

# ALERT

## *Assessment of Local Environmental Risk Training to Reduce Health Disparities*

### **WHAT**

ALERT--*Assessment of Local Environmental Risk Training to Reduce Health Disparities*—is a training and education project supported through a grant from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. ALERT aims to foster community-academic partnerships in addressing the priority air-quality issues identified by communities of color, low-income neighborhoods, and immigrant populations in Los Angeles. ALERT aims to enhance community-based participatory research (CBPR) skills of researchers and increase the capacity of community based organizations to use scientific data in collaboration with academic researchers.

### **WHO**

ALERT is a collaborative project of the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research (CHPR), UCLA Center Occupational and Environmental Health (COEH), East LA Community Corporation (ELACC), and The Children's Clinic of Long Beach (TCC).

### **WHERE**

ALERT priority areas are the Boyle Heights and Long Beach communities of Los Angeles County.

### **WHY**

The Los Angeles-Long Beach-Riverside metropolitan area has among the worst air quality in the country. Air pollution is associated with approximately 3,700 premature deaths and more than one million related school absences a year statewide. Residents of many impacted communities are not actively engaged with scientists who are documenting the potential adverse health outcomes from related air pollution, as well as possible solutions. These impacts are disproportionately found in low-income, minority communities, which are more often located in close proximity to ports, freeways, rail yards and warehouses. Addressing these environmental health concerns requires partnerships between community members and researchers, enabling communities to more effectively engage in policy efforts to reduce air pollution.

### **HOW**

ALERT is designed to increase environmental public health capacity by building trust between researchers and community members through collaborative education and strategic planning activities. Specifically:

- ALERT will conduct two 4-day certificated ALERT Train the Trainer courses in Boyle Heights and Long Beach to build community capacity to use environmental health data in their planning and advocacy work
- ALERT trainers will receive training materials, a stipend, and technical assistance to conduct Environmental Health Action Planning Workshops in their local community
- ALERT will engage community members to work in partnership with environmental health scientists so that the scientists' work is both relevant and accessible to impacted communities
- ALERT will train environmental health scientists in community-based research methods
- ALERT will fund two pilot community based research projects in which environmental health researchers collaborate with community representatives

### **WHEN**

ALERT launched in October 2009. Training activities will be implemented April 2010 through June 2011.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

ALERT is based at the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research Health DATA Program and can be contacted for more information at [hdp@ucla.edu](mailto:hdp@ucla.edu) or 310-794-0983.