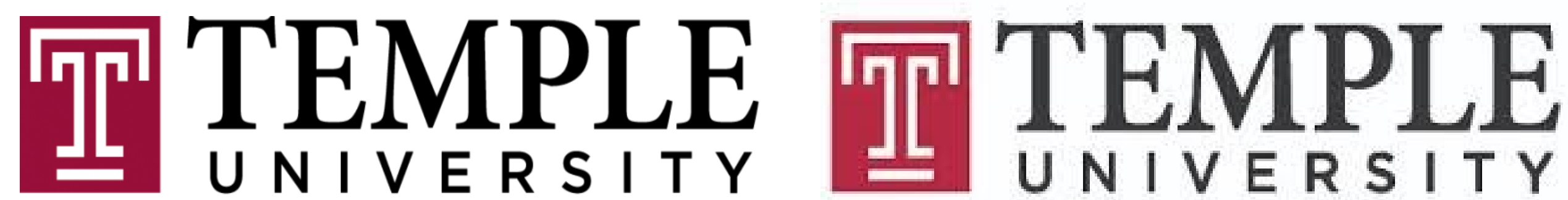


# Bridging the Gaps



Lewis Katz School of Medicine College of Public Health School of Social Work

## Promoting the Health and Well-Being of Communities with the Lenfest Center

### Student Interns:

- Santiago Appiani, Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University
- Michael Mirarchi, Temple University, School of Social Work – College of Public Health

### Academic Preceptors:

- Brian Work, MD, MPH, Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University

### Community Preceptors:

- Alejandra Castano, MSW, PHA Cares Project Coordinator, Lenfest Center for Community Workforce Partnerships, Temple University's Vice President's Office for Public Affairs
- Shirley Moy, MSW, Executive Director, Lenfest Center for Community Workforce Partnerships, Temple University's Vice President's Office for Public Affairs

## COMMUNITY PARTNER

Our Community Partner was the Lenfest Center for Community Workforce Partnerships, a part of Temple University's Office for Public Affairs. The Lenfest Center's mission is to engage stakeholders throughout the Commonwealth to address issues that impact the health and well-being of communities.  
<https://lenfestcenter.temple.edu/>



## BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The Lenfest Center has several programs through which it supports adult education, career development, health literacy, public housing, trauma education, and many other aspects of the North Philadelphia community. North Philadelphia is one of Philadelphia's poorest communities, with a poverty rate of over 45%. North Philadelphia is also an epicenter of gun violence in the city, with 196 shootings in 2022 in the 19140 zip code, which covers which covers parts of North Philadelphia, Nicetown-Tioga and Hunting Park.

## TEAM'S EXPERIENCE

- Supported the Lenfest Center's Resiliency in Communities After Stress and Trauma program, which funds community organizations to promote healing, recreation and education programs for youths in the city.
- Tabled at various events with the Achieving Independence Center, which supports children aging out of foster care. Interns answered health-related questions on topics like parenting, mental health, nutrition, etc.
- Provided mathematics tutoring for adults studying for the GED.
- Tabled at various events with Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) to help promote community resources and summer health tips.
- Prepared and presented various health-related topics at PHA sites.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS, CHALLENGES & JOYS

- Helped adult learners gain confidence in their ability to pass the GED and obtain their high school diploma through mathematics tutoring.
- Discussed community trauma and the effects of violence with neighborhood organization leaders, and saw the profound healing effects of cooperation, dedication and well-funded programs.
- Supported a man who was released from incarceration as he completed an internship arranged by the Lenfest Center and secured full-time employment. He remarked, "if I didn't take this program, I wouldn't be sitting here . . . I would have gone back to selling drugs."

## REFLECTION

- Equipped us to become more caring and understanding healthcare providers
- Taught us new tools and skills to help connect with people
- Deepened our understanding of the challenges faced by vulnerable communities
- Showed us the power of community organizations to promote healing from trauma and stress
- Illustrated, through the Lenfest Center's Branching Up Program, how critical economic opportunity is to preventing recidivism and the importance of providing support to men who are reentering society after having been incarcerated.

