

**Collaborative on Health and the Environment-Washington (CHE-WA)  
Environmental Justice Working Group Meeting  
March 9, 2006  
NOTES**

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, April 12 from 11:00- a.m. -12:30 p.m. at the EPA Region 10 office in Seattle (calling in will be an option for those who cannot attend in person)

**Participants:**

- Chetana Acharya, UW School of Ecogenetics and Environmental Health (by phone)
- Morgan Barry, Public Health Seattle – King County
- June Belefond, Public Health Seattle – King County
- Stella Chao, International District Housing Alliance (by phone)
- Ticiang Diangson, Seattle Public Utilities
- Elise Miller, Institute for Children’s Environmental Health
- Douglas Palenshus, Washington Department of Ecology
- Marianne Seifert, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
- Melanie Wood, EPA Regional 10

**Notes:**

1) *Proposed regional conference on the nexus of health disparities and environmental justice (HDEJ Conference)*

- Consensus to move ahead with the conference: Participants enthusiastically agreed that this would be an excellent opportunity for CHE-WA and the Health Justice Network to work together and to further the conversation and catalyze action (such as establishing local networks or “allies”) regarding these concerns.
- Timing: The group proposed that this conference would be held in the spring 2007, possibly dovetailing with the Community Coalition for Environmental Justice (CCEJ) annual meeting, and invite organizations and individuals not just from across Washington State, but Oregon and possibly Alaska and Idaho as well.
- Listening sessions: The group proposed that we organize a series of listening sessions with communities to build up to the conference. The structure of these listening sessions would be similar to the model Running Grass has used at EPA Region 10. The suggested framing question would be “How do you think your health is being impacted by the environment?”
  - Elements of the listening sessions would include a) ground rules; b) language interpreters; c) good facilitators; d) a recorder who can transcribe what is expressed by participants [*Suggestion:* train students to take hand-written notes for these]; e) good food, organic if possible; f) possible break-out sessions in the second half if themes emerge that people would like to discuss in more depth.
  - Use what emerges out of the listening sessions to determine what we will focus on at the conference. [*Suggestion:* Pick 3-5 “stories” that come out of the listening sessions that can serve as case studies of the HDEJ issues, such as the Hwy 5 Corridor, the Transit Project, the Port, etc. These could serve as “coalescing” points of discussion for panels, etc. at the conference.]

- Calendar is key. Though it can be challenging to try to avoid every holiday or important event in every community involved, it is important to try. [*Suggestion*: Hold the listening session at two different times of day so that more people might be able to participate.]
- Partners should include (but are not limited to): ethnic health clinics, UW, Antioch, Native American communities, Indian Health Board, Urban Indian Health Centers, CCEJ and its sister center in Portland, Health Justice Network, ECOSS, public health departments, EPA Region 10, Washington Department of Health, Washington Department of Ecology, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, youth (from high schools and middle schools), International District Housing Alliance, Institute for Children's Environmental Health, environmental lawyers, farmworkers, journalists (media), school nutritionists, Hispanic and Asian community groups, etc.
- Fundraising: Brainstormed ideas included the Bullitt Foundation, the Russell Family Fund, Washington Mutual, Costco, PCCs, Starbucks, Boeing, sports stars (such as Ray Allen, Jamie Morgan).

## 2) *Action Items*:

- Refine how we do listening sessions (who needs to be involved, locations, facilitators, recorders, dates, etc.)
- Draft overview of our goals and objectives for the HDEJ Conference
- Develop and refine brainstormed list of partners – everyone is asked to look at the first cut of the list and suggest additional partners. We will then need to decide how to tier these partnerships, i.e. some will be part of the planning; others will help with publicity and outreach to their communities, etc.
- Further develop fundraising suggestions and point people to solicit those funds.
- Find out more about UW's funding project spearheaded by Matt Keifer that may have done similar listening sessions (Chetana will follow up).