

# Case Example: Live Healthy Little Havana

## Una Comunidad Conectada

Founded in 2014, [Live Healthy Little Havana](#) (LHLH) “is a community initiative supported by the City of Miami and a non-profit organization to promote healthier living in Little Havana. With founding funder Health Foundation of South Florida, the goal is to strengthen community capacity to collaboratively plan and collectively carryout strategies to improve health in the community. [...] LHLH has a focus placed on strategies that will foster changes in policy, systems, or the environment, with an emphasis on sustainability” (LiveHealthyLittleHavana.com).

During 2017, Urban Health Partnerships proposed to the LHLH initiative and HFSF to create a Community Liaison (CL) Framework to help create systems changes in how the initiative engaged with the community and implemented projects. This framework sought to match residents trained on LHLH’s focus areas with community stakeholders and enhance community outreach.

### Setting the Arrangements

#### a. **The Ensemble: Preparing LHLH for a Community Liaison Framework**

UHP’ Executive Director met with the initiative’s Board of Directors and each of the HITs, to gather their input about community stakeholders and areas of focus that should be prioritized to help address community engagement gaps and advance the goals of LHLH.

#### b. **Comping: Preparing UHP to foster the Community Liaison Framework**

The A Team that UHP organized was composed by four team members:

- Executive Director: provided oversight for the overall program, co-developed the CL Framework, and facilitated some of the trainings.
- Project Manager: assisted with the planning, execution, reporting, and evaluation of the program and the CLs’ individual and group projects. Additionally, supported the Training and Outreach Coordinator.
- Training and Outreach Coordinator: designed and implemented the training plan, facilitated trainings, provided the individual coaching, and supported the CLs’ professional development progress. Additionally, the Training and Outreach Coordinator coached and supported CLs in the outreach of community stakeholders in Little Havana.
- Intern: supported the evaluation planning, training planning and implementation, and documentation of the program.



Every team member spoke Spanish fluently to communicate with the CLs and other community members and stakeholders. They attended LHLH’s meetings monthly and provided reports of progress on the program.

**c. Behind the beat: Understanding the community and its context**



The LHLH initiative conducted a community assessment in 2014, which surveyed 332 community residents. The issues that concerned residents the most were: physical activity, parks use, neighborhood safety, built environment, social cohesion, and transportation. Additionally, UHP surveyed over 1200 residents in 2017 as part of a LHLH community survey.

As a result, community strengths, assets, key organizations, and community services were identified. Additionally, UHP and the initiative’s Evaluation Team, reviewed data (by census tract) regarding demographics of Little Havana and indicators such as mental health, physical health, leisure-time activities, obesity, poverty, housing, education. This was very valuable because it helped UHP identify Little Havana’s census tracts with highest needs.

**d. The Real Book: Develop a Workplan and Evaluation Plan**

A Work Plan was developed focusing on the key outcomes of the CL Framework addressing individual and community capacity-building, as well as, systems changes in how Little Havana residents are engaged and integrated into the LHLH initiative. The following logic model was used to help map out project activities and determine an evaluation plan:

