

# FY2023 - 2025 Strategic Plan

of the

National Association of Community Health Workers



NACHW Founders Circle Members at the  
2023 Unity Conference in Austin, Texas

“ Community Health Workers are the workforce we need  
for the world we want. ”

-Denise Octavia Smith, CHW, PN, MBA, Inaugural Executive Director

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Community health workers (CHWs) are a unique, diverse, community-based, cross-sector, and proven workforce in the United States (NACHW, 2022), yet they remain marginalized and financially precarious due to inconsistent role recognition, inequitable workforce programs, and lack of sustainable integration of CHW leadership and innovations into clinical, public health and social systems.

As the leading voice for the CHW profession, The National Association of Community Health Workers engaged hundreds of our members, key influencers, staff, committee members, and our board of directors to envision a Strategic Plan that will develop and scale CHW-led organizational leadership, policy, advocacy, technical assistance, and capacity building initiatives to advance and sustain our profession.

This Strategic Plan represents the perspectives of our membership, staff, and board of directors - who are committed to transforming clinical, public health, and social systems to realize health, racial equity, and social justice everywhere. The Plan includes approaches that confirm how we show up in the world, prioritizes strategies that center CHWs and CHW Network and Association expertise and creates opportunities for NACHW members, partners and sponsors to connect with us!

We invite members to explore this document, identify ways in which you can get more involved with this work, share your expertise, and collaborate with us! We invite CHW employers and partners to consider how your values, approaches, and strategic priorities align with ours and what we can accomplish together. We invite policymakers to learn who we are and respect, protect, and authentically partner with us. We invite funders and sponsors to recognize our current and emerging value to lead CHW advancement and sustainability.

**Denise Octavia Smith**  
Executive Director, NACHW



# THE NATIONAL VOICE FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

The National Association of Community Health Workers is the national voice for the CHW workforce. NACHW's over 3500 enrolled and 2049 active individual and organizational members hail from all 50 states and over thirty tribes and territories, and our reach extends to over 8,000 people on our national email listserv and over 15,000 in our COVID listserv.

NACHW is led by an Executive Director who is also a CHW and is governed by a national CHW-led Board of Directors with decades of research and practice expertise in CHW training and workforce development, community organizing and engagement, intervention design, equity and social justice advocacy, research and policy leadership.

Our founding Board of Directors made up of a majority of CHWs, Promotores and Community Health Representatives from tribal nations, created NACHW as a national CHW-led member-driven association that could build upon the history, structural advancements and growing recognition of the CHW workforce in the United States.

Our Founders developed the NACHW values to guide our work: self-determination and self-empowerment of our workforce; integrity of character; dignity and respect for every human being, social justice, and equity to ensure fair treatment, access, opportunity and outcomes for all individuals and communities. They are north stars we will use to support our members, foster partnerships, advocate nationally, develop strategic objectives, and assess our impact.

## THE FOUNDING BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mae-Gilene Begay, CHR

Naomi Cottoms, CHW

Durrell Fox, CHW

Wandy Hernandez, CHW

Lisa Renee Holderby-Fox, CHW

Maria Lemus, Promotora

Anita McDonnell

Carl Rush

Julie Smithwick, chw

Ashley Wennerstrom

Katherine Sutkowi

Joelisa Castillo, Promotora

Ramona Dillard, CHR

Catherine Haywood, CHW

Gail Hirsch

Susan Mayfield Johnson

Sergio Matos, CHW

Floribella Redondo-Martinez, Promotora

Alise Sanchez

Napualani Spock, CHW

Geoff Wilkinson

Neena Schultz



# NACHW BOARD OF DIRECTORS FISCAL YEAR 2024



## BOARD OFFICERS

Lillie Fox, CHW - *Board Chair*  
Paige Menking, *Board Treasurer*  
Amber Culver, CHW - *Board Secretary*

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Luis Lagos, CHW - *Ambassador Committee Co-Chair*  
Teresa Campos Dominguez, *Promotora - Policy Committee Co-Chair, Promotora*

## BOARD MEMBERS

Joanne Calista  
*Policy Committee Co-Chair*  
Atara Estes, CHW  
Anna Huff Davis, CHW  
Ricardo Garay, CHW  
*Development Committee Co-Chair*  
Claudia Hartz, CHW  
*Conference Committee Co-Chair*  
Ben Hummel  
*Workforce Development Committee Co-Chair*  
Kim Jay, CHW  
*Workforce Development Committee Co-Chair*  
Lily Lee  
Yanelle Powell, CHW  
*Conference Committee Co-Chair*  
Iris Reano, CHR/CHR  
*Ambassador Committee Co-Chair*

Betsy Rodriguez  
Julie St. John  
Sara Selig  
Treva Smith, CHW  
Oreta Tupelo, CHW  
*Development Committee Co-Chair*



# COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

## WHO WE ARE

NACHW recognizes Community Health Workers (CHWs include Community Health Representatives from tribal nations (CHRs), Promotoras(es), Aunties/Uncles from Pacific Islander and Native Hawaiian populations, Peers, Doulas, Outreach Workers, and at least 90 different work titles), as frontline public health workers who are trusted members of and/or have an unusually close understanding of the community served (APHA, 2014).

