

SENATOR WALTER RAND INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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WRI ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

WRI Faculty Forum Focuses on Public Health Coalitions in the Region

At the Forum About South Jersey on February 13, 2015, WRI Faculty Fellow, Dr. Bernadette West, presented the findings of her research on public health coalitions and their ability to address the health priorities of the Southern New Jersey region. Her presentation was followed by a panel discussion with key public health leaders in New Jersey: Serita Reels, Public Health Program Prevention Specialist, Division of Family Health Services, New Jersey Department of Health; Paschal Nwako, Camden County Health Officer/Public Health Coordinator, Camden County Health and Human Services; and Diane Hagerman, Manager, Program Development, New Jersey Health Initiatives, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. While the research demonstrated many advantages in working within a

coalition framework, there were many challenges, as well. One challenge particularly relevant to the South Jersey region is that services are often available but not accessible to the people that need them the most due to limited transportation options. While the missions of coalitions throughout the region are well aligned to the needs identified, more can be done to support them such as providing adequate funding for government mandates and providing support for attaining future sustainability.

This event, which was held at the Cherry Hill Public Library, drew over 70 professionals and provided an opportunity for open dialogue about ways to improve health outcomes in the region. The majority of attendees were overwhelmingly pleased with the event and spoke to the need for continued dialogue about this topic.

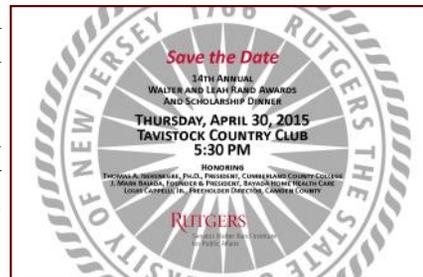
You can access the report by Dr. West by clicking on the above image. [See pictures!](#)

Coalition supported by WRI receives grant

The New Jersey State Attorney General's Office recently announced the award of several grants to support youth in communities throughout the state. The Cumberland County Positive Youth Development Coalition is one of several groups selected. The Boys & Girls Club of Vineland is the lead agency for this effort and will work closely with the Inspira Family Success Center, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Cumberland & Salem Counties, Gateway Family Success Center, Cumberland County Prosecutor's Office, and the Police Chaplaincy Program. The \$250,000, two-year grant is designed to help young people avoid the juvenile justice system and learn leadership and communication skills, improve self-esteem, engage in

physical fitness and nutrition education, prepare for college, learn important life skills and foster an interest in future career opportunities.

The grant is the culmination of work accomplished by the Cumberland County Positive Youth Development Coalition which has been at the forefront of the effort to curb youth delinquency in the county. WRI will provide program evaluation through collecting data, observing meetings, identifying benchmarks, and conducting focus groups.



WRI welcomes Darleen Garcia, who is currently in her second year of the Ph.D. program in Public Affairs-Community Development here at Rutgers-Camden. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Urban Affairs and Planning from Hunter College, and a Master's in Urban Planning and Policy from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Here at WRI, she is currently working on the DOL and FAMCO projects.

WRI also welcomes Nicole Cunningham, who is currently enrolled in the M.A. program in Criminal Justice here at Rutgers-Camden. She received her B.A. degree in Criminal Justice at Rutgers-Camden in 2014. At WRI, she is currently working with the FAMCO project.

Check our updated website: [HTTP://WRAND.RUTGERS.EDU/](http://wrand.rutgers.edu/) and our new Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/walterrandinstitute>

Questions or comments, please contact us at wrand@camden.rutgers.edu or call 856-225-6566.