PENNSYLVANIA ENGAGEMENT SCAN

A look at how Pennsylvanians are engaging with institutions and each other
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Introduction: What is this document for?

It is increasingly apparent that engagement matters. Research in a range of fields shows that strong, ongoing connections between residents, robust relationships between policymakers and their constituents, accessible information on public issues, and positive attachments between citizens and their communities are highly correlated with a variety of positive outcomes, from increased public health¹ to greater K-12 student success² to resilience in the face of natural disasters.³

Unfortunately, in most places it is difficult to get a read on the state of public engagement. There are usually promising innovations and pockets of productive engagement, but they often fly under the radar. Most attempts to measure engagement are narrow project evaluations; they usually don’t paint a larger picture of engagement assets and gaps, let alone describe how new efforts to involve residents are likely to affect those high-level indicators of well-being.

This scan has been developed by Public Agenda for the Pennsylvania Voices for Health project, which is trying to develop and improve ways for people to engage. The goal is to dramatically increase the number of people engaged, especially marginalized communities whose voices are rarely heard on health policy issues. Public Agenda and Altarum are providing assistance and support on the project, which is led by the Pennsylvania Health Access Network.

As part of the project, the scan is intended to help Pennsylvanians understand the broader landscape of engagement in their state. It is not an exhaustive list of engagement activities and opportunities, but it describes different types of engagement and provides examples of each. By illustrating the range of possible engagement building blocks, the scan will help people identify other activities and opportunities and think through how to incorporate some of them as part of a larger strategy for strengthening engagement infrastructure.


The scan is designed to be used with the Community Voices for Health guide, which outlines how organizers can build on engagement building blocks and connector strategies to develop a plan for statewide engagement that is meaningful, powerful, inclusive and sustained. Section 2 of the scan provides pictures of engagement in Pennsylvania based on interviews with engagement leaders and organizers in the state. Section 3 describes some previous or existing efforts to connect Pennsylvanians’ voices with key statewide policy questions and decisions. Section 4 includes a list of organizations and networks that support regularly occurring meetings in communities throughout the state; some of them are health related, while others are organized by different kinds of networks. Section 5 is a list of meetings convened by commonly found local grassroots groups and Section 6 provides examples of local online networks. Any of these vehicles for sustained engagement could be effective building blocks for a statewide plan.

In producing this scan, we were assisted by engagement leaders and organizers who attended meetings in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia in May 2019. At these meetings, participants named a number of the initiatives and regularly occurring engagement opportunities listed in Sections 3 to 6, and several of the participants were interviewed for Section 2. To ensure a statewide perspective, we also interviewed a number of organizers who work in rural areas or smaller cities outside the two major metro areas.
Pictures of engagement in Pennsylvania

This section describes some of the ways in which people are engaging residents in different parts of the state. Based mainly on phone and in-person interviews, the following examples include statewide, county-wide, and local efforts and networks.

Pennsylvania Health Access Network

The Pennsylvania Health Access Network (PHAN) uses various strategies to engage their constituents, including social media, story banking, community outreach events, connecting people to coverage through their helpline, door knocking and utilizing the Voter Activation Network, which includes every registered voter in the state, for list building.

For PHAN staffers Shana Jalbert, Erin Ninehouser and Casey Pegg, face-to-face interactions are essential when engaging the public. “Pennsylvanians, especially rural Pennsylvanians, want to see the people who are reaching out to them. They want you to come to their communities and invest time in them. This builds trust,” says Ninehouser.

One of PHAN’s key engagement tools is story banking. First, PHAN asks people to sign petitions at events or via email. Then someone from PHAN personally calls people who have signed the petition and encourages them to share their stories. Stories can be written testimonials, video interviews, or letters to the editors or op-eds. These stories are shared on PHAN’s social media platforms, at meetings with lawmakers and officials, at other events and with the press. The stories make the issues more visible and connect them to a personal voice. People with the most engaging stories are encouraged to take a more active role by writing letters to legislators, speaking at public events and taking part in leadership development workshops.

In these ways, PHAN helps people “move up the ladder of engagement,” as PHAN Director Antoinette Kraus puts it. For example, Ninehouser points to one individual who shared their story and is now working with an official in Allegheny to organize town halls. The idea is to “connect personal experience to policy and political change,” says Ninehouser.
This is particularly important in small, rural areas, adds Ninehouser, where she works with older residents in particular. She finds that older residents trust news sources like local radio, local newspapers and newsletters found at their local pharmacies or senior housing. At the end of the day, it is about “giving people a seat at the table.”

Engagement strategies used include:

• Leadership development, including nominating residents for state boards
• Door knocking
• Community conversations
• Social media
• Story banking
• Using voter registration lists
• Paid media
• Petitions
• Newsletters and emails
• Enrolling people in the Affordable Care Act
• Building health literacy through education on how to utilize health coverage and interact with the health care system as a whole
• Grassroots advocacy lists
• Action alerts for policies of interest
• Media outreach.

Challenges:

• Capacity to train other organizers
• Organizing is very time- and resource-intensive.
Philly Counts 2020

Philly Counts 2020 is an initiative from the City of Philadelphia to support the upcoming census. By working closely with community members and partners, this program aims to:

- Increase understanding of the importance of the census.
- Educate the public on how to participate.
- Ensure responses from the public for a fair and accurate count.
- Support filling census jobs.

The Complete Count Committee guides Philly Counts. This is a volunteer committee established by the City of Philadelphia to increase awareness about the 2020 census and motivate residents in the community to respond. The committee is chaired by Mayor Jim Kenney and will include elected officials that represent Philadelphia and other leaders in nonprofit organizations, business and government. The Complete Count Committee has 19 working subcommittees that focus on historically undercounted communities and critical parts of the plan. Stephanie Reid is the executive director of Philly Counts 2020. She brings a service background to the position, having been Philadelphia’s chief service officer before this new role.

The federal funds Philadelphia receives based on the census go toward public and social services, including: the Medical Assistance Program and Medicare; Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); school lunch programs; special education grants; funding for improvements to roads, highways and bridges; Pell Grants; and Section 8 housing.

The U.S. Census Bureau has a plan to staff and engage Philadelphians in all activities related to the 2020 census. Philly Counts’ engagement plan is meant to support and elevate the work already planned by the U.S. Census Bureau. Engagement activities are broken into three categories:

1. Nonprofit organizations doing targeted outreach to specific households with their own written plan.
2. Nonprofits and volunteers participating in targeted outreach activities hosted by another organization.
3. Community events, earned media and coordinated communications.
Pennsylvania Voice

Pennsylvania Voice is a nonprofit, nonpartisan group that helps organizations working on a variety of issues “to break down barriers to civic participation, restore confidence in government and bring historically marginalized populations—and their issues—to the center of public discourse.” They work with 40 permanent partner organizations by convening them annually to develop statewide plans. In addition to consumer advocacy, they work to increase voter registration and turnout. Pennsylvania Voice pays special attention to people of color and immigrant and low-income communities and to how shifting demographics can influence the direction of policy. Erin Casey, the executive director of Pennsylvania Voice, says they are “aware of the structural ways democracy is not working. There is a realization that policy to date has been created without community voice and that needs to change.”

Engagement strategies used include:

- Door knocking
- Calls and texts
- Using voter registration lists.

