



Promoting Food Access and Access to Care through the Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge

The 20 [Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge grantees](#) work to reduce health disparities in chronic disease by improving access to food and health services. The 20 project teams will continue to establish new partnerships and shift power to community residents through September 2022 and beyond, paving the way for systems and policy change to achieve health equity.

Key Achievements: January - June 2021



Doubled the number of attendees at community convenings:

Grantees used these opportunities to keep their communities informed and shared decision-making power with individuals with lived experience.



Engaged 396 partner organizations across 20 communities:

Project teams broke down barriers to advance common goals with local government agencies and officials, schools, faith-based organizations, academic institutions, farmers, food system partners and health systems.



Added 60 new food access points and 5 new health services access points:

Communities added food pantries, meal distribution sites and health hubs to reach 252,215 individuals with foods that support healthy eating patterns, 262 individuals with health services and 14,248 individuals with education or support services.

Successful Approaches for Changing Systems in Communities



Shift organizational policies and practices to establish consistent meetings and clear agreements with partners, food procurement and distribution processes that align with community needs and fair compensation mechanisms for community members.



Make authentic connections with partners through transparency about goals and challenges, sharing funding, pooling data and information, offering and inviting expertise, connecting partners with each other and establishing referral systems.



Draw connections between local conditions and individual needs to support people and organizations in understanding diverse perspectives and root causes of health disparities and show them how they can contribute to solutions.

Read the full [HCCC Highlights Report](#) for an overview of accomplishments, success stories and lessons learned during the second reporting period (January - June 2021).