experience, dedication, and a genuine commitment to serving his people at every level. Chairman Boyd draws daily inspiration from

his family. His leadership is grounded not only in policy and governance, but in the lived experiences of family, community, and cultural responsibility. Chairman Boyd leads with purpose and perspective; guided by tradition, shaped by experience, and committed to ensuring that the Forest County Potawatomi Community continues to thrive for generations to come.

Session: The Evolution of Partnership: From Initiation to Impact (Panelist)



**Eric R. Giordano, PhD, Executive Director,
Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service**

Dr. Eric Giordano, is the founding executive director for the Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service (WIPPS) and an associate professor of political science at UW-Stevens Point. He has over 25 years of experience as a researcher, project manager, and consultant for nonprofit, government and business organizations. He specializes in survey and focus group research, design and analysis; strategic and

action planning; dialogue and deliberation training and facilitation; community development and public engagement research; and conflict management processes.

Session: Introduction to Deliberation as a Community Engagement Tool

**Brittany Hoegh, Senior Director of Health Programs,
Special Olympics Wisconsin**

Brittany Hoegh is the Senior Director of Health Programs at the Special Olympics Wisconsin (SOWI), where she oversees all health and fitness programming statewide, including leading the health team, grant management, and strategic planning. After graduating from the University of Wisconsin – Madison in 2013 with a degree in Kinesiology, Brittany’s passion for sports and working with people with disabilities led her to an internship with Special Olympics Wisconsin (SOWI). Shortly after, her career with SOWI began. Brittany’s passion has moved beyond sports to the



important work of health equity for all, especially for those with intellectual disabilities.

Session: *The Evolution of Partnership: From Initiation to Impact* (Panelist)



**Brian Jackson, EdD, MSED, Assistant Professor,
Family and Community Medicine, MCW**

Dr. Brian Jackson, an Assistant Professor at the MCW, has dedicated his career to advancing culturally grounded community engagement across Tribal Nations. His work centers on strengthening relationships between Indigenous communities, public health systems, and educational institutions through the integration of Indigenous knowledge systems and evidence-based practices. As a Master Trainer of the Lac Du Flambeau Family Circles model and Tribal Legacy Theory, Dr. Jackson advances a holistic approach to prevention, leadership, and wellness rooted in culture, identity, and belonging. He has led impactful collaborations with tribal communities to improve health outcomes, build local capacity, and elevate Indigenous evaluation frameworks aligned with sovereignty and data governance. His leadership reflects a deep commitment to community-driven solutions, honoring Indigenous ways of knowing while bridging academic and community systems to create sustainable, intergenerational impact.

Session: *The Evolution of Partnership: From Initiation to Impact* (Panelist)

Ann McCullough, MA

Program Manager, Comprehensive Injury Center, MCW

Ann McCullough (McKaig) serves as the Statewide Community Safety Program Manager for the Division of Community Safety at the Medical College of Wisconsin Comprehensive Injury Center. Her focus has been implementation of the first statewide funding program focusing on violence prevention using a public health approach. This \$10M portfolio of investments increased awareness, capacity, and coordination, laying the groundwork for the first Wisconsin State Office of Violence Prevention. Ann has more than 30 years of experience facilitating community-centered policy change, collective impact projects, and individual growth with diverse clients and groups.



Session: Community of Practice: A Tool for Transformative Change



Corina Norrbom, MD, Associate Professor, MCW-Central Wisconsin

Dr Norrbom is an Associate Professor at Medical College of Wisconsin-Central Wisconsin and a Health Policy Fellow at the Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service. She is a family physician, and she has led local and statewide projects to advance health equity. She has mentored over 125 medical students in community-engaged scholarly projects. Dr Norrbom sees patients at the Wausau Free Clinic and provides medical direction for the H2N network of community health workers.

Session: The Evolution of Partnership: From Initiation to Impact (Panelist)

Jill Renken, MPH, CHES

Executive Director, Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging

Jill Renken, Executive Director for the Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA), collaboratively supports and guides WIHA in its mission to improve the health and well-being of all people as we age. Jill has a bachelor's degree in Health Promotion & Wellness and Master of Public Health degree. She is also a Certified Health Education Specialist. Jill has done health education work in the university, healthcare, and worksite employee wellness setting, with most experience in community wellness



programs. Over the past 19 years, she has worked within Wisconsin's Aging Network to oversee statewide implementation of healthy aging programs and initiatives, including the research and development of evidence-based programs that improve the health and quality of life of older adults in Wisconsin and Nationwide.

Session: Social Connection: Addressing the Epidemic of Social Isolation & Loneliness in Wisconsin

Toni Whitaker, Program Manager, Radiology, MCW

Toni Whitaker brings extensive expertise as a mental health first aid instructor and restorative justice practitioner. She is a passionate curator of learning and growth experiences that provoke deep thought and meaningful engagement. An award-winning advocate for inclusive community-building and leadership growth, Toni is dedicated to fostering understanding, healing, and authentic connection in every space she enters. As a mother of two, she balances her professional work with personal joys, savoring culinary adventures from around the world



cherishing the serenity of the ocean, and indulging in a well-made documentary. Though introverted by nature, Toni's quiet strength and thoughtful approach continue to make a lasting impact on the communities she serves.