Gaps in engagement identified:

- More civic engagement tools are needed, but many groups cannot afford them. These tools include:
  - Hustle, a texting platform
  - Phone banking
  - Canvassing

Philadelphia’s Office of Civic Engagement and Volunteer Service

Philadelphia’s Office of Civic Engagement and Volunteer Service (Serve Philadelphia/OCEVS) works on community engagement, volunteer engagement and civic engagement. OCEVS accomplishes this through “connecting Philadelphians with volunteer opportunities in their communities.” The office depends on other organizations to supply them with volunteers for programs like the Mayor’s Volunteer Corps. Amanda Finch, the chief service officer for OCEVS, explains that “they develop strong relationships with key community leaders so that the leaders can help them engage the public on their initiatives.”
BeHeard Philly℠

BeHeardPhilly is an initiative maintained by Temple University’s Institute for Survey Research that uses easy-to-take surveys to engage residents of Philadelphia on issues and policies that affect them. The director of BeHeardPhilly, Heidi Grunwald, says “we strive to create an opportunity for ongoing dialogue between all residents, nonprofit and local organizations and government departments.” BeHeardPhilly focuses on giving voice to all, most importantly those underrepresented voices in civic dialogue. Grunwald says that since many Philadelphia residents rely on pay-as-you-go phones and public Wi-Fi, BeHeardPhilly allows residents to select their mode of choice, which includes phone, web or SMS. BeHeardPhilly then “delivers the comprehensive results to key decision-makers, which allows them to ignite positive social change throughout the city,” she says.

Engagement strategies used:

• Online surveys
• Range of technologies for participating
• Tracking demographics of participants to show whether and how the respondents are representative of the larger population.

Community potlucks in State College

Although 71 percent of the population of State College, Pennsylvania, is aged 18 to 24, “the youth voice has been missing in the political process,” says Spud Marshall, a local community builder and consultant. He believes “we don’t come together as often as we should. People are intimidated and unwilling to put themselves out there. Hence, they don’t participate.” Furthermore, “the city council uses conventional models of engagement that attract people that share the same narrative – ‘CAVE people,’ or citizens against virtually everything.”

To counter these trends, Marshall has been organizing monthly community potlucks in his home. During these gatherings, he facilitates conversations on local issues. He has observed that this strategy has resulted in a stronger sense of community. “More and more, there is a new subculture of engagement emerging on the fringe.”
Engagement strategies used:

- Adapted the Art of Hosting framework, an approach to leadership that scales up from the personal to the systemic, using personal practice, dialogue, facilitation and the co-creation of innovation to address complex challenges.
- Adapted Detroit Soup, a crowdfunding potluck that brings people together to raise money and support for community projects.
- One-on-one interviews and coffee meet-ups.
- Seek out connectors who bring people together.
- Leadership development, honing skills such as how to run a meeting and how to talk to a legislator.
- Using libraries (particularly for computers and Wi-Fi access) and other common public spaces.

Community Heart & Soul® in Williamsport

In a rural area with a population of 80,000, Alice Trowbridge, the co-director of a Community Heart & Soul® project in Williamsport, emphasizes storytelling. Heart & Soul is a planning process developed by the Orton Family Foundation, based in Vermont. Some key questions Trowbridge uses when talking to people include: 1) Why do you choose to live here? and 2) If you have lived here your entire life, why do you choose to stay? According to Trowbridge, these questions enable people to “get out of their head and into their heart.” Trowbridge and her group then use community network analysis, a tool that helps identify missing voices and ways to reach and engage them, to determine who is not at the table and who they need to approach.

For Trowbridge, “change happens at the seat of trust.” This is especially true when working with diverse populations. She believes “you must meet people where they are. You have to go to them, they won’t come to you. Engagement needs to be meaningful so that people can express themselves.” Trowbridge feels that she wouldn’t understand their barriers to thriving without their input. She contends that “it is essential for the team to be diverse in order to build trust and build community.”

Engagement strategies used:

- Community Heart & Soul®
- Storytelling
- Community network analysis
Peace Pole and the Second Street Garden in South Williamsport

“South Williamsport is a community that is still rebuilding from racial segregation,” says Star Poole, an active board member of several local civic organizations in South Williamsport. “There were pockets of the community where violence was prevalent. People were afraid to talk to each other. There was not a lot of green space where residents could feel safe.”

Poole was involved in engagement strategies that had lasting effects on the community. She worked with others in the community to plant a Peace Pole, a wooden pole with the phrase “May peace prevail on earth,” and hold a celebration. Shortly after, she started a community garden. Poole says these strategies “gave the community ownership over a process. It is something that they can take care of for years to come. I immediately saw the community changing because the residents had something to focus on and that made everything better. The drug dealers and bar fights went away. Kids began riding their bikes in the streets again because they felt safe.”

Poole is active in many community groups and is now running for the school board. Poole, who is African-American, was invited to join boards where there were only two or three African-Americans. She feels like she is making a difference. “Now people in the African-American community see that I can do it and they feel they can do it too,” says Poole.

Engagement strategies used:
- Community garden
- Peace Pole

Cameron County Project

Cameron County is a former manufacturing hub where, according to local resident Jessica Herzing, residents do not attend community meetings. In fact, it was not uncommon for Herzing to be the only community member at a city council or school board meeting. Herzing began conceptualizing a project to address this lack of engagement while capitalizing on “the power of meeting people where they are.” She created Cameron County Project as a vehicle to use data to engage people in local decision-making. They are currently creating a database of resident stories as part of a Community Heart & Soul® visioning process.

Engagement strategies used:
- Community Heart & Soul®
- Feasibility study
- Story banking
Examples of Pennsylvania initiatives

Before planning new initiatives, would-be organizers can learn from initiatives that have already been attempted. Were they successful? Did they fall short? How many people were engaged, and how?

With these questions in mind, we set out to map the recent history of large-scale engagement efforts in Pennsylvania. We quickly came to several realizations:

- As in many other states, intensive engagement efforts have been far more common at the local level than the state level. We uncovered a number of interesting examples in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and other Pennsylvania cities and towns, but far fewer that encompassed the whole state.

- It was very difficult to find information online on the initiatives that we did uncover – or the ones participants named for us at the engagement scan meetings. Websites often included facts and figures about the issue being addressed, but far less information about how people could get involved and almost no information on how that engagement may have had an impact.

- Thinner forms of participation were more common than thick forms in the information found about engagement in statewide initiatives. The more common thin activities included signing petitions or “liking” an effort on social media, while the thick activities included face-to-face meetings and participation in volunteer work (for more on thick and thin, see the Community Voices for Health guide).

The initiatives we found differed in their main purpose: some were focused on policy advocacy, others were large-scale planning efforts and for a few the main goal was to boost volunteerism. In some cases, while the goal of the overall initiative was clear, it was difficult to describe the role and goal(s) of engagement in the initiative.

At the engagement scan meetings, we asked attendees not only to add to the list of initiatives, but also to provide comments on each example. Those insights are included below, along with information we were able to find on the initiative.
Organizing around Affordable Care Act enrollment
Sharing information about public services

One of the initiatives that surfaced multiple times in our scan meetings was enrollment around the Affordable Care Act (ACA), implemented in 2010. After the ACA was passed, many organizations worked diligently to assist Americans with enrollment in the various insurance options. Scan meeting participants felt the initiative was positive in that many trusted community entities stepped up to share information with their communities and to serve as enrollers.

The Philadelphia Health Access Network (PHAN) was part of a coalition of Pennsylvania organizations working to connect residents to care. Serving as an access point, PHAN provided information and support throughout the enrollment process. They gave referrals to organizations that were enrolling in the ACA and conducted a lot of non-traditional organizing, such as stopping to chat with residents about health care in coffee shops. The City of Philadelphia was one of the many coalition members working as a partner with PHAN during the enrollment initiative.

