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## Public Health Advocates Receives 5-year CDC Cooperative Agreement

Stockton REACH Program to continue successful efforts to reduce health disparities among African Americans in Stockton

**STOCKTON, CA, October 24, 2018** – Public Health Advocates (PHAdvocates) is one of 31 recipients nationwide to receive a 5-year Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) cooperative agreement from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). REACH is a national program focused on reducing health disparities among racial and ethnic populations with the highest burden of chronic disease through culturally tailored interventions.

PHAdvocates initially received a REACH grant in September 2013 and has been working with community partners to reduce disparities by promoting healthy eating and physical activity for African Americans living in Stockton, California. Through that grant, which ended September 2018, PHAdvocates' increased access to healthy foods and water in churches, organizations, and neighborhoods. Simultaneously, PHAdvocates convened community leaders representing targeted census tracts to encourage the City of Stockton to include substantive health policies in its General Plan Update.

Evaluation results from the previous REACH grant indicate that after adopting healthy food and beverage guidelines, substantial behavioral changes and cultural shifts took place within the 10 African American faith-based REACH partners:

- water was exchanged for sugary drinks at church functions; churches incorporated physical activity breaks into educational sessions, bible study, and conferences; and faith leaders regularly promoted healthy foods and beverages from the pulpit
- daily water consumption increased from 86% to 96%
- overall soda consumption decreased from 56% to 47%
- daily fruit consumption increased from 41% to 58%
- daily consumption of green salad increased from 13% to 24%

With the new REACH 2018 cooperative agreement, PHAdvocates plans to continue its efforts to reduce health disparities among Stockton's African American community by increasing access to healthy foods and beverages and advocating for policies that promote healthy active living. PHAdvocates will expand its purpose to support environments for breastfeeding accommodations, improve infrastructure for physical activity, increase clinical linkages through resource liaisons and community resource hubs, and address trauma by helping to build a community of resilience.

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**About Public Health Advocates:** Public Health Advocates (PHAdvocates) is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization at the forefront of solving the obesity and diabetes epidemics by advocating for groundbreaking policies that build a healthier California. PHAdvocates played a leading role in removing soda and junk food from public schools, passing California's landmark restaurant menu labeling law and advocating for a statewide soda warning label law. For more information, visit: <https://phadvocates.org/>.

**About Stockton REACH:** The goal of the Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program is to develop and promote community strategies and policies that improve nutrition, increase physical activity and expand access to healthy foods in Stockton and within organizations that serve the region's African-American community. For more information, visit: <https://www.stocktonreach.org/>.