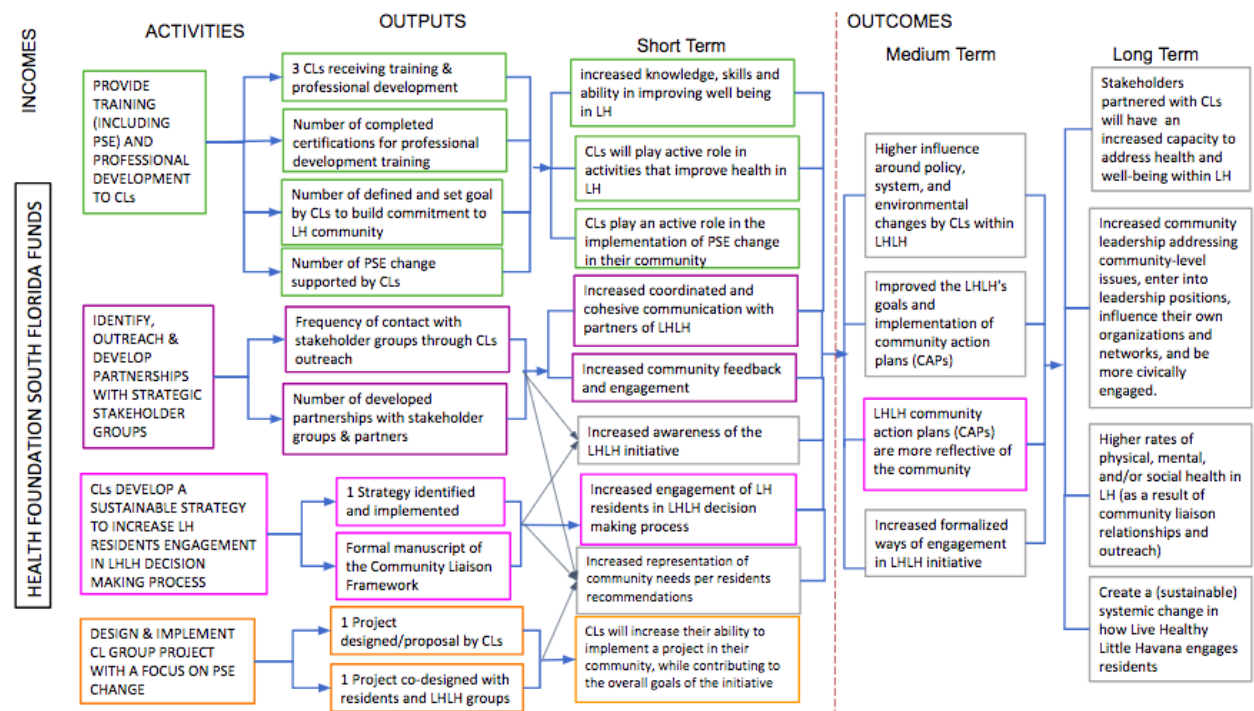


Figure 1. Logic Model of LHLH Una Comunidad Conectada

# SWING! Let the Music Start

## a. Big Band: Hiring the Community Liaisons

UHP recruited and hired three community liaisons (CLs) who are residents of Little Havana (LH) in April of 2018. At orientation, CLs were given an overview of the LHLH initiative, the structure and partners, and their roles (see appendix A to read the job description). They work an average of 30 hours each month. There was turnover in one of the positions due to CL family conflicts, but recruitment, training, and onboarding of a new CL was promptly conducted to ensure continuity in the project.



Alejandro



Daniela



Juan

### Identify professional development route

One of the CLs selected improving their English as their professional development goal, because Spanish is their native language. He created a presentation in English highlighting LHLH and the CL roles to put his new skills into practice. The second CL developed a plan for building sustainable walking groups in Little Havana based on his assessment and research. The third CL created a plan for a family art class program focused on how art can help improve health based on feedback from local families and artists. Additionally, the CLs participated in local forums and trainings and in a 2-day training of National Hispanic Council on Aging- Empowerment and Civic Engagement Training (ECET).



## b. Getting the Chops: Leadership Development

### Trainings:

The CLs participated in a total of 17 training sessions which were conducted every other week. Every training session was evaluated by each CL at the end of the session.

Topics for these trainings focused on the skills CLs need to advance in their role including, but not limited to:

- PSE change
- Non-traditional public involvement
- Assessing community needs and surveying
- Project development
- Outcome and process objectives
- 8-steps to developing a strong community action plan (CAP)
- Demographics and health data in LH
- Theory of change and evaluation
- Building effective participation and collaboration
- Presentation skills

#### Individual Coaching:

The three CLs received biweekly coaching, in-person meetings or calls with the Training and Outreach Coordinator to help facilitate their goals, address individual needs, and monitor their individual professional goals. The CLs also received on-the-field support.

