The Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice

Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice Virtual Meeting

Date: Thursday, March 26, 2026 from 2-4pm ET

Meeting Minutes

Members and Designees Present: Amy Lee (Chair), Gabrielle Benenson, Terry Brandenburg, Allison Foster, Adrienne Gill, Gary Gilmore, Paul Halverson, Allison Jacobs, Larry Jones, Bill Keck, Laura Rasar King, Charity Menefee, Erin Seedorf, Erica Smith, Julie Willems Van Dijk

Other Participants Present: Emebet Aklilu, Suzanne Alexander, Mary Kate Allee, Nikole Allen, Peg Allen, Carla Alvarez, Jessica Arrazola, Tori Baker, Katie Barnhart, Mike Barry, Christine Beluk, Amrita Bhatt, Debra Bragdon, E. Chandlee Bryan, Noel Cabrera, Candy Cates, Mariana Chilton, Marita Chilton, Rick Clark, Amanda Coles, Kay Conley, Mckelle Cox, Kevin Dentinger, Mitch DeValliere, John Dowd, Joan Duwve, Ashley Edmiston, Maranda Foster, Meredith Gaffney, Emily Gordon, Margaret Gradie, Reginald Greene, Carolina Guzman, Marty Handly, Ellie Hansotte, Monica Harmon, Engle Hasani, Shanna Hastie, Rich Hazeltine, Casie Higginbotham, Emily Hines, Laurencia Hutton, Nicole Ingold, Maria Jackson, Sarah Jones, Jori July, Joneigh Khaldun, Pamela Kuehling, Jessica Kumar, Anna Kathryn Lambert, Daryien Lee, Paula Lee, Helen Linda, Meg Maccherone, Nicole Magnuson, Rachel Mahas, Jennifer Marston, Erika Martinez, J'Vonnah Maryman, Mondi Mason, Hannah McMillan, Bonnie Mencher, Janay Mourer, Lindsey Myers, Angela O'Bryant, Yasmin Odowa, Leann Orr, Kelly Potkay, Shelby Rentmeester, Beth Resnick, Carey Riccitelli, Dwight Richards, Victor Rodriguez, Sara Rojas, Jennifer Romaszewski, Chelsey Saari, Martha Sanchez, Kaela Schommer, Cynthia Scott, Mandy Shaffer, Turquoise Sidibe, Risa Silverman, Amelia Swafford, Sharon Talboys, Grecia Tures, Graciela Valdez, Marcela Vasquez, Cecilia Vernes, Angela Watson, Sarah Worthington, Minzhi Xing, Benjamin Yawakie

Staff Present: Ron Bialek, Kathleen Amos, Mayela Arana, Carol Moehrle

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
Welcome and Overview of Agenda	The meeting began with a welcome by Council Chair Amy Lee, MD, MPH, MBA. Dr. Lee thanked the Public Health Foundation's (PHF's) Board of Directors for providing the funding enabling Council activities. Dr. Lee reminded participants of the Council's mission and reviewed the agenda for the meeting.	
Introduction of New Council Member	Dr. Lee invited Charity Menefee, MA, representative for the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) to introduce herself. Ms. Menefee is an Associate Professor and Director of Regional Programs and Partnerships within the Department of Environmental, Agricultural, and Occupational Health at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.	

Approval of Minutes from September 12, 2025 Meeting	Dr. Lee asked for any changes to the minutes of the September 12, 2025 Council meeting. Gary Gilmore, MPH, PhD, MCHES, moved to approve the minutes as written. C. William Keck, MD, MPH, seconded the motion. No additions or corrections.	Minutes of the September 12, 2025 Council meeting were approved as written.
Rebuilding the Public Health Workforce • **Insights from the Public Health Accreditation Board**	Council Director Ron Bialek, MPP, introduced a discussion on rebuilding the public health workforce featuring the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). Joneigh Khaldun, MD, MPH, FACEP, PHAB President and CEO, and Marita Chilton, MPH, Senior Director of Accreditation and Recognition, PHAB, provided updates on PHAB's workforce-related activities and the refresh of PHAB's Standards and Measures for accreditation and reaccreditation. Ms. Chilton noted that the refresh aligns accreditation and reaccreditation requirements into a single set of standards and includes updates to Domain 8 on workforce development. The refreshed standards are scheduled to take effect on July 1, 2026. Mr. Bialek invited questions for Dr. Khaldun and Ms. Chilton. Discussion focused on accreditation participation among health departments, workforce retention, succession planning, workforce development plan templates, resources available to support public health professionals seeking employment opportunities, the importance of incorporating accreditation standards into academic curricula, the value of accreditation in strengthening public health practice, and the importance of encouraging health departments to pursue formal accreditation status.	
Council Member Organization Workforce Development Updates • **National Board of Public Health Examiners** • **National Association of County & City Health Officials**	Dr. Lee invited the National Board of Public Health Examiners (NBPHE) and the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) to share updates on their workforce development activities. Allison J. Foster, MBA, CAE, CPH, President, NBPHE, provided updates on the organization's recent activities. Ms. Foster highlighted growth in partnerships with health departments to support Certified in Public Health certification through cohort-based programs, the launch of new data dashboards for schools, and efforts to expand the use of workforce data through research and publications. She shared updates on new certification initiatives, including the recently launched Certified in Disease Intervention credential and development of	

