

Partner Spotlight

A graphic of a spotlight with a yellow beam of light, positioned in the top right corner of the page. The beam of light is directed towards the title 'Partner Spotlight'. There are also several small yellow starburst graphics scattered around the spotlight.

Each month, the CDPHP Health Equity Unit will spotlight one of our partners to showcase their tremendous efforts in health equity. Our team thanks each and every partner and Community Based-Organization for all of their extraordinary efforts in assisting Nevadans and making an impact in public health.

What is the most exciting project you are currently working on?

The health equity team has collaborated with the Air Quality Management (AQM) division at WCHD on a PurpleAir Sensor Project. Air pollution and air quality has become increasingly important over the past few years in Northern Nevada due to wildfire season. The Air Quality Index (AQI) has reached extremely high levels impacting people's health. An important tool to check if the air quality is at safe or harmful levels is through a PurpleAir sensor which can be found on AirNow's Fire and Smoke map.

A recent study published in the American Journal of Public Health showed a socioeconomic disparity of air quality sensors in California. Meaning fewer sensors were distributed in census tracts with lower socioeconomic status (SES), higher PM 2.5, and higher proportions of racial/ethnic minority populations. AirNow's Fire and Smoke map shows a similar trend in Washoe County where there are gaps of air quality monitoring among underserved populations.

What is the most exciting project you are currently working on? (Continued)

To address this, the PurpleAir project aims to increase access to PurpleAir sensors to fill in spatial gaps of air quality monitoring and address environmental justice concerns in underserved communities.


The health equity team and AQM division has been partnering with Community-Based Organizations to identify community locations where PurpleAir sensors can be installed, to help gather better air quality data for under-represented populations.

What has been your most memorable moment?

The most memorable moment is when the Reno-Sparks Indian Colonies Tribal Council voted to receive two PurpleAir sensors. One for their Hungry Valley Gym location, and the other for their Reno Gym location. This story received news coverage on KRNV (link provided below).

KRNV: [Hungry Valley residents can now monitor air quality as smoke continues to fill the skies](#)





What piece of advice would you give to new partners?

The WCHD consists of multiple divisions to include Air Quality Management, Community and Clinical Health Services, Environmental Health Services, and Epidemiology and Public Health Preparedness. Each division provides various programs, services, and resources. It can be difficult to be aware of all the health district does, has to offer, and the support it can provide.

The advice I would give to new partners is to visit our website to become more familiar with all the services available, and to further connect with health district staff to schedule a tour, help answer questions, and get connected to the information and resources needed.

Furthermore, the health district is currently working to increase its internal health equity organization capacity, so health equity is embedded in everyday work throughout all divisions, programs, and services. The WCHD is here for the community and wants to work with, and alongside the community to create a healthier and more equitable Washoe county.

Additional Resources and Links

[EPA's AirNow Fire and Smoke Map.](#)

KTVN: [Protecting Yourself From The Smoke](#)

[Visit our Health Equity Website Here](#)