One of the resources PHAN used to share information and interact with residents was their Facebook page, which provided a space for followers to engage and have conversations about the ACA during this time. Facebook was also used to foster conversations that were happening organically between their followers. One challenge mentioned about the initiative was the lack of resources for local groups. Many grassroots and nonprofit organizations operate on lean budgets and while the passion and desire to connect as many people as possible to the information, services and care they need is in abundance, unfortunately resources and capacity are not.

Organizing around expansion of Medicaid in ACA
Advocacy and sharing information about public services

Medicaid expansion took effect in Pennsylvania in 2015, with those eligible enrolling December 2014. “In just the first two days of enrollment, 41,500 Pennsylvania residents applied for Healthy Pennsylvania coverage. Medicaid expansion – which is a cornerstone of the ACA – has played a significant role in the declining uninsured rate in Pennsylvania (according to U.S. census data, the uninsured rate fell from 9.7 percent in 2013 to 5.5 percent in 2017).”

PHAN worked with coalitions to organize communities and individuals around this initiative. A big part of this was disseminating information through their traditional channels as well as through digital platforms such as Facebook and their website and blog. They actively posted about Medicaid expansion on their Facebook page, encouraging their followers to have conversations and share information. While the initiative was unfolding, many conversations in defense of Medicaid took place on the Facebook page, with PHAN moderating as much as capacity would allow. PHAN also posted articles on their blog that shared data regarding Medicaid and its expansion and invited readers to submit their stories, which would then be shared on the PHAN website.

Philadelphia 2035
Citywide planning

The City of Philadelphia has created a comprehensive plan for managing growth and development in the city. The plan contains multiple components including a citywide vision, an “overarching policy document for Philadelphia2035, the city’s comprehensive plan.” The citywide plan functions as a blueprint, outlining the city’s growth and development for the next 25 years, and contains strategies for overall city improvements, such as quality and diversity of housing, where community resources like neighborhood centers, commercial corridors and transit hubs are situated as well as the engagement between each and expanding access to local parks and open spaces.

The staff of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC) create the plans through an open process that includes outreach to citizens, business associations, institutions and other city agencies. The PCPC then adopts the plan, and government agencies, elected officials and community partners put the plan into action. Individual district plans include a minimum of three community meetings, which are designed to encourage residents to participate in the planning process.

Participants at our Philadelphia scan meeting cited Philadelphia2035 as having positive substantive engagement aspects such as the community meetings. They characterized it as comprehensive, organized, systemic, place-based, and inclusive of a broad cross-section of the population.
Live Well Allegheny
Health and wellness

Live Well Allegheny is a county-wide effort to improve the health and well-being of Allegheny County residents. Throughout Allegheny’s 130 municipalities there are 65 communities that pledged to work with Allegheny County on the initiative, including restaurants, workplaces and school districts that follow the Live Well mission.

Partners are working to create or improve upon initiatives that engage residents in ways that promote or support overall health and wellness, such as outdoor wellness trails, farmer’s markets and other community-supported agriculture and encouraging smoke-free buildings and zones.

In return, Allegheny County provides information on nutrition, managing stress, physical activity and other factors that can directly or indirectly impact the well-being of Allegheny residents.

The Welcoming Pittsburgh Plan
Community relations and support for immigrant communities

An ongoing 10-year initiative to attract 20,000 residents to the Pittsburgh area, the main goals of the Welcoming Pittsburgh Plan are to support the immigrant community living in Pittsburgh, encourage immigrant and Latino communities to come to Pittsburgh, and provide them with the resources to do so.

The Welcoming Pittsburgh Plan has connected with immigrant communities through many channels and has gathered data to help create initiatives that are beneficial to these groups. These methods involve attending public meetings, soliciting information through immigrant community listening sessions and issuing public surveys.

It has also developed short-term and long-term strategies that include:

- Celebrating immigrant heritage (in the form of festivals and other cultural celebrations)
- Increasing transportation accessibility
- Reviewing, updating and translating significant city documents into multiple languages
- Cultivating immigrant and minority businesses.
Pre-K for PA

Advocacy for early childhood education

Pre-K for PA is an initiative established by a statewide coalition including Public Citizens for Children and Youth, an organization dedicated to delivering resources for children and youth to develop necessary life skills. Pre-K for PA was launched in 2014 with the intention of bringing high quality preschool education to at-risk children and to improve affordability of preschool for middle-class families by the year 2022.

Pre-K for PA supports this mission by:

- Researching the benefits of early education and applications in real life.
- Educating the public, government officials and candidates on the importance of a preschool education.
- Advocating for additional state budgeting for preschool education.

The initiative has several social media accounts, including a Facebook page with over 17,000 followers, that links to the official website. Local elected officials, nonprofits, education-related organizations and followers tag Pre-K for PA in supportive and informative posts. Advocacy events, local faith-based gatherings and fun play events for children and families are posted on the events calendar.

Organizing around Community HealthChoices

Sharing information about public services

HealthChoices groups together Pennsylvania’s managed care programs for Medical Assistance (also known as Medicaid) recipients. Physical health managed care organizations provide recipients with quality medical care and timely access to all appropriate physical health services, whether the services are delivered on an inpatient or outpatient basis. Behavioral health managed care organizations provide recipients with quality medical care and timely access to appropriate mental health and/or drug and alcohol services.

Overseen by the Department of Human Services’ (DHS) Office of Long-Term Living and the Department of Aging, the DHS has been coordinating with health care providers to host informational sessions in areas where HealthChoices will be expanding their services. These sessions will outline which services will be available and will help potential recipients pick out the package most suitable to their needs.
HealthChoices started in 14 areas in the Pittsburgh region, and in 2019 they expanded to five additional locations in Philadelphia. Individuals 21 or older who have both Medicare and Medicaid or receive long-term supports through Medicaid because they need help with everyday personal tasks will be covered by Community HealthChoices.

Organizing to ensure full count in the 2020 census
Sharing information about public services

*Philly Counts 2020*, highlighted in Section 2 of this engagement scan, is the city’s effort to support the next United States census. By working closely with community members and partners, this program aims to increase understanding about the importance of the census and educate the public on how to participate. There are opportunities to volunteer and work for compensation, and for businesses, nonprofits and community groups to serve on a subcommittee.

The City of Philadelphia is partnering with the U.S. Census Bureau to ensure fast and easy participation for all; providing multiple locations where people can speak to representatives close to their neighborhood. Their website links to the U.S. Census Bureau website, and there are several blog posts on how the census works, some of the funding benefits Pennsylvanians will receive and plans for continued economic development after the data is analyzed. There is also information about how even a slight drop in count from the 2010 census could result in the loss of millions of dollars, particularly for essential public services.
Other Notable Initiatives

**One Northside**

*Engagement for: local sustainable community development*

Resident-driven initiative to create and maintain a sustainable change for the Pittsburgh region of Northside.

**Vision Zero**

*Engagement for: traffic safety*

Multinational road traffic safety project with the goal of achieving a fatality-free highway system as well as eliminating serious injuries involving road traffic.

**Read by 4th**

*Engagement for: volunteerism*

Citywide campaign throughout Philadelphia bringing together an ever-growing coalition of partners working toward a shared vision that all children will be reading at grade level by the time they enter the fourth grade.

**Organizing to make Philadelphia a sanctuary city**

*Engagement for: advocacy for immigrant issues*

Philadelphia became a sanctuary city in 2014 when an executive order prohibited local police from detaining individuals longer than usual due to their non-citizen status.