Session: The Evolution of Partnership: From Initiation to Impact (Moderator)



Brittany Wilson, Athlete Leader, Special Olympics Wisconsin

Brittany Wilson is a passionate leader with Special Olympics Wisconsin where she proudly wears many hats. For the past nine years, she has been a dedicated athlete and Athlete Leader for the past 8. Both of these roles reflect her great commitment to the organization. Through her church involvement, Brttany brings a heartfelt and personal approach to leadership. She participates in basketball, track and field, bowling, and flag football, her favorite sport. Brittany believes in celebrating every step of the journey and lives by a powerful philosophy: the moment athletes arrive at a tournament, they've already won.

Session: *The Evolution of Partnership: From Initiation to Impact (Panelist)*



Staci Young, PhD, Senior Associate Dean for Community Engagement; Professor, Family and Community Medicine, MCW

Staci Young, PhD, is the Senior Associate Dean for Community Engagement and Director of the Office of Community Engagement at MCW. She is also a Professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine, the Inaugural Faculty Director for the ThriveOn Collaboration, the Associate Director for Community Outreach and Engagement for the MCW Cancer Center, and the Director Emerita of the Center for Healthy Communities

and Research. She actively teaches and mentors students and serves as a research faculty advisor for the Saturday Clinic for the Uninsured. As a medical sociologist, her work and scholarship demonstrate a deep commitment to examining structural conditions that contribute to health outcomes.

Session: *Community Engagement: Setting the Context*

Gary Zajc

Statewide Project Director, Alma Center

Gary Zajc is a strategic executive leader specializing in "Systems-to-Soul" leadership, a model that integrates rigorous operational discipline with trauma-informed, healing-centered organizational transformation. Currently serving as the Statewide Program Director for the Alma Center's "Breaking the Cycle" initiative, Gary is supporting the evolution of domestic violence intervention by replacing punitive carceral models with restorative,

evidence-based healing frameworks. With over 25 years of experience—ranging from technical leadership at Time Warner Cable to DEI and workforce innovation at Hunger Task Force—he is a renowned advocate who educates judicial and legislative bodies on the neurobiological impacts of trauma and systemic re-education. Through his leadership at the Alma Center, Gary remains a dedicated architect of workplace cultures rooted in compassionate accountability, systemic growth, and the pursuit of whole-story narratives that foster lasting community healing.

Session: Community of Practice: A Tool for Transformative Change



Community Engagement

RECOGNITION

CARNEGIE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CLASSIFICATION

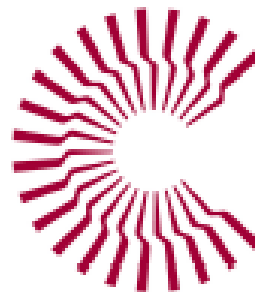
MCW is proud to announce it has received the 2026 Carnegie Community Engagement (CE) Classification, a designation awarded by the American Council on Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching to acknowledge an institution's commitment to community engagement. MCW originally received the Carnegie CE Classification in 2015 and is currently one of only seven institutions nationwide to receive this prestigious honor specifically as an academic medical institution.



RICHARD GUARASCI AWARD FOR INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION

The Richard Guarasci Award for Institutional Transformation recognizes institutions that have successfully implemented institution-wide efforts to address issues of public concern by aligning teaching, research, practice, and values in service of the common good.

As a national leader in community engagement, the Medical College of Wisconsin was recognized for this award in 2021 for integrating engagement into research, education, and clinical care with the goal of advancing health policy and advocacy and addressing the social determinants of health. "Through initiatives like [Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin endowment] and its extended community-engaged research, the Medical College of Wisconsin demonstrates a deep strategic commitment to community, embracing its responsibility as a place-based institution to address diverse health needs throughout Wisconsin."



Campus Compact

2026 CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE



Andy Dresang, MBA

*Executive Director for Community Engagement
Froedtert ThedaCare*



Tony Garcia, MS

*Program Director II
Office of Workforce Engagement, MCW*



Jennifer Harris, M.Ed

*Deputy Director
Comprehensive Injury Center, MCW*



Marques Hogans

*Health Strategy Director
Milwaukee Health Department*



Debra Nevels, MSHCM

*Program Director
MCW Cancer Center*



Corina Norrbom, MD

*Associate Professor
MCW - Central Wisconsin*



Deja Imani, MUP

*Portfolio Manager - Health Equity
Greater Milwaukee Foundation*



Yingyakia Vang, BS

*Hmong CHW Team Coordinator
Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service*



Otis Winstead

*President/CEO
Dryhootch*



Chrystal Woller, BSN, RN, MBA

*Health Officer/Director
City of De Pere Health Department*

THANK YOU!