National survey data collected by NACHW in 2021 confirms that our workforce is predominately female and persons of color, with more than 90 different work titles who share ethnicity, diagnosis, socio-economic status and geography with the communities they serve ([nachw.org/advancechwsproject](http://nachw.org/advancechwsproject)).

CHWs are unique stakeholders, pursuing equity and social justice in community-based organizations and nonprofits, programs, policies and systems. so that all people can achieve health and well-being. Members of our workforce are closest to the problems that prevent historically under-resourced and oppressed communities from realizing their self-determination, dignity and self-actualization. They are visionaries who have founded CHW Networks, Associations and Community-based nonprofits. They are policy advocates, researchers, executives, organizers, and compassionate servant leaders.



# DEVELOPING THE PLAN

## WHO WAS INVOLVED

The strategic planning process included broad participation from stakeholders including NACHW members, NACHW staff, Board of Directors and Committee Members, and CHW Leaders from across the country.

This process, and the resulting plan, demonstrate dedication to work together to advance NACHW's mission.

## DATA GATHERING & FINDINGS

Data gathering for this plan included fifteen key informant interviews, five focus groups (two in Spanish and three in English), a member survey (n=314), and a comparative analysis of NACHW to three peer/mission-aligned organizations. Recommendations were then synthesized and compiled into a Key Findings Summary which was used to identify priorities, as well as to inform the goals, objectives, and strategies for the strategic plan.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- **Priority 1:** Training, Professional Development & Workforce Development
- **Priority 2:** Policymaking & Advocacy
- **Priority 3:** Professionalization and Unified Identity for CHWs nationally
- **Priority 4:** CHW Networks, Associations, and Community-Based Organizations
- **Priority 5:** Racial and Health Equity
- **Priority 6:** Organizational Sustainability



# 2023-2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

<b>Strategic Priorities</b>	<b>Goal Statement</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
<i>Priority 1: Training, Professional Development &amp; Workforce Development</i>	<b>Goal 1:</b> Support the value of unique, community grounded CHW training and professional development.	1.1: Develop and promote guidelines for employers to provide CHW's a minimum of required training, professional development, and networking opportunities as part of their paid working hours by 2025.
		1.2: Establish and maintain a current library of training and professional development opportunities by 2025.
		1.3: Increase awareness of funding and policy resources that directly benefit CHWs in the advancement of their profession and practice starting in 2023.
		1.4: Increase employers' and organizations' foundational knowledge of CHW roles and scopes of practice to support workforce integration by 2025.
<i>Priority 2: Policymaking &amp; Advocacy</i>	<b>Goal 2:</b> Advance national and state policy that respects, protects, partners with and sustains the CHW workforce and improves health and well-being of all people.	2.1: Promote and improve national financing mechanisms (Medicaid, Medicare, etc.) that support authentic, diverse community health worker roles and workforce by 2025.
		2.2: Decide whether to form a 501(c)(4) organization by 2025.
		2.3: Expand and formalize a stakeholder engagement and partnership approach that ensures NACHW's policy and advocacy work is guided by diverse input including grassroots organizations/CBOs and networks by 2025.
		2.4: Develop a proactive policy agenda with a racial equity focus and align it with the updated/revised policy platform by 2025.
<i>Priority 3: National Professionalization and Unified Identity for CHWs on the National Stage</i>	<b>Goal 3:</b> Lead with an inclusive, unified voice of the CHW work force to reinforce the advancement and recognition of the profession throughout the national public health system.	3.1: Establish and disseminate messaging and resources to promote and advocate for the professionalism of CHWS by 2024.
		3.2: Convene NACHW members twice each year to solicit input on identifying and advancing priorities to promote the CHW profession in the following year by 2023.
		3.3: Increase membership by 25% in each region of the country by 2025.
		3.4: Establish NACHW in a thought leadership position in the elimination of inequities by 2025.
		3.5: Reinstate and enhance the Ambassador Program
<i>Priority 4: CHW Networks &amp; Organizations: Local, State, and Regional</i>	<b>Goal 4:</b> Advance and sustain a national community of CHW networks* and associations with robust presence, capacity, and connection.	4.1: Assess the quality and impact of technical assistance, capacity building opportunities, and ongoing learning for existing regional CHW networks and associations by 2025.
		4.2: Improve and enhance NACHW's capacity to provide technical assistance, capacity building, and ongoing learning support to new and emerging regional and state CHW networks* by 2025.
		4.3: Convene and link existing regional networks and associations to facilitate information sharing, communication, and mutual support by 2025.
<i>Priority Five: Racial and Health Equity</i>	<b>Goal 5:</b> Develop and strengthen team practices to disrupt and challenge racial and health inequities and injustices within our teams and with our members and our world	5.1 Implement racial justice and equity tools into staff programming.
		5.2 Develop and strengthen organizational practices to disrupt and challenge inequities and injustices within our departments, teams, and with clients.
		5.3 Create, launch and disseminate a curated repository of resources and products around racial and health equity.
		5.4 Enhance NACHW virtual and in-person convening agendas based on the bright spots and challenges related to CHWs and racial equity.
		5.5 Leverage existing member technology to amplify and measure diverse voices.
<i>Priority Six: Organizational Sustainability</i>	<b>Goal 6:</b> Develop business plans, capacity and infrastructure that is profitable and sustainable	6.1: Establish the NACHW Program Center by March 2025
		6.2: Develop and implement a business development plan by 2025
		6.3: Improve staff capacity and development by 2025
		6.4: Establish the Founders Circle by 2024
		6.5: Expand and improve NACHW Board capacity and effectiveness by 2024
		6.6 Define requirements for a transition plan by 2025





