

Over 100 years ago W.E.B. Dubois wrote "The "Philadelphia Negro," a book detailing one of the first social-scientific studies of a community of African Americans - their collective history and individual families; their health, educational, occupational, economic and political status; their churches and businesses; their personal habits, biases and living conditions - revealing the potential of research as a means to correct social injustice and effect societal change. Today, the issue of what is now termed "health disparities" continues to plague not only African Americans, but also other people of color and the medically underserved, and society struggles with ways to improve the plight of minorities while remaining "culturally competent" and "sensitive." It is our opinion that the scientific approaches of the twentieth century, especially those involving underserved communities, will not work in the twenty-first century. We need a more comprehensive approach that will involve not just scientific discovery alone, but scientific discovery coupled with real-world applications and community service. The Dorothy I. Height Center for Health Equity & Evaluation Research (CHEER), formerly the Congressionally mandated Center for Research on Minority Health, motto is "science that benefits community." In our mind, the effort of CHEER transcends the concept of translational research. The central hub of CHEER is its Community Relations Core, also referred to as Community Engagement and Outreach. This core supports CHEER's efforts in Nutrition, Gene Environment Interaction and Health Services Research. The presentation will cover the cores and philosophy of CHEER as well as provide an overview of three of our projects, the Women Health Eating & Living (WHEL) Study, the CAN DO/SCIENCE Education Projects, and Project EXPORT.