	certifications in public health nursing and public health essentials for early career professionals. Ashley Edmiston, MPH, Director of Workforce and Leadership Development, NACCHO, provided updates on NACCHO's workforce well-being initiatives. Ms. Edmiston highlighted resources developed through NACCHO's Joy in Work initiative, including a framework, implementation guide, and practice guide designed to support workplace culture, employee well-being, and workforce retention. Discussion focused on workforce retention, organizational culture, and the need for healing and support within public health agencies following workforce disruptions experienced in recent years.	
Council Activities Updates: • **Academic Health Department Learning Community** • **Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals** • **Retention and Recruitment Toolkit**	Mayela Arana, MPH, CHES, CPH, Senior Program Manager, Workforce Development, PHF, provided an update on Council initiatives. Ms. Arana provided an update on activities of the Academic Health Department (AHD) Learning Community, a national network of more than 1,400 members that supports collaboration between health departments and academic institutions. The Learning Community offers resources, webinars, technical assistance (TA), and information sharing to strengthen AHD partnerships nationwide. Ms. Arana highlighted PHF's AHD Partnerships Environmental Scan Service, which provides facilitated assessments to help health departments and academic institutions identify shared goals, align resources, and strengthen collaboration, and shared examples of outcomes from these efforts. Drawing on lessons learned from supporting AHD partnerships, Ms. Arana emphasized the importance of ongoing communication, trust, dedicated staffing, organizational champions, shared goals, formal partnership structures, and an understanding of partner capacity and organizational processes. Participants were invited to share their own lessons learned and best practices for partnerships. Ms. Arana also provided updates on upcoming activities funded through the Public Health Infrastructure Grant program, including a new success story on public health fellowship programs, webinars featuring AHD partnerships in California and North Dakota, and an opportunity for one additional	More information about the AHD Learning Community and its activities is available through the AHD Learning Community section of the Council website or by contacting Mayela Arana at marana@phf.org.

	health department to receive TA related to AHD partnerships. Ms. Arana invited questions about the AHD Learning Community. Ms. Arana shared updates about the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals (Core Competencies). The Core Competencies, a set of foundational or crosscutting skills for professionals engaged in public health practice, education, and research, are used in workforce development activities across the US. Most recently updated in 2021, the Core Competencies support efforts nationwide and are incorporated into major initiatives, including health department accreditation and Healthy People. Ms. Arana highlighted the continued use of the Core Competencies and related resources, noting that they remain among the most frequently accessed resources on the PHF website. She also shared examples from a recent ASTHO webinar that featured health departments from Kentucky, Missouri, and New York discussing how they use the Core Competencies in workforce planning, competency assessments, training plans, strategic planning, and the development of job descriptions. Ms. Arana encouraged participants to continue sharing experiences and best practices related to implementing the Core Competencies in their organizations and highlighted the availability of additional resources and training materials. Ms. Arana invited questions about the Core Competencies. Ms. Arana provided an update on the Retention and Recruitment (R&R) Toolkit, designed to support public health agencies in strengthening workforce retention, enhancing recruitment efforts, and building a skilled and diverse workforce. Available through the PHF website, the toolkit includes practical resources, strategies, and tools to address workforce challenges and support agency workforce development efforts. Ms. Arana noted that the toolkit continues to evolve as new resources are identified and added. Participants were encouraged to share tools and resources that may be valuable for the toolkit.	More information about the Core Competencies is available through the Core Competencies section of the Council website or by contacting Mayela Arana at marana@phf.org. More information about the R&R Toolkit is available through the Council website or by contacting Mayela Arana at marana@phf.org.

	Ms. Arana invited questions about the R&R Toolkit.	
Open Discussion of Council Priorities	Dr. Lee and Council Assistant Director Kathleen Amos, MLIS, led a discussion on Council priorities and future opportunities in light of the Council's current funding challenges and implementation of its *2023-2027 Strategic Directions*. Council members discussed the importance of identifying workforce development activities with strong potential for funding while continuing to support existing priorities, including AHD partnerships, the Core Competencies, and retention and recruitment efforts. Discussion emphasized the value of pursuing collaborative opportunities with other sectors to leverage shared resources and strengthen funding prospects. Participants reflected on the Council's historical contributions to the field, including advancing academic/practice partnerships, supporting public health services and systems research, and establishing foundational public health competencies. Participants discussed opportunities for the Council to continue providing implementation support in these areas while exploring emerging workforce development needs. Discussion also considered ways to enhance use of the Core Competencies through additional examples and resources addressing evolving topics and workforce needs. Participants emphasized the importance of sustaining the Council's work and preserving its contributions to public health workforce development and suggested exploring shared funding approaches and broader organizational support to ensure the Council's long-term sustainability and impact.	
Other Business and Next Steps	Dr. Lee asked if there was any other business to address. Ms. Amos shared a save-the-date announcement for the 2026 Public Health Learning Forum, which will be held virtually November 16-19, 2026. The conference will be offered free of charge and will feature sessions focused on workforce development, performance management, and quality improvement. Planning is underway, and sponsorship opportunities will be available. Information about the conference, including registration details, will be available through the PHF website and Council communications. Council staff will be in touch with Council members about scheduling the next meeting for Fall 2026.	Questions can be sent to Mayela Arana at marana@phf.org.