**Toward a Trauma-Informed City, Philadelphia**

*Engagement for: mental health and wellness*

Informed by research, and in partnership with the ACE Task Force and Drexel University’s School of Public Health, the Trauma-Informed Care movement aims to build capacity in people, organizations, systems and communities to help better understand and more effectively serve children and families impacted by stress and adversity.
POTENTIAL BUILDING BLOCKS

Statewide organizations and networks that support regularly occurring meetings in communities

Throughout Pennsylvania people are already engaging with one another, on health and other issues, in many different ways. An important step in any engagement strategy is to “meet people where they are” by mapping some of the existing opportunities and understanding what is motivating people to engage. The Community Voices for Health guide describes some tactics for working with these building blocks and connecting them; this section and the two that follow list some of the building blocks that already exist in Pennsylvania.

This section includes two lists: the first relies mainly on web research and the second was generated by participants at the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh engagement scan meetings, with annotation after the fact by Public Agenda.

Organizations and networks from Public Agenda’s initial research

ADVOCACY GROUPS

One Pennsylvania

One Pennsylvania unites low-income and working-class activists with the support of a broad coalition of community, labor, faith and students’ organizations. Their members are workers, students, parents, seniors, people with disabilities and retirees who are “excited to learn, collaborate and build power.” They tackle “fundamental economic justice and political participation problems.”

Are groups meeting? How often?

One Pennsylvania organizes campaigns around a diverse array of issues including access to free water, fair wages for food service and hospitality workers and education rights activism.

They do not meet regularly outside of their actions/demonstrations.
Demographics of Participants
Their membership includes workers, students, parents, seniors, people with disabilities and retirees.

League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
LULAC is the largest and oldest Hispanic organization in the United States. LULAC advances the economic conditions, educational attainment, political influence, housing, health and civil rights of Hispanic-Americans through community-based programs operating at more than 1,000 LULAC councils nationwide. The organization involves and serves all Hispanic nationality groups.

Are groups meeting? How often?
LULAC councils across the United States hold voter registration drives, citizenship awareness sessions, sponsor health fairs and tutorial programs and raise scholarship money for the LULAC National Scholarship Fund. LULAC councils have also responded to an alarming increase in xenophobia and anti-Hispanic sentiment. They have held seminars and public symposiums on language and immigration issues. LULAC holds a LGBTQ Latino Leadership Summit, Dreamer Summit, monthly state conventions, women’s empowerment conference and leadership conference.

LULAC National has three main annual events: National Legislative Awards Gala, LULAC National Women’s Conference and LULAC National Convention.

Demographics of Participants
Predominantly Latino community in Philadelphia.

Disability Rights Pennsylvania (DRP)
Disability Rights Pennsylvania (DRP) protects and advocates for the rights of people with disabilities so they may “live the lives they choose, free from abuse, neglect, discrimination and segregation.”

DRP works toward “a commonwealth where people of all abilities are equal and free.” The website states that “through our legal and advocacy work, Disability Rights Pennsylvania has impacted 32 percent of all Pennsylvanians with disabilities.”
Are groups meeting? How often?
DRP delivers approximately 10 outreach events annually to provide information about services to people with disabilities, family members, advocates and professionals. It provides approximately 50 trainings and presentations annually to people with disabilities, family members, advocates and professionals on a variety of topics relating to disability rights.

DRP operates a toll-free intake system available to all Pennsylvanians, providing legal advice, advocacy and/or information and referral services to over 2,500 callers annually.

They also facilitate forums, webinars, and have an active Facebook page with over 3,300 followers.

DRP has offices in Harrisburg, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

Demographics of Participants
All Pennsylvania residents with disabilities.

Pennsylvania Health Law Project (PHLP)
The Pennsylvania Health Law Project (PHLP) is a nationally recognized expert and consultant on access to health care for low-income consumers, the elderly and persons with disabilities. For more than two decades, PHLP has engaged in direct advocacy on behalf of individual consumers while working on the kinds of health policy changes that promise the most to Pennsylvanians in greatest need.

Are groups meeting? How often?
Various types of engagement include one-on-one interviews, trainings and group meetings.

PHLP provides free legal help to Pennsylvanians who are seeking health coverage through publicly funded programs or have been denied a medically necessary service.

Staff conducts trainings on a variety of health law topics, including health reform, medical assistance (e.g., home and community-based services), Medicare and accessing the health care system.

PHLP also provides leadership and support to consumer organizations and policymakers. They work intensively with clients to turn the lessons learned by PHLP, consumers and other advocates into policy changes that improve the health care system and the lives of low-income consumers.

PHLP maintains an active consumer advisory committee.
Demographics of Participants
Low-income families, persons with disabilities and the elderly, who are struggling to obtain health care coverage or services.

**Support Groups**

- **Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)**
  Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) is an international mutual aid fellowship with the stated purpose of enabling “its members to stay sober and help other alcoholics achieve sobriety.”

  **Are groups meeting? How often?**
  There are at least 10 AA chapters in Pennsylvania. There will be an international convention in Detroit in 2020 as well as Pennsylvania regional conventions. There are also daily AA meetings seven days a week. For example, in Erie there are 15 to 25 meetings per day.

  **Demographics of Participants**
  Due to the anonymous nature of participation, this is difficult to ascertain.

- **Narcotics Anonymous**
  Narcotics Anonymous describes itself as a “nonprofit fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem.” Narcotics Anonymous uses a traditional 12-step model that has been expanded and developed for people with varied substance abuse issues.

  **Are groups meeting? How often?**
  There are at least 10 NA chapters in Pennsylvania. There are thousands of weekly NA meetings, as well as regional service meetings, and regional subcommittee meetings on a monthly basis. Over 400 in Philadelphia alone.

  **Demographics of Participants**
  Due to the anonymous nature of participation, this is difficult to ascertain.

- **National Alliance on Mental Illness – Pennsylvania (NAMI)**
  NAMI has 59 chapters in Pennsylvania, mostly at the county level but some for particular demographic groups. Most chapters have paid staff and most have monthly meetings and/or support groups. NAMI was a key ally for Text, Talk, Act in the National Dialogue on Mental Health.

  **Are groups meeting? How often?**
  Different support groups (i.e., spousal abuse support, children, etc.) meet once a month.
Demographics of Participants
Broad diversity of groups with a stake in mental health and mental illness.

Pennsylvania Autism Services, Education, Resources and Training (ASERT)
Pennsylvania ASERT is an extension of the state’s Department of Public Welfare. ASERT supports individuals with autism and their families, as well as coordinates and supports autism advocacy and awareness.

Are groups meeting? How often?
Every county in Pennsylvania has some combination of in-person and online support groups.

Demographics of Participants
Those seeking ASERT’s services include individuals with autism and their families and those who wish to learn about communicating with individuals who have autism.

Behavioral Health Choices (BHC) support groups
For more information on BHC’s support groups call 484-685-0965
BHC support groups deal with topics such as:

- Mindfulness for chronic pain/disease/fibromyalgia
- Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder and social skills for children/coping and support groups for adults
- Dialectical Behavior Therapy groups for children and teens.

Are groups meeting? How often?
Most groups meet weekly.

Demographics of Participants
The group is for patients 18+ who want to manage their chronic pain through mindfulness techniques.

PA Tourette’s Syndrome Alliance (PATSA)
PA Tourette’s Syndrome Alliance (PATSA) provides support to children and adults with Tourette’s syndrome. PATSA provides information about Tourette’s syndrome to communities, teachers and peers who interact with individuals with the condition.

