



Health & Wellness Academy of Science High School 2017-18 Pilot

Breaking a Cycle of Poverty and Illness

The Social Determinants of Health connect environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship and age to a wide range of health and quality-of-life outcomes and risks, meaning: poverty makes people sick. As a community healthcare organization, Marin City Health & Wellness Center (MCHWC) understands that to address the *health* needs of at-risk communities, we must create economic opportunity – especially for youth.

There is a direct correlation between level of educational attainment and the chances that an individual will experience poverty. Marin City has one of the lowest educational attainment rates in Marin County, and ***the percentage of individuals with a high school degree is sharply decreasing in the younger adult age groups***. According to the 2015 American Community Survey:

- 61% of Marin City residents age 25-34 have a high school degree or higher, compared to 85% of Marin County residents of the same age, and 81% of older Marin City residents (age 35-44).
- 17% of residents in Marin City never finish high school, compared to 7% in Marin County.
- 53% of Marin City residents with less than a high school degree live in poverty, compared to 3% of those with a Bachelor's degree. (43% of Marin City residents who complete high school live in poverty, indicating that attaining a degree or GED is critical to increasing income.)
- Marin County residents without a high school degree have median earnings of \$18,665; high school graduates earn \$29,919 (60% more); college graduates earn \$65,543 (250% more).

Low educational attainment restricts a resident's ability to obtain higher wage jobs and move out of the cycle of poverty. Children whose parents have low educational attainment are least likely to attend college and often continue the cycle of low-earning wages.

We believe this is a mental health issue.

Educational Equity as Behavioral Health

The Sausalito Marin City School District is under investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice for civil rights violations: diverting funding away from Marin City's diverse MLK/Bayside Academy (whose students are 78% African American and 90% qualify for free lunch program), to the Willow Creek charter school in neighboring Sausalito (which is 67% White and 35% low-income).

Since 2012, there has been no full-time math or science teacher for the 150 students at MLK/Bayside. The new principal hired for the 2016-17 academic year has already resigned, and leadership is in flux.

Children from MLK/Bayside graduate from 8th grade with 3rd grade reading skills, yet are expected to survive and thrive in highly competitive southern Marin public high schools (Tamalpais, Redwood and Drake). When they struggle academically and become frustrated and angry, they are labeled as "troubled kids," and often transferred to the Marin Department of Education's alternative "County School," thus perpetuating the cycle of poor education, lack of career options, and lifelong poverty.

Youth Served

This *Health & Wellness Academy of Science High School* is a new preventative behavioral health program that will offer a supportive and challenging intellectual environment, where teens experience learning, hope and possibilities for education and careers. African American staff bring expertise in teaching *and* mental health, so they can support children managing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) caused by racism, trauma and poverty, which manifest in disease and chronic illness later in life.

Twelve to 15 high school students will be selected for this 2017-18 pilot based on our experience working with them over the past two years in our *Defenders* and *Girl Power* youth programs. We will consider the severity of the risks these children face at home, including toxic stress from ACEs. The provision of an inclusive, supported high school program is essential to helping more Marin City youth increase their chances of completing high school, set a foundation for college, decrease the likelihood of incarceration, and increase earning potential.

Educational Attainment in Marin City and Marin County

Source: 2011-2015 America Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Education	Marin City	Marin County
Percent high school graduates or higher	82.6%	92.9%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	31.6%	55.8%
Less than 9 th grade	7.1%	3.8%
9 th -12 th grade, no diploma	10.3%	3.3%
No high school degree	17.4%	7.1%
Poverty rate by educational attainment		
Less than high school graduate	52.7%	25.3%
High school graduate	42.6%	12.3%
Some college or associate's degree	12.3%	7.6%
Bachelor's degree or higher	3.2%	4.0%
Median Earnings in Past 12 Months		
Less than high school graduate	NA	\$18,665
High school graduate	NA	\$29,919
Some college or associate's degree	NA	\$41,192
Bachelor's degree	NA	\$65,543
Graduate or professional degree	NA	\$88,198

2017-18 Program Pilot

Section 33190 of the California Educational Code specifies that anyone engaging in private school education must file an affidavit between October 1-15 for that school year. Section 48222 exempts children from compulsory public school attendance if they are being instructed in a private, full-time day school by persons capable of teaching, are taught in the English language on several branches of study, and that a registry of daily attendance is kept for all students.

The *Health & Wellness Academy of Science High School* will meet these requirements. MCHWC has recruited a consultant who has designed a homeschool curriculum for this purpose, with a focus on STEM education and including African American leadership, history and cultural influence.

Funding Need

Anticipated funding needed to launch this project is \$300,000 for the 2017-18 academic year, which will provide a private homeschool for up to 15 students. Budget detail is:

\$90,000 (salary/benefits) for a consultant and educator with a masters in Math

\$80,000 (salary/benefits) for an educator credentialed in English, History and/or Social Studies

\$50,000 (meals) for student breakfast and lunch

\$50,000 (supplies) for student books and materials

\$30,000 (travel) for field trips and experiential learning opportunities

Supporting a MCHWC high school program benefits local employers with an educated potential workforce, where young adults have been provided with a well-rounded high school education as a foundation for their next steps into college or entering the local labor pool.

About Marin City Health & Wellness Center

As an FQHC, MCHWC brings clinical behavioral health expertise to at-risk youth. Through year-round youth programs – *The Defenders* and *Girl Power* – and the summer *Quality of Life Road Trip*, we serve the wellness of Black teens. These programs are part of our larger vision of community transformation and neighborhood revitalization, by investing in the mental health of our most vulnerable families.

Our mission is to provide innovative health and wellness services to all, with the goal of African American health equity. Founded in 2006 to serve residents of public housing, we are uniquely located in historic Black communities and now have four clinics from San Rafael to San Francisco. MCHWC wellness services include primary medical, dental, behavioral healthcare, recovery services, midwifery and maternal care, health education, and leadership programs for Black teens. In 2016 we provided 13,816 patient visits – a 22% increase over 2015. We serve multicultural patients (40% Caucasian, 27% African American, 13% Latino, 4% Asian) of all ages, from infants to seniors.

Contact Us

For more information about the **Health & Wellness Academy of Science High School** or **Marin City Health & Wellness Center**, please visit us at www.marincityclinic.org, call 415.339.8813 or email us:

- JayVon Muhammad, CEO, JayVon@marincityclinic.org or 415.579.0077
- Nicole Johnson, Assistant to the CEO, Nicole@marincityclinic.org or 415.827.4198
- Melanie Hamburger, Director of Development, Melanie@marincityclinic.org or 415.999.3197