MCW's Office of Community Engagement team thanks you for joining us today!

Staci Young, PhD

Senior Associate Dean for Community Engagement and Professor

Laila Azam, PhD, MBA

Research Scientist II

Rebecca Bernstein, MD, MS

Associate Professor

Kristine Burke, MPH, MSW

Program Coordinator III

Yesica Desarden

Program Coordinator III

Zeno Franco, PhD

Associate Professor

Ayodele Idowu, MBA

Business Operations Coordinator

Jai Lor

Administrative Associate

David Nelson, PhD, MS

Professor

Corina Norrbom, MD

Associate Professor

Sarah O'Connor, MS

Program Director I

Kelsey Potratz

Program Coordinator III

Leslie Ruffalo, PhD, MS

Associate Professor

Christopher Simenz, PhD, MS

Associate Professor

2026 PRESIDENT'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AWARD

The President's Community Engagement Award annually recognizes exemplary community-academic partnerships, community-engaged research and community outreach activities of faculty, staff, students and community partners of MCW.

Join us in congratulating this year's recipients!

COMMUNITY PARTNER AND PROGRAM

Darryl Davidson, MS, CPM

City of Milwaukee

Joshua Liston-Zawadi, CHW, Doula

Life Redefined MKE

MCW STUDENT

Adileen Sii

Medical Student, Class of 2027, MCW-Milwaukee

MCW STAFF TEAM

Ricardo Aguilar, MEd

Zandra Clevert

Crystal Jushka, MEd

Jean Mallett, DrPH, MBA

Office of Academic Pathways, MCW

MCW FACULTY

Brian Jackson, EdD, MEd

Institute for Health & Humanity, MCW

MCW Community Engagement

DONATION DRIVE

The Office of Community Engagement is collecting items needed for Pathfinders, a non-profit community organization serving youth in crisis in the Greater Milwaukee Area.



How to donate:

- **May 4 - May 29:** Drop off your donation to boxes at the MCW-Milwaukee campus or ThriveOn King.
- **May 8:** Bring your donation to the President's Community Engagement Award Luncheon at the MCW-Milwaukee campus (event registration is required).
- **Throughout May:** Purchase items from the Amazon Wishlist.

Needed Items:

- **New underwear (all sizes and styles)**
- **New bras (all sizes and styles)**
- **Shampoo and conditioner for textured hair**
- **Phone chargers (USB Type C/iPhone)**



Scan or tap the QR code to donate
via Amazon Wishlist



Questions? Contact Jai Lor in the MCW Office of Community Engagement
jlor@mcw.edu | 414-955-4434

2025 Community Engagement Donation Drive Recipient



pathfinders

Serving Milwaukee youth since 1970

Ensuring all youth are safe, healthy, independent and valued.

Working alongside youth, families, and community partners across the Greater Milwaukee Area, Pathfinders supports individuals experiencing homelessness, housing instability, crisis, and trauma through a connected continuum of care, from ages 11 - 25.

Programs & Services

Drop-In Center

Housing & Shelter

Street Outreach

Clinical Services

**Anti-Sexual Violence
Services**



info@pathfindersmke.org



www.facebook.com/pathfindersmke

MCW Community Engagement

ENGAGEMENT HUB

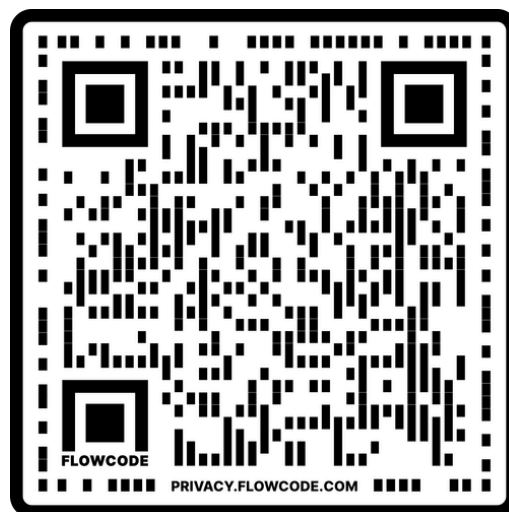
The Office of Community Engagement launched the ‘Engagement Hub’ on GivePulse, Inc.—a platform connecting MCW with community volunteer opportunities!

MCW faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to join the platform—steps are outlined below and it takes just a few minutes:

- Click “Join” or “Log In” and sign in via MCW OneLogin
- Click on your name in upper right corner to edit your profile
- Update your basic information and add a profile photo

MCW community partners and other community-based organizations interested in posting volunteer opportunities on the Engagement Hub are encouraged to sign up for a free basic account!

Scan or tap the QR code to get started!



Interested in learning more or have questions?
Contact Kelsey Potratz at kpotratz@mcw.edu!

CONNECT WITH US



Scan or tap below to join our mailing list, learn about our programming, common community engagement terms and principles, and explore other valuable resources:

www.mcw.edu/departments/community-engagement

or

email us at communityengagement@mcw.edu