#### c. **The Breaks and the Solos: Leveraging Community Network(s)**

##### Stakeholders Collaboration

UHP obtained an understanding of the CLs' existing connections in Little Havana and received input from the LHLH Health Impact Teams and Board of Directors to match them with community stakeholders that could help advance the goals of the initiative. Each CL was matched with two to three categories of stakeholders including: faith-based organizations, schools, parks, older adult residences, medical centers, local gyms, and immigration services.

*In one year, the work of the CLs resulted in 39 engagements and reached roughly 1294 people.*



The CLs also put what they were learning into practice by engaging residents and stakeholders in creative ways. A few of the successes in building ongoing partnerships and collaborations include:

- Once-a-month engagement visits at a clinical facility and an older adult housing building; as well as participating on monthly community events
- Once-a-month participation in a local art and culture festival engaging residents and a plan for monthly engagement at a community art center
- Participation in community resource fairs
- A series of workshops for non-traditional and immigrant individuals seeking educational and employment opportunities in partnership with the local college

- The leading of a “Guardians of Little Havana Parks” group that included park assessments and building the capacity of residents to advocate for local parks
- Leading civic engagement groups and activities

Group Project: Mano a Mano



During the first four months of the program, the CLs participated in several community events throughout Little Havana and had the opportunity to talk with residents openly regarding their concerns and issues surrounding health and wellbeing in their community. They also conducted interviews with different stakeholders including churches, schools, and business owners, among

others. Based on information gathered from community members and other stakeholders, the most pressing community issue of concern was the relationship between community and police, as well as enforcement, in general.

Based on this information, the CLs designed the project Mano a Mano to improve this relationship and increase trust between residents and the police in Little Havana toward a shared vision of citizenship and community to improve health and well-being.

The initial plan was co-designed with local police and included implementing two events to bring community and police together and further evaluate both of their concerns.

Results:

- ✦ Four events (October 2018 – January 2019)
- ✦ Over 220 residents and stakeholders participated
- ✦ 50 pre- and 34 post- surveys completed
- ✦ Pre- and Post- comparisons showed a **significant positive change** ( $p < 0.05$ ) in “Strongly Agree” statements, pointing to a reliable positive effect from the Mano a Mano engagements.
- ✦ Post- evaluations were **on average 98.4% positive** (i.e., “Agree” and “Strongly Agree”).
- ✦ All survey items referring to the police’s character, reliability, protection, and overall community involvement showed **at least 40% and up to 59% improvement** because of participating in the event(s).
- ✦ Majority of participants who completed the post assessment (after the events) were more confident that their voices were being heard (**79%**), that they participation was important





(82%), that they could be part of changing perceptions and relations with the police (79%), and that events like this could be helpful and effective in this effort (74%).

✦ Participants who completed an open polling, known as Dotmocracy, prioritized 1) wanting to know more about the police’s public engagements and their 2) interest in learning more about the law and their rights as their top concerns.

- ✦ Although only two Mano a Mano engagements were planned in the beginning, due to their success, the police officers decided to have 2 additional events and continue implementing these events further in collaboration with the City and the CLs.
- ✦ The police committed to incorporating Mano a Mano into their community outreach strategies and requested to continue with monthly engagements.
- ✦ A report with recommendations and action-steps was created in collaboration with the police officers. Some of these recommendations included developing a police Little Havana-specific social media account and formalizing a community liaison position to coordinate directly with the police.



**d. Jam Session: Integration into an initiative’s decision-making processes**

The CLs attended the initiative’s Health Impact Team meetings, during CLs provided updates about their activities, obtained guidance, and provided ensure there was community member representation. They also learned about the challenges in the community and plans to resolve these issues, and about existing programs. They provided input in the development of funding proposals, in the initiative’s strategic and action planning processes, and helped recruit more resident and stakeholder participation. They actively incorporated this knowledge into their stakeholder relationships to become an even better resource to the community. When applicable, they also invited stakeholders to LHLH meetings.



which the input to

One key systems change is that LHLH began to offer English-Spanish translation during their meetings through a collaboration with the local college so more community members could attend and participate in the meetings

## Harmonic Rhythm: Building Sustainability

### a. Community connections and awareness

- a. CLs initiated, developed, maintained, and re-established ongoing relationships with diverse stakeholder groups: health clinics, adult housing sites, local artists, schools/colleges, neighborhood/community associations, and faith-based organizations.
- b. CLs established recurrent collaborations and consistently supported stakeholder projects and activities.
  - i. Recurrent collaborations established an ongoing presence of CLs at stakeholder/collaborator sites.
  - ii. Stakeholder project/activity support included built environment projects (e.g., Painting a play trail around an elementary school health and resource fairs, cultural activities, and more).