Are groups meeting? How often?
There is a private Facebook group for people with a connection to Tourette’s syndrome to communicate with each other. There are also four locations that hold in-person, monthly meetings.
Demographics of Participants
Children and adults with Tourette’s syndrome, as well as their families.

Women’s Resource Center
The Women’s Resource Center operates primarily in Southeastern Pennsylvania. They provide support to women and girls and offer resources and tools to navigate significant changes in women’s lives.

Are groups meeting? How often?
The Women’s Resource Center coordinates Girls Lead, a 12- or 15-session workshop for middle school and high school females to develop a host of skills that reinforce positive life skills.

Demographics of Participants
Girls Lead is offered to middle school and high school girls.

Pennsylvania Breast Cancer Coalition (PBCC)
The Pennsylvania Breast Cancer Coalition (PBCC) is a state-funded, independent nonprofit that supports and advocates for women who are diagnosed with breast cancer.

Are groups meeting? How often?
There are many support groups throughout Pennsylvania for those who are newly diagnosed and who were formerly diagnosed. PBCC also hosts the PBCC Conference annually, where they provide 10 to 12 workshops for over 900 participants.

Demographics of Participants
PBCC caters to women who have or had a breast cancer diagnosis.

Pennsylvania Youth Advisory Board
The Pennsylvania Youth Advisory Board supports and advocates for youth in the child welfare system.

Are groups meeting? How often?
There are four major meetings a year, as well as an annual Youth Summit and Older Youth Retreat.

Demographics of Participants
Youth, aged 16 to 24, who have been a part of the child welfare system.
Vision Corps
Vision Corps is a nonprofit organization that aims to support adults and children who are blind or vision-impaired to attain and maintain independence.

Are groups meeting? How often?
Vision Corps has sight loss support group locations throughout Pennsylvania, each location meeting once a month. The goal of Vision Corps support groups is to share feelings, thoughts and information between individuals who are blind/vision-impaired.

Demographics of Participants
Adults and children who are blind or vision-impaired.

HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) - Pennsylvania Chapter
The Pennsylvania chapter of the AAP is affiliated with the national AAP but is a separate 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. They support the national AAP agenda for children and work on children’s initiatives that are specific to Pennsylvania.

Are groups meeting? How often?
Conferences, summits, biannual council meetings, presentations at health-related forums and webinars, monthly e-newsletter and social media presence (Twitter).

Demographics of Participants
The Pennsylvania chapter of the AAP is a state level organization of approximately 2,200 pediatricians who are dedicated to promoting the health and well-being of children and the value of pediatric practice.

American College of Cardiology - Pennsylvania Chapter
The Pennsylvania chapter of the American College of Cardiology, a not-for-profit corporation, is a group of 2,200 cardiologists, fellows-in-training, cardiovascular team members and practice administrators who live and practice throughout the state of Pennsylvania.
Are groups meeting? How often?

**Cardiovascular Care Tour:** Member practitioners host opportunities for policymakers, patients and health plan representatives to “witness firsthand how cardiovascular specialists provide patients with quality, cost-efficient care by employing state-of-the-art technology, health care data and professional training through a team approach.” FIT Jeopardy: Fellows-in-training chapters at various schools/programs around the state form teams and compete at state level. Winners represent the state at the annual national conference. A popular way to promote healthy competition and engagement within state FIT chapters.

**Demographics of Participants**

CVT (cardiovascular team) member designations: Nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist, physician assistant, clinical pharmacist, technician and rehabilitation specialist.

**Pennsylvania Association of Staff Nurses and Allied Professionals (PASNAP)**

The Pennsylvania Association of Staff Nurses and Allied Professionals (PASNAP) is a labor union that represents nurses and allied health professionals.

Are groups meeting? How often?

PASNAP organizes meetings, conducts surveys and supports advocacy on issues important to school and staff nurses.

**Demographics of Participants**

Nurses and health professionals.
AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania
AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania is a Medicaid-managed health plan that supports several community health programs with community organizations across the Lehigh/Capital and New West regions of Pennsylvania.

Are groups meeting? How often?
The network supports groups that meet regularly for maternity support, a childhood obesity initiative, community gardens and more. Partners include the Lehigh Valley Health Network, Booker T. Washington Center of Erie, Casa Guadalupe of Allentown and others.

Demographics of Participants
People of all ages and conditions participate, but there is a special focus on young people, children and the community centers/programs that serve them.

Mainline Health
Mainline Health is a network of hospitals and health centers throughout Philadelphia, Delaware and Montgomery counties.

Are groups meeting? How often?
Member locations provide a variety of classes and events. The Mainline Health Network hospitals and centers are distributed throughout southeastern Pennsylvania.

Demographics of Participants
Free services offered to anyone who is experiencing a wide range of health issues.

Jewish Family and Community Services Pittsburgh
Jewish Family and Community Services provides comprehensive social service programs in the Greater Pittsburgh region: career development, counseling services, guardianship services, immigration legal services, refugee and immigrant services and senior services.

Are groups meeting? How often?
Monthly community events and celebrations, career development assistance, support groups, annual meeting, job recruitment events, personal finance workshops and homework help for immigrant and refugee children.

Demographics of Participants
The career development and support group services are open to all. Several programs are focused on immigrant populations, particularly from Southeast Asia.
Pennsylvania Association of Community Health Centers (PACHC)
PACHC serves federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), FQHC look-alikes (FQHCLAs) and nonprofit rural health clinics (RHCs) around the state of Pennsylvania. They provide training and technical assistance for members to keep them up-to-date on the latest methods of care in all areas of health. Their membership includes corporate members like Aetna and many more local, neighborhood centers.

Are groups meeting? How often?
Annual conference and several webinars throughout the year, but no regular local meetings.

Demographics of Participants
Pennsylvanians in underserved areas of the state, both rural and urban.

Doylestown Health
Doylestown Health is a health care network that serves Doylestown, centered around Doylestown Hospital. The hospital provides a variety of health classes, support groups and special events. Some are fee-based but many are free and require no registration.

Are groups meeting? How often?
A wide variety of groups and services are offered, including bereavement support groups, healthy lifestyle classes, “Living with Cancer” support groups, a mental health series and a breastfeeding mothers group where mothers can share their experiences, weigh their babies and have their questions answered by a lactation consultant.

Demographics of Participants
There are free services offered to anyone who is experiencing a wide range of health issues and to their families.
COMMUNITY-SERVING NETWORKS

Union Project
A community hub and office space in Pittsburgh for grassroots entrepreneurs, artists, nonprofits and people of all faiths to work, connect and have dialogue. Besides offering a space for others to rent, Union Project’s programming includes a variety of ceramics classes, large-scale community art projects and visiting ceramic arts programs.

Are groups meeting? How often?
Union Project hosts a monthly "Creative Conversation" on the topic of making Pittsburgh “an example of how to generate change.”

Demographics of Participants
Serves the neighborhoods of Pittsburgh’s East End.

Penn State Extension
Penn State Extension is an educational organization dedicated to delivering science-based information to people, businesses and communities. They provide access to face-to-face and online education to their customers to help them address problems and take advantage of opportunities for improvement and innovation.

Demographics of Participants
Penn State Extension’s community planning and engagement programming includes articles, webinars, online courses, workshops and videos on topics ranging from how to aid community meetings to strategies for working with volunteers to working with local governments.

La Communidad Hispana, Inc. (LCH)
La Communidad Hispana, Inc. (LCH) is a diverse, bilingual federally qualified health center in southern Chester County, Pennsylvania.