# NACHW APPROACHES

## HOW WE SHOW UP IN THE WORLD



Amplify the unique identities, qualities, competencies, expertise and voice of authentic Community Health Workers.



Articulate the past, present and future impact of CHWs on clinical and public health, community wellbeing and social justice.



Ally with individuals and organizations who share our values and support our strategic priorities.



Advance innovations in CHW research, workforce development, integration, and career pathways



Advocate for sustainable and equitable policies and funding that respect, protect and authentically partner with CHWs and CHW Networks and Associations.



Activate CHW leadership, capacity and vision.



# MEMBER AND PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

## WAYS TO GET INVOLVED!

01

**BECOME  
A MEMBER!**

NACHW members include individual CHWs and allies, CHW Networks and Associations and multi-sector organizations. They share and promote our values, approaches, policies and vision for CHW unity, leadership and sustainability.

Members enjoy our members-only newsletters and webinars, and have exclusive opportunities to partner with NACHW and join our committees. Members are granted special discounts for conferences and more!

**Visit our website** to learn about all membership benefits! Enroll yourself or your organization as a member.

NACHW committees are established and led by members of the Board of Directors. NACHW members are invited to join our committees annually.

Committees develop their objectives annually, in support of NACHW Strategic Priorities, Goals and Objectives. They create webinars, listening sessions, and resources to amplify, advocate with, and advance the CHW profession.

Visit our [Committee](#) website to learn more and get access to committee member applications!

02

**LEARN  
ABOUT  
OUR BOARD  
COMMITTEES**

NACHW invites all our members to a new biannual Member's Townhall! These events will include an overview of NACHW's history, our membership portal and benefits, and updates on our current and upcoming projects.

In 2024, our Member's Town Hall will take place in May 2024. Members old and new are invited to attend!

**BECOME A  
MEMBER!**

This townhall is a place to give NACHW feedback and network with your fellow members! The last 30 minutes will be reserved exclusively for networking. [Register here!](#)

The NACHW Document Resource Center (DRC) is the nation's largest searchable database on CHW policies.

These DRC documents include reports, policy studies, meeting minutes, brochures, state legislative bills and other materials that show how state-level groups have created CHW definitions, policies and workforce development programs.

Login to the [DRC](#) and start searching today!

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**LEARN  
ABOUT OUR  
BOARD  
COMMITTEES**



# MEMBER AND PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

## WAYS TO GET INVOLVED!

05

SHARE  
YOUR  
EXPERTISE

NACHW amplifies the roles, leadership and lived experience of CHWs in many different ways. We develop in-person and online gatherings, webinars, articles, publications, programs and policy and advocacy initiatives that center CHW expertise and vision. We are also invited by many other organizations to collaborate on resource development and dissemination.