By establishing an ongoing presence with each of the stakeholder groups and the community members, CLs participated in collective trust building through team work and collaboration. Additionally, these efforts made CLs consistently aware of community member and other stakeholder needs and concerns; helping them make important connections that further enhanced the integration of these groups in the processes and outcomes of the initiative.



### b. Long-lasting policies, systems and environmental change implementation

Policies, systems, and environmental changes often take a long time, and require a lot of preparation and collaboration. The CL Framework supported the implementation of PSEs in year one:

- CLs and more community members participate in the initiative's meetings helping to support a social environment change
- The Board of Directors is requiring for all initiative projects to integrate CLs into their projects.
- CLs have time on meeting agendas to report on their projects, experiences, and share community feedback.
- Initiative meetings include Spanish interpretation and/or conduct them primarily in Spanish to allow better understanding and communication with CLs and other community members/stakeholders.
- LHLH partners now contract CLs to assist with community engagement.
- The City of Miami Police, specifically the Little Havana Neighborhood Resource Officers, have integrated a monthly Mano a Mano engagement into their community engagement goals and will use the resulting recommendations and the Mano a Mano report to address participant concerns and plan more community-focused events.

- The engagement of key stakeholders to implement built environment changes such as a play trail around a local school and adding benches to transit stops in important corridors in Little Havana.
- Supporting a systems change by developing a mechanism for residents to advocate for changes in local parks through the Guardians of Little Havana Parks group
- The support of social environment changes through the planning of walking groups and a family art program

The success of these PSEs helped ensure these changes fostered further integration of CLs, community members and other stakeholders into the processes of the LHLH initiative.

**c. Sustaining the Community Liaison Framework**



- UHP secured funding for Year 2 of this project through Health Foundation of South Florida to continue to build on the successes of Year 1 and help implement more PSEs that will further secure this framework and its goals.
- UHP also established a formula and process for LHLH partners and collaborators to sub-contract CLs as part of their community engagement strategies.
- UHP is actively seeking grants to further the development of the CL Framework and the tools that help facilitate it more effectively.

**d. Monitoring and evaluation of the Community Liaison Framework**

The CL framework was monitored and evaluated through:

- Interviews with CLs, initiative partners, and stakeholders.
- CL reach, or number of people they connected with: through sign-in sheets, social media, and field notes completed by CLs after every engagement.
- Tracking of PSEs resulting from this project.
- Project and event evaluations.
- Evaluations conducted at the end of every CL training
- Pre and Post CL assessments.

**e. Shifting culture and action to build civic engagement, leadership and advocacy**

The case example of Una Comunidad Conectada offers great hope that a culture change is being initiated. Through the CLs’ work and the support from UHP and the partners, the CL Framework began important connections and implemented necessary PSEs that will help strengthen and expand the work moving forward—potentially leading to a true culture shift in LHLH and the way it integrates the community.



## Lessons learned and recommendations

- Define, review and discuss on an ongoing basis the commitments set out from the beginning with the different teams of the initiative.
- To restore power balance in a community it is imperative that partners, decision-makers, and other stakeholders engage in a power analysis. This is an area of assessment for the project in the second year.
- We recommend creating a training schedule and plan prior to hiring the CLs or during the process of interviewing. Due to the diverse time constraints it helps to, consider everyone's availability and pre-determine a tentative schedule, but at the same time be aware that once individual and group projects begin there may need to be some creative adaptation.
- Time can be a barrier. Practice problem solving, be adaptable and get creative. Develop a sustainability plan early to help increase the CLs' number of hours and be able to provide job security.
- Consider having professional support for some of the community meetings as community members may ask for or need assistance during these events. A good example would be child care services.
- The CLs recommended creating teams of a minimum of two CLs for their stakeholder work to ensure continuity if one of them is not available and provide multiple perspectives.
- Be prepared to manage potential turnover in the CL position as there could be family or financial issues that make it difficult for CLs to continue in their role.
- Build a line item into your budget for CL support that includes funding for technology and equipment needs, transportation, child care, and other issues that may create a barrier for the CLs in their role.

