

The Lerner Center Vision Statement

The Lerner Center for public health promotion is dedicated to conducting cutting-edge research, education, and service to advance health promotion and health communication practices. Over the next five years, we aim to build upon our record of achievement and more fully integrate the components of our mission to enhance their impact on public health practice, policy, and science.

Since its inception in 2014, the Lerner Center has grown rapidly. The Center has contributed to the growth of research in addressing disparities in the marketing of electronic nicotine delivery devices and other novel tobacco products; disseminating, and sustaining evidence based interventions for drug use prevention, cancer prevention, and HIV prevention and treatment adherence, and scaling adolescent health programs in low-income countries. The Center has been successful in securing federally funded grants totaling over \$6.5 million.

The Center has also served as the educational hub of two of the most popular concentrations for the Mailman School's MPH students: certificates in *Health Promotion and Health Communication*. Over the past four years we trained 132 students in these certificate programs. Graduates have taken on leadership positions in organizations such as McCann Global Health, the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Corkery Group Unlimited, FCB Health, NYC Health and Hospitals, and Omnicom Health Group. Additionally, the Center excels in leading the training of the Mailman School's underrepresented doctoral students. Our strategic partnerships with leading health communication agencies, community based organizations, and professional groups across NYC and nationally is crucial. These collaborations fuel our research capacity, provide a robust and healthy culture of experiential learning opportunities that complement the coursework provided at Columbia, and create impactful careers for our graduates.

The success of our two ***Turning the Tide*** conferences has enhanced the national visibility of the Center by bringing together scholars and public health professionals in the fields of health promotion and health communication. These conferences were attended by over 200 faculty representing 35 different academic institutions; 38 private agencies, 4 public organizations, and post-doctoral fellows. Further, we disseminated the conference presentations, and published Center faculty's research in a special supplement of the *American Journal of Public Health*, a leading public health journal with broad reach.

Our model is to link science and practice. Conducting rigorous scientific research, securing competitive government and private funding, publishing in high-impact journals, hosting national conferences, and teaching, including experiential education, while also honing relationships with stakeholders outside the academy, including prominent media agencies and community partners. This is an exciting model, but there is more to be done to truly strengthen our leadership in the fields of health

communication and health promotion. Over the next five years, the Center will strive to more closely connect our research, teaching, convening of experts, and organizational collaborations in a feedback loop -- each reinforcing the other. The more that faculty, students and other public health professionals are able to fully participate in all four of these objectives, the higher will be the quality of our work and the greater our ability to impact the field. That is the goal demanded by our faculty, our students, and our external stakeholders. In the coming years, we will strive to better promote and translate the science of public health to the broader public health community. Understanding this science is challenging, as there is no significant federal agency dedicated to enhancing novel research and training in the arena of health communications. Moreover, gaps still exist in disseminating and implementing evidence-based programs in diverse, real world settings.

Over the next five years, the Center should remain at the forefront of the health communication and health promotion movements. To do so, we must *prioritize our commitment to these dynamic fields; contribute to the growth and pursue new avenues of research in these fields by hiring innovative faculty, promote scholarship by investing in career advancement for current faculty, strengthen models of graduate training at the master's and doctoral level, equip public health professionals with 21st century new technological skills, maintain and enhance support with our organizational partners, and coordinate efforts through Columbia to build a common agenda around health promotion and health communication.*