Are groups meeting? How often?
Regularly held ESL, GED, citizenship classes, monthly community events and festivals.

Demographics of Participants
They serve a large Latino population but everyone is welcome to partake in their services.
**Congreso de Latinos Unidos, Inc.**
Headquartered in Philadelphia, Congreso de Latinos Unidos, Inc. is a leading provider of high quality programs with an expert focus on the Latino community. Its Primary Client Model (PCM™), which ensures a client-centered, data-driven approach to service delivery, is the foundation for Congreso’s “nationally renowned emphasis on outcomes measurement.” They provide services in: education and workforce, family and housing services, health promotion and wellness.

**Are groups meeting? How often?**
Job fairs, AIDS Walk, community building events, festivals and a yearly gala.

**Demographics of Participants**
Their clientele is 73 percent Latino and 61 percent low income.

**El Concilio (Council of Spanish Speaking Organizations, Inc.)**
El Concilio provides social, educational, cultural, prevention and intervention services and programs to underserved young people and families in the Philadelphia region. The network serves as “a convener/voice for the diverse Latino community around issues impacting children, youth and families,” and as “a catalyst for maintaining and celebrating the cultural heritages and histories of diverse Latino communities.”

**Are groups meeting? How often?**
Fiestas, cultural parades, an annual gala, emergency resource drives and senior luncheons.

**Demographics of Participants**
They seem to serve a predominantly Puerto Rican and Dominican population.

**Esperanza (Nueva Esperanza)**
Esperanza’s mission is to transform the Hispanic community in Philadelphia and around the country. A faith-based initiative that began with a handful of employees, it now boasts a $40 million annual operating budget, over 400 employees and a broad array of institutions, real estate developments and programs. Through education, economic development, immigration legal services, arts and culture, capacity building and advocacy, Esperanza has become “a leading voice for Hispanics in America.” Esperanza provides services in: education, housing and economic development, immigration, advocacy, job training and arts and culture.
Are groups meeting? How often?
Esperanza holds immigration clinics, a science festival, music events, festivals, tree planting, a winter recital, events for kids, a youth summit, the Minorities in Health Sciences Symposium and legal clinics.

**Boys and Girls Clubs of America (BGCA)**
Boys and Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) is a national network of more than 3,900 neighborhood-based facilities annually serving some 4.6 million young people, primarily from disadvantaged circumstances. The Clubs provide guidance-oriented character development programs on a daily basis for children 6 to 18 years old.

Demographics of Participants
BGCA serves youth in grades one through 12.

**Kiwanis International - Pennsylvania chapters**
Kiwanis International is an international service club founded in Detroit. There are 174 Kiwanis Clubs with over 4,000 members. The Pennsylvania District of Kiwanis International consists of the Kiwanis Clubs and Kiwanis Family Clubs. In addition, they are active in schools and communities that sponsor Service Leadership Programs.

Are groups meeting? How often?
Local chapters meet 1 to 2 times a week as well as through community events they organize. Some local chapters have service learning initiatives that address young adults with mental and physical disabilities, children with special needs and infant health and nutrition. There is an annual Kiwanis convention in June, as well as several conferences and conventions in Pennsylvania throughout the year.

**Lions Club - Pennsylvania chapters**
Lions Clubs International is a global service organization. It has over 46,000 local clubs and more than 1.7 million members in 190 countries around the world. In Pennsylvania, there are 250 Lions chapters, three Lioness and three Leo clubs.

Are groups meeting? How often?
Local chapters meet 1 to 2 times a week as well as through community events they organize. There is an annual state council meeting in May as well as an international conference in July. There are several health-related programs, including SightFirst (Childhood Blindness Project, Lions Eye Health Program, Sight for Kids), Core 4 Preschool, Vision Screening, Lions World Services for the Blind, Diabetes Prevention/Treatment, Lions Affordable Hearing Aid and Low Vision.
Rotary International - Pennsylvania chapters
Rotary International is a global service organization whose stated purpose is to bring together business and professional leaders in order to provide humanitarian service and to advance goodwill and peace around the world.

Are groups meeting? How often?
Meeting times and frequency are dependent on the volume of people participating in any one club. Most clubs meet at least once a month.

Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers (POWR)
The Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers (POWR) is a nonprofit organization with a mission to protect Pennsylvania’s watersheds. POWR operates through direct work and support of other organizations with similar missions. The organization works across the state.

Are groups meeting? How often?
POWR organizes events, workshops and river “sojourns” throughout the year.

Pennsylvania Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
PTA is the largest volunteer child advocacy organization in the United States. A not-for-profit association of parents, educators, students and other citizens active in their schools and communities, PTA is “a leader in reminding our nation of its obligations to children.” The Pennsylvania PTA is divided into 13 regions, each with scores of participating schools.

Are groups meeting? How often?
PTAs typically meet monthly at their schools. The Pennsylvania PTA hosts a statewide convention, as well as trainings and workshops for parent leaders.

Demographics of Participants
The Pennsylvania PTA “represents a diverse membership and is comprised of members who are actively involved in providing children and youth with various programs and advocating on their behalf.”
Organizations and networks named by participants during the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh engagement scan meetings

League of Women Voters (LWV) is a nonpartisan group made up of individuals across the nation who advocate in favor of voting rights for all eligible voters. Made up of 700+ local leagues and 400,000+ members, LWV also advocates for health care reform, immigration reform and the environment. LWV hosts an annual New York meeting to discuss relevant LWV issues with other members. In New York City, LWV also hosts monthly committee meetings surrounding women’s rights, voter and telephone information, voter registration and education. Additionally, LWV hosts a biennial convention where they provide speakers, civic workshops and propose LWV budgeting for the upcoming year. There are 35 local leagues throughout Pennsylvania that conduct their own set of board meetings, educational events and advocacy projects.

Pittsburgh Hispanic Development Corporation (PHDC) is a Hispanic-centered group located in Pittsburgh that helps Hispanic entrepreneurs create development plans to operate businesses effectively. PHDC offers office space, intercultural tutoring and training that equips businesses for success in the United States. Many, if not all, of the mentioned services are offered in both English and Spanish as PHDC hopes to uplift the Hispanic population in Pittsburgh. Every week throughout the summer PHDC also hosts a trilingual program to teach English, Spanish and Portuguese, typically weekly on a short-term semester basis.

Centers for Independent Living (CILs) is a federally-funded program that supports people with disabilities in their pursuit to live and support themselves unassisted. CILs provide development and skills training to supplement what a resident with disabilities may need to perform in their community. These services include, but are not limited to, providing transportation, interpretation services, physical therapy, counseling, children services and disability advocacy. The National Council for Independent Living hosts an annual conference in which they discuss issues associated with independent living.

Rotary International (see entry in table above).
Service Employees International Union (SEIU) is an international union that supports 2 million+ workers. SEIU focuses on health care, public service and property services. Specific committees and caucuses further advocate for minorities, such as the African-American Caucus, Latino Caucus and the Lavender Caucus, which provides communication efforts for the LGBTQ+ community.

Scouting (e.g., Boy Scouts) is a nationwide effort to give American youth hands-on experience with the outdoors. Scouting is offered in five different forms, dependent on age and activity: Cub Scouting, Scouts BSA, Venturing, Sea Scouting and Exploring. Scouting units’ meeting times vary from group to group, but are typically weekly or bi-weekly with meetings waning off during the summer.