# Appendix A. Community Liaison's Job Description



Urban Health Partnerships, Inc.  
425 NE 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, Suite 401, Miami, FL 33137  
O: 786-224-2309 • F: 855-768-3758 • Info@UrbanHS.com

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## Urban Health Partnerships, Inc.

*POSITION TITLE:* Live Healthy Little Havana Community Liaison

### OVERVIEW:

Live Healthy Little Havana is an initiative focused on promoting a healthier Little Havana supported by the Health Foundation of South Florida (HFSF) and the City of Miami. The goal is to strengthen community capacity to collaboratively plan and collectively carry out strategies to improve health. There are three focus areas to the initiative: Physical Activity, Behavioral Health, and Primary Healthcare.

Urban Health Partnerships (UHP) is looking to hire three Live Healthy Little Havana Community Liaisons who are residents of Little Havana. Community Liaisons are community members who are or want to become long-term advocates and champions for positive change in their communities. They will work to engage community members, increase awareness and education around important health issues, and work closely with the Live Healthy Little Havana initiative to ensure that its efforts incorporate the community's voice and are representative of the their needs.

The Community Liaisons that are selected will take part in trainings, professional development opportunities, community workshops, and health impact meetings to support them in becoming long-term advocates of health in Little Havana.

### Main Duties & Responsibilities

The Community Liaison will:

- Build relationships with the community through one-on one interactions and meeting residents at community meeting and events
- Help connect the community with Live Healthy Little Havana projects and leaders
- Help connect residents to events and opportunities for involvement
- Educate the residents about the Live Healthy Little Havana focus areas and inform the teams of the residents' input

- Collect community information through surveys or other assessments and helping to tell the story of the community
- Attend meetings and events related to the Live Healthy Little Havana initiative and support goals of increasing resident engagement in the initiative.
- Ensure the implementation of strategies is reflective of the community's input
- Be in close contact with project leaders and provide updates and information as requested

### **Time Commitment**

Live Healthy Little Havana Community Liaisons must be able to commit to 1 year in the position. Each Live Healthy Little Havana Community Liaison is expected to work between 5-10 hours per week on the tasks described above, for no more than 30 and no less than 20 hours/month.

### **Compensation**

Each Community Liaison will be compensated \$15 per hour for no more than 30 and no less than 20 hours/month.

After this project, there is the opportunity to stay involved in the overall Live Health Little Havana initiative and to potentially be hired to be involved in other activities.

### **Desired Qualifications, Knowledge, Skills & Abilities**

A Live Healthy Little Havana Community Liaison:

- Must live within Little Havana boundaries ([click here for boundaries](#))
- Must have experience with community involvement and outreach related activities
- Must present themselves professionally
- Must be able to work with community in a context-sensitive and understanding way
- Must have availability to attend Community Liaison trainings and supervision meetings (weekly or biweekly)
- Must have availability to meet with community members, leaders, and attend events
- Must be able to provide detailed notes on work to the UHP team and updates for reporting as needed
- Must be able to move around independently
- Strong preference for ability to speak and write Spanish
- Background check completed by UHP

Thank you for your interest in being a Live Healthy Little Havana Community Liaison.

**To apply, please visit our website at [www.urbanhp.org/careers](http://www.urbanhp.org/careers) where you will be asked to provide:**

- Contact information
- Information about your experience and interest
- References
- **Only those who complete the full application on the UHP website will be considered for the position. If unable to submit electronically please contact us at 786-224-2309.**

**Deadline:** Please apply by **March 16, 2018** for full consideration.