NACHW Members - keep your information up to date in our Member Clicks platform. We use this information to send you our newsletter and invite you to contribute to these activities. Not a NACHW member? Visit [www.nachw.org](http://www.nachw.org) and become a member today!

NACHW partners with individuals and organizations who align with our values, are open to our approaches and promote policies and programs that respect, protect and authentically partners with CHWs.

Partnership can come in many forms. A one-day event or a multi-year initiative. Partnerships may include collaboration on policy and advocacy, membership engagement, and technical assistance or learning events.

**[Click here to access our partnership interest form.](#)**

06

PARTNER  
WITH US!

07

SPONSOR  
OUR ANNUAL  
MEETING &  
UNITY  
CONFERENCE

NACHW hosts an Annual Members meeting and coordinates the Unity Conference to build relationships with, celebrate, learn from and develop strategies with our members. These events bring CHWs and allies together from across the U.S. tribal nations, territories and other parts of the world!

Sponsors helped us host the 2023 Annual Meeting and Unity conference, including two keynotes, an exhibit hall and poster sessions, a gala and more than 65 workshops. **[Click here if you are interested in becoming a sponsor.](#)**

NACHW staff and board members have rich subject matter expertise to support a variety of events including, CHW and ally conferences, CHW classes, professional development workshops, racial equity summits, policy sessions and more!

Our staff and board members have presented on [National CHW Data, understanding CHWs unique roles, recommendations on partnering with CHW Networks, racial health equity,](#) and dozens of other topics.

[Complete this form to request a NACHW speaker today!](#)

08

LEARN  
ABOUT OUR  
BOARD  
COMMITTEES



# NACHW RESOURCES TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CHWs

## Six Pillars of the CHW Workforce

Over many decades, CHWs, CHRs, Promotoras(es) and other members of our frontline workforce have advocates and organized to articulate CHW Identities.

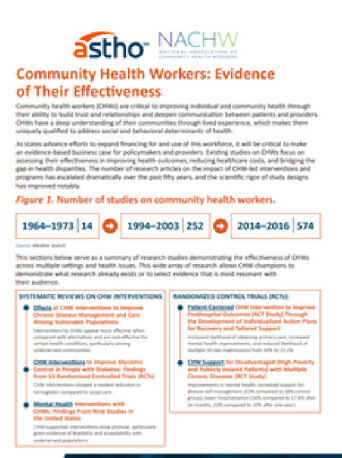
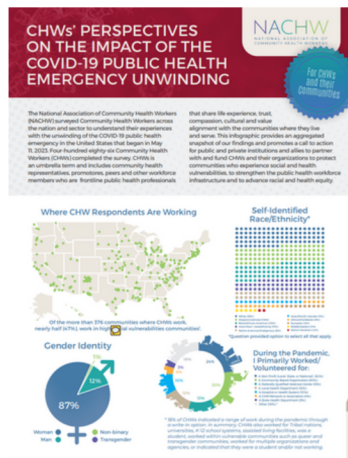
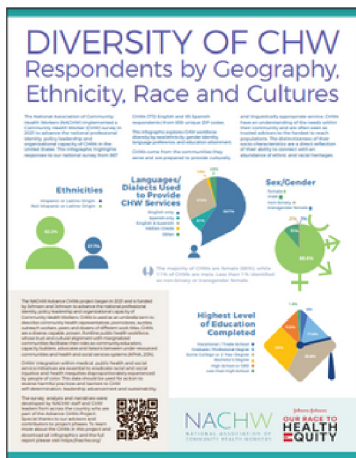
However, CHW identities, histories and capacities are still not well understood in the United States. This results in employment settings, policies, programs and systems that often do not respect, protect or authentically partner with us.

The Six Pillars were created in collaboration with CHWs, CHW Networks and Allies across the country to communicate clearly and succinctly who we are, where we come from, what we do, and our capacity and needs for sustainability.

Click [HERE](#) to Access all Six Pillars Resources

The infographic consists of six panels, each representing a pillar of the CHW workforce. Each panel features a central icon, a title, and a brief description. The pillars are: 1. A Unique Field (with a person icon), 2. Community-based (with a house icon), 3. Historic & Diverse (with a globe icon), 4. Cross-sector Workers (with a network icon), 5. A Proven Workforce (with a heart and pulse icon), and 6. A Precarious Workforce (with a warning triangle icon). Each panel includes the NACHW logo and the tagline 'LEADERS IN COMMUNITY HEALTH'.