Pennsylvania American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organization (PA AFL-CIO) is a conglomerate of organizations consisting of local, national and international unions. PA AFL-CIO seeks to guarantee workers’ rights, preserve the environment and protect Pennsylvania’s communities. PA AFL-CIO hosts labor walks and labor canvassing for branches across the state, events that can span over the course of a month.

Pennsylvania Interfaith Impact Network (PIIN) is a nonprofit organization in Pittsburgh made up of faith-based congregations and local members who seek legislative change. With task forces dedicated to areas where they have identified policy flaws, PIIN develops relationships with members and leaders of the community to influence policy change. These task forces have achieved significant policy changes in their communities, including expanding officer training, fair budgeting for tax dollars going toward education and helping pass an assistance plan to help low-income families with ALCOSAN (local sanitation company) bills. The various task force meetings are held once a month in locations across Pittsburgh.

Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition (PICC) is an organization that supports immigrants, migrants and refugees. PICC member organizations select which pro-immigrant/migrant/refugee policies they will focus on for the upcoming two years and work toward remedying those matters. These topics include access to driver’s licenses, workplace and education justice and federal immigration policy. PICC holds an annual membership meeting for due-paying organizations to report on their progress. PICC’s Youth Organizing Club holds monthly meetings for younger members aged 13 to 25. The youth program seeks to uplift immigrant, refugee and allied youth and give them a voice within PICC.
POTENTIAL BUILDING BLOCKS

Common grassroots groups

The groups described in this section overlap somewhat with those in the previous section, since many grassroots groups are at least loosely organized statewide. Most of the entries in this list were generated by participants at the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh engagement scan meetings, with annotation after the fact by Public Agenda.

Groups listed by participants at the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh meetings:

- Dornsife Center for Neighborhood Partnerships
- Boy/Girl Scouts
- Community centers
- Food co-ops
- Chinatowns and their community/development associations
- After-school programs
- Little League
- Registered community organizations in Philadelphia
- Libraries
- Meals on Wheels
- Tenant associations – public housing
- Churches
- Sports associations – soccer, Police Athletic League, etc.
- Rotary clubs
- Community development corporations
- Interfaith or council of churches type of groups
- Neighborhood advisory councils
- Redevelopment authorities
- Reclaim Philadelphia
- Community bookstores
- Library resident councils
- Civic associations
- Public health clinics
- Community advisory boards
- Community development corporations
- Political ward meetings.
Information gathered mainly from organizational websites:

**Dornsife Center for Neighborhood Partnerships**

- The Dornsife Center for Neighborhood Partnerships convenes programming for a diverse community by weaving together Drexel University’s knowledge resources with the expertise of community-based partners.
  - Aims to address the needs and interests of stakeholders in a way that strengthens, empowers and educates, while maintaining a strong commitment to economic and social justice.
- More than just a service program, the Dornsife Center provides a physical space where students and faculty get to know and work closely with local residents and neighborhood leaders, partnering on initiatives for the long term.
- Programs for people of all ages, and for members of the Mantua, Powelton Village and Drexel communities.
  - Several programs including adult education and workforce access:
- Beachell Family Learning Center hosts a range of programs aimed at supporting residents in their search for family-sustaining wages.
- Community Lawyering Clinic helps workers address some of their most pressing employment-access concerns.
- Some ongoing engagement opportunities include:
  - Dornsife Center Community Dinner - every first Tuesday of the month.
  - Writer’s Room – a community writing workshop.
  - Helms Academy - Goodwill Industries in partnership with Community College of Philadelphia provide a zero-cost community-based educational opportunity for adults over 18 to attain their high school equivalency credentials and up to 30 college credits.
  - Community Garden Day - participants help maintain and harvest the garden and learn urban gardening skills, every other Saturday.

**Boy/Girl Scouts**

- Teaching leadership and values while providing recreational activities for children of all ages, Boy Scouts of America – Cradle of Liberty Council, headquartered in Wayne, Pennsylvania, serves more than 16,500 young people in three Philadelphia counties:
  - Philadelphia County
  - Delaware County
  - Montgomery County.
• Among the largest youth-serving organizations in the state of Pennsylvania, led by over 5,000 volunteers.

• Hundreds of community organizations, representing educational, religious, nonprofit, civic and business organizations, join in partnership with Cradle of Liberty Council by chartering over 500 Scouting units (packs, troops, teams, crews, posts and groups).

• Activities such as:
  • Camping, hiking and other outdoor activities
  • Summer camp.

**Meals on Wheels**

• Leadership organization supporting the more than 5,000 community-based programs across the country that are dedicated to addressing senior isolation and hunger. This network serves virtually every community in the United States and, along with more than 2 million staff and volunteers, delivers nutritious meals, friendly visits and safety checks that enable America’s seniors to live nourished lives with independence and dignity.

• Programs throughout Pennsylvania, including but not limited to: Philadelphia, Montgomery County, Chester County and Greater Lehigh Valley.

• Partnership examples (outside of Pennsylvania) with some health care initiatives:
  • **Virginia:** Innovation Health, a multi-faceted health benefits and insurance company, made a $95,000 contribution to Meals on Wheels in 2019. This donation will support efforts to more fully integrate Meals on Wheels into the health care system as well as expand the nutrition and wellness services they provide for at-risk homebound seniors.
  • **Maryland:** Together in Care: Johns Hopkins, Meals on Wheels team up to help patients:
    • The goal is to secure more funding for Meals on Wheels while helping keep patients out of the hospital with more personalized care.

**Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Nutrition Alliance (MANNA)**

• Uses nutrition to improve health for people with serious illnesses who need nourishment to heal. By providing medically tailored meals and nutrition education, MANNA empowers people to improve their health and quality of life.
• Leader in evidence-based nutrition services, bringing together dietitians, chefs, drivers and thousands of volunteers to cook and deliver nutritious, medically appropriate meals and provide nutrition counseling to neighbors who are battling life-threatening illnesses such as cancer, renal disease and HIV/AIDS.

• From hands-on cooking classes and nutrition counseling to the delivery of three meals a day, seven days a week, MANNA provides nourishment, hope and healing to the Greater Philadelphia area, southern New Jersey and beyond.

• MANNA’s partnership with Independence Blue Cross offers a free and nutritious meal delivery program to Medicare Advantage members who have certain chronic conditions and have recently been discharged from the hospital for four weeks following discharge.

Nonprofit Finance Funds

Nonprofit Finance Funds awarded $1.1 million to Health, Housing and Human Services Pay for Success Projects in April 2017. The grants support outcomes-based approaches to persistent social issues. One of the recipients of that round of grants was:

• The Philadelphia Partnership Supportive Housing Demonstration project, a collaborative initiative of Project HOME, Philadelphia’s Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Services through Community Behavioral Health and Comprehensive School Health. It is designed to create supportive housing for approximately 150 chronic homeless individuals recovering from substance use disorders and/or mental illness. The primary goal is to provide stable housing and additional support for those moving away from addiction and improving their lives.

Reclaim Philadelphia

• Reclaim Philadelphia was founded in May 2016 by former staff and volunteers of the Bernie Sanders campaign in Philadelphia. Their first campaign, protesting corporate power and lobbyists within the Democratic National Convention host committee, was launched in June 2016.

• Reclaim started with a group of 35 members and one campaign and has since grown into an organization with multiple issues-based and electoral campaigns and task forces that are fueled by the engagement of over 300 dues-paying members and hundreds of volunteers.
East End Food Co-op - Pittsburgh

- Full service natural and organic food market located in Pittsburgh. For nearly 40 years, a trusted source for high quality, nourishing food. As a local business, they support sustainable food, environmental responsibility and their community. The co-op market is open to the public and membership is not required to make purchases.

