



Community Health Educator

P.J. Lee (they/them)

"It's about the people: building trust is at the core of all of my activities and provides the foundation for creating meaningful programs"

Bio

P.J. began college with an interest in the social sciences. Through volunteer work with a local women's shelter, they became interested in the fields of psychology and social work. P.J. received a degree in Psychology which led to work in community health. They soon focused on the community health educator role as purposeful work that would combine their two passions: a love of learning about people and personal histories and making meaningful differences in people's lives.

P.J.'s work involves identifying needs and developing and delivering educational programs in health promotion and disease prevention in these areas. Working with diverse client populations provides P.J. the opportunity to leverage their interpersonal skills: they gain trust through displaying genuine interest, empathy, and ongoing commitment. They build relationships between the translational sciences institute and local organizations to develop and adapt community learning opportunities that meet local needs. P.J. enjoys the freedom to assess learner needs and apply best practices to deliver culturally appropriate and meaningful solutions.

Education: BS, Psychology

Years of experience: 12

Work location: Office; remote work on laptop; traveling to meet individuals and groups in the community

Goals

- Forge strong relationships with community partners
- Foster the exchange of information between CTS researchers and community members

Software attitude & use

- Proficient in some applications, but others cause frustration
- Presentations: often seeking culturally appropriate and free images for outreach and education
- General: Microsoft Office Suite and Google Workspace
- Collaboration: Slack, Zoom and other video conferencing software
- Specialized resources: data collection through Excel and REDCap

Outputs

- Presentation materials such as handouts, slide decks, and recorded videos
- Educational flyers to promote public health and disease prevention topics
- Contributions to reports and grant applications
- Infrequent journal publications as a co-author

Pain Points

- Navigating different personalities and organizational structures, bureaucracy, distrust
- Lots of projects and meetings; can be difficult to dedicate time to one task
- Lack of resources to organize in-person community gatherings

Motivators

- Become a trusted partner of various communities and better understand people, their experiences and stories
- Develop meaningful training programs and resources for organizations and community members
- Active listening when working with the community to identify and prioritize needs and preferences
- Build and sustain a reputation of trust with community leaders
- Fulfill grant requirements to support personal development and more importantly, present their team as accountable to the communities they serve

Wants/Needs

- Continuous learning about what shapes individual and community experiences, especially for vulnerable and at-risk populations
- In-person events to better support all aspects of work, from recruiting and education to committee work
- Better sources of free, culturally appropriate, and relevant content to use in educational materials

Professional Development

Ongoing education and funding for both formal and informal trainings to learn about cultural sensitivities of different cohorts

Attending and contributing to community events which mostly happen during the weekend to build relationships and better understand local relationships, activities and priorities

Attend international workshops and seminar sessions organized by the NCHEC (National Commission for Health Education Credentialing) and SOPHE (Society for Public Health Education) to gain domain information