Click on these Resources to Explore CHW Diversity, COVID Experiences and Effectiveness



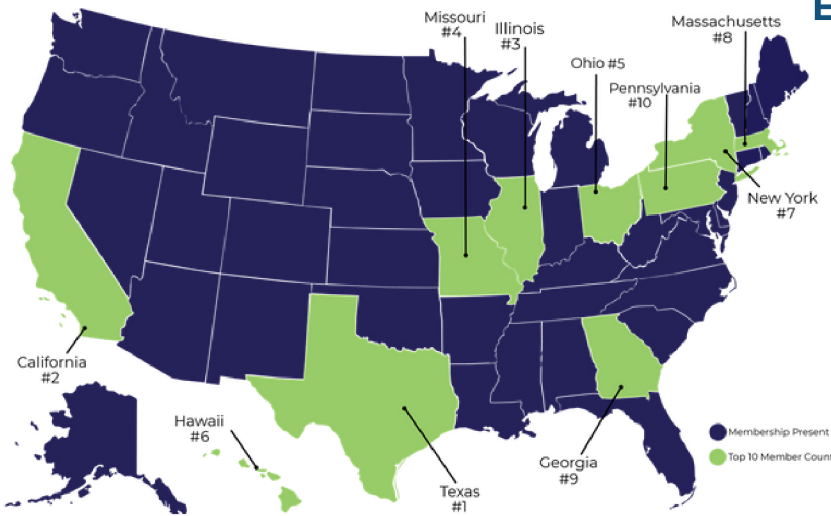
# NACHW MEMBERSHIP INSIGHTS

NACHW’s more than 3500 members are individuals (CHWs and Allies) and Organizations (CHW Networks and Associations and cross sector Ally Organizations). CHW Network Organizations (including Associations and Coalitions) are defined by NACHW as organizations led by or co-led by Community Health Workers (includes Promotores, CHRs, Aunties, Peers and other titles/identities within our profession) whose mission and activities focus on CHW membership, networking, policy, advocacy, and workforce development.

## Expand National Membership

NACHW believes that having a nationally representative membership that guides and holds us accountable is essential to our growth, success and sustainability.

NACHW is proud to report we have members from all 50 states, dozens of tribes and several US territories. We will continue to increase membership in states and regions that are currently underrepresented.

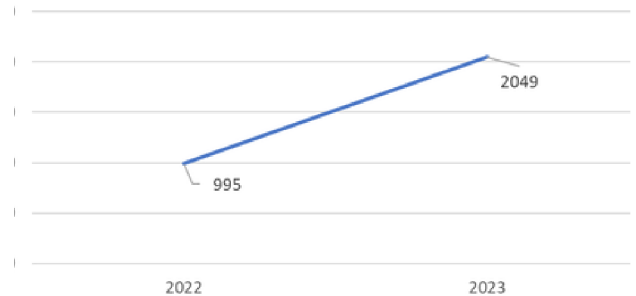


## Grow and Retain Members

As a membership organization, it is essential to our mission to maintain and grow our membership. The more CHWs and Allies we have as members, the more perspectives, knowledge, and collective power we have to make lasting change for the workforce and overall health equity.

The NACHW Ambassador Program helps us grow our membership and deepen our partnerships by attending CHW conferences, and sharing NACHW member benefits, resources, events and opportunities.

NACHW Membership Growth by Fiscal Year



## Center and Celebrate Our Diversity

NACHW membership comes from hundreds of different communities, specialties, types of organizations, educational backgrounds, and more.

NACHW unifies members of the profession across race, ethnicity, gender, language, sector and lived experience differences and creates initiatives that amplify underrepresented members of the professions.



# OUR VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

**The vision of the National Association of Community Health Workers is to unify CHWs across race, ethnicity, gender, geography, language, sector and lived experience – to support communities to achieve health, equity and social justice.**

Founded in April 2019 after several years of planning and organizing by CHWs, Promotoras, Community Health Representatives, and allies,

NACHW is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit membership driven organization with a mission to unify the voices of the community health workers and strengthen the profession's capacity to promote healthy communities.

## NACHW VALUES GUIDE OUR WORK

- self-determination and self-empowerment of our workforce
- integrity of character
- dignity and respect for every human being
- social justice and equity to ensure fair treatment
- access, opportunity and outcomes for all individuals and communities

Our Values are north stars we will use to support our members, foster partnerships, advocate nationally, develop strategic objectives, and assess our impact.

## SAVE THE DATE

August 2024

- 2nd Annual CHW Awareness Week
  - Fall 2024 virtual and in-person activities in your state
- NACHW Annual Meeting and Unity Conference
  - virtual gathering for members