- Their Community Partners Program offers members exclusive discounts when they support local businesses in the community.
  - Local businesses offer discounts to East End Food Co-op members in exchange for being listed in the new member brochure and on the website. Only locally owned businesses are eligible to participate in the Community Partners Program.

Pennsylvania Association of Community Health Centers

- As the state’s primary care association, the Pennsylvania Association of Community Health Centers (PACHC) represents and supports the largest network of primary health care providers in the commonwealth. This network of health centers includes community health centers (FQHCs and FQHC look-alikes), rural health clinics and other mission providers serving more than 800,000 patients annually at 300+ sites in underserved rural and urban areas throughout Pennsylvania.

- Unique nonprofit primary care facilities that provide a wide array of services to Pennsylvanians in underserved areas of the state, offering sliding fees based on income, quality primary health care open to all, highly competent professional teams and community governed and patient centered.

- Provides timely and high caliber educational opportunities to health center leaders, clinicians, staff and others.
  - Trainings cover numerous topics through:
    - Webinars
    - Face-to-face skill-based trainings
    - Conferences.
  - Throughout the year, PACHC organizes training and networking events that address a variety of the community health centers' needs.
Additional examples:

Somali Bantu Community Association of Pittsburgh
An ethnic, community-based nonprofit organization with a vision to foster the rich cultures and traditions of the Somali Bantu community in Pittsburgh.

Is this group meeting?
This group meets several times a month for: welcome meetings, to discuss local issues, community language assistance and resources, 2019 community projects, farmer’s market, cultural celebrations and May Day - Justice for Workers.

Ben Franklin Circles - Philadelphia
Brings people together face to face to discuss how we can improve ourselves and how we can improve our world.
Most of the entries in this list were generated by participants at the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh engagement scan meetings, with annotation after the fact by Public Agenda.

Groups listed by participants at the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh meetings:

- Neighborhood email groups
- Young Involved Philadelphia
- Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development (PHENND)
- Philadelphia Adverse Childhood Experiences Connection
- Local parents’ networks
- Facebook groups
- College students/campus groups
- Action for Early Learning Listserv
- Health Bulletin Listserv
- Parents email groups
- Indivisible
- MoveOn
- Buy Nothing groups
- County-based Facebook groups, such as What’s Up Washington County
- Facebook Community municipality forums
- Resistance groups - Order of the Phoenix

Information gathered mainly from organizational websites:

Indivisible is an organization created in 2017 to uplift progressive leaders supported by communities through grassroots means. Made up of thousands of individual Indivisible groups throughout the country, each group works toward Indivisible’s goal of advocating progressive legislation. Indivisible is led through three entities: Indivisible Civics, Indivisible Project and Indivisible Action. Indivisible Civics provides education surrounding federal and state
policies through trainings and conferences. Indivisible Project advocates for legislative and electoral change through calls to action and targeted electoral programs. Indivisible Action generates tools and software that Indivisible groups can use to canvas, phone bank and generate texts to support selected leaders. Indivisible uses Twitter and Facebook, with each Indivisible group forming their own means of communication within their organization.

**Young Involved Philadelphia (YIP)** is a nonprofit that develops civic engagement among young Philadelphia residents. YIP connects young adults, ranging in age from 22 to 35, to civic groups to further enrich their understanding of business and government. With around 7,000 members, YIP carries out its mission by encouraging young adults to engage in Philadelphia’s civic affairs, connecting young adults to civic groups and fortifying communication between the youth and Philadelphia’s leaders. Events hosted by YIP include leadership trainings and conferences, monthly running clubs, mixers and civic engagement fairs. YIP uses Facebook and Twitter as well as Meetup and Ticketleap - both are sites that promote upcoming events and offer convenient ticket purchasing.

**The Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development (PHENND)** is a network of 30+ Philadelphia colleges and universities, nonprofit organizations, community organizations and motivated individuals that aims to improve the communities and schools throughout the Philadelphia area. In 2018, one of PHENND’s main projects included the K-16 Partnership, which seeks to improve communication between schools and community members in order for students to participate in both school and community events effectively. PHENND also drives attention to matters relevant to Philadelphia’s population, including public health, voting advocacy and promoting a healthy lifestyle. PHENND advocates through Twitter and Facebook, and provides resources to community sites and accounts that are affiliated with PHENND.

**Philadelphia Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Connection** is a part of ACEsConnection, a movement to prevent and heal childhood trauma. Philadelphia’s ACE Connection works with advocates and professionals to help residents living with ACE in the Philadelphia community. Throughout each month, Philadelphia’s ACE Connection hosts various trainings and meetings to highlight and discuss relevant matters such as stress, adversity, trauma and addiction. Once a month they host the Trauma Informed Network, which provides individuals with qualified service providers to address trauma and develop coping skills.
**Action for Early Learning (AFEL)** is an initiative led by Drexel University in collaboration with qualified professionals and organizations to provide education to families in West Philadelphia, specifically for low-income families. AFEL focuses on increasing access to early childhood education, emphasizing the importance of early childhood education and intervention services, and improving childhood literacy. AFEL routinely puts together events, mostly at Drexel’s Dornsife Center for Neighborhood Partnerships. AFEL hosts early education job fairs, promotes enrolling eligible children in kindergarten and preschool and hosts community meetings that invite the community to collaborate on West Philadelphia changes. Other events include family portraits, family dinners, family read-along programs to promote literacy, music lessons and festivals.

**Buy Nothing** is an extensive network of local groups that base their services on the philosophy of “give where you live.” Members of each locally-focused group offer and request goods and services with no compensation required. Philadelphia hosts multiple Buy Nothing groups, such as the ones in the neighborhoods of Roxborough and Graduate Hospital - both with memberships of 1,000+ residents. Members conduct their matters online, in Buy Nothing groups specific to their region. When participants have a deal, they decide on a central place to exchange the good or service offered. Many have cited that their local Buy Nothing group has allowed them to foster communication with others in their neighborhoods. Through Buy Nothing, people talk to new people and find new places in their area, which strengthens their relationships within their communities.

**NextDoor** is an online social network that groups neighborhoods into forums that residents use to facilitate discussions on interests and news relevant to their community. Users of NextDoor have various options for connecting, communicating and engaging within their communities - they can post messages, events, polls and urgent alerts. Individual pages allow residents to informally engage with one other through interdependent communications. These methods involve selling and giving away items, advertising events and recommending local businesses in the area. Additionally, NextDoor allows public agencies that register on the platform, and are verified, to connect with residents within their jurisdiction. Public agencies are then able to geo-target communities as hyperlocal as small neighborhoods or as large as entire cities in order to relay relevant information. Residents in the community can reply to public agencies and develop positive relationships with the public sector, reinforcing strong community relations. NextDoor’s posts notify residents through push notifications and can be shared through Facebook and Twitter.
Over 150 cities in Pennsylvania utilize NextDoor, and within each city numerous neighborhoods are connecting within the platform. For example, in the Juniata neighborhood of Altoona, neighbors are posting about the Logan Township FD blueberry sale, recommending Deejai Thai massage and offering their dog walking services. People share what they love about Juniata ("family friendly," "welcoming" and "quiet") while the Pennsylvania State Police keep the community informed on missing persons and share tips on how to have a safe summer. The Tripp Park neighborhood in Scranton is talking about home improvement and DIY, family activities and live music; in Upper Chichester, neighbors are discussing blacksmithing and woodworking, motorcycles and helping a friend find a room to rent.


