SUMMARY
2019 WESTERN FORUM
FOR MIGRANT AND COMMUNITY HEALTH
February 20-22 Portland, Oregon
2019 Western Forum for Migrant and Community Health

Together We Can, Junt@s Podemos

The 2019 Western Forum for Migrant and Community Health was held February 20-22 in the beautiful Portland, Oregon. Nearly 300 attendees from 15 states participated in the three-day event featuring 3 plenary sessions, 32 breakout sessions, 12 poster presentations, 24 exhibitors, 4 CEU Credit types and a vibrant Mercadito. This year’s theme, Together We Can, Junt@s Podemos, highlights the power of unity and working together. Throughout the Forum participants engaged in peer-learning activities, networked, and learned about innovative programs and strategies related to social determinants of health and advancing health equity.

Wednesday’s Opening Plenary began with a welcome address from Gil Muñoz the Chief Executive Officer at Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center and NWRPCA Board Member followed by Maria Castro the Health Equity Program Analyst at the Oregon Health Authority & Western Forum Planning Committee Member. We then heard national updates from Joe Gallegos, Senior Vice President of Western Operations for the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC).

Mr. Gallegos provided a comprehensive overview of policy changes being considered at the federal level and the potential impacts these changes would have on the country’s Health Centers. Mr. Gallegos outlined NACHC’s advocacy strategy to address the Health Center program’s most pressing concerns related to Medicaid, federal funding for Health Centers, Public Charge and support for the workforce that is needed to deliver high quality, affordable, accessible, and culturally competent care.

The Opening Plenary concluded with a thought-provoking and visually engaging presentation by keynote speaker David Bacon. Mr. Bacon is a California-based writer and photographer who shared photos and stories from the families and farmworkers around our region, drawing connections from agriculture, the labor rights movement, and the health center movement.

Wednesday evening participants enjoyed the Western Forum Mercadito, Poster Session and Welcome Reception. The Mercadito was made up of five Washington and Oregon based artists and vendors sharing homemade art, crafts, books and more. The Poster session had 12 innovative posters from students, academics and health professionals displaying and highlighting best practices, programs, and research in migrant and community health. Throughout the welcome reception attendees networked and enjoyed the music of Nat Hulskamp.

Thursday began with a morning Plenary from Susan Gabbard sharing highlights and demographic changes from the Agricultural Worker Survey results. We also heard from Lisa Miller & Patricia Horton from the National Center for Farmworker Health who shared more on the Agricultural Worker Access Campaign and had attendees energized creating and sharing their own Victory Circles. Thursday also featured a full day of robust workshops, including topics related to social determinants of health, Community Health Workers, Innovative Collaborations Mental Health & Trauma, Policy & Environment and Chronic Diseases. The day ended with an enthusiastically anticipated raffle with Exhibitors.

After more than two days of learning and networking, attendees gathered for the closing luncheon and were treated to a lively, colorful and bilingual performance of “Corre! Corre!” by Teatro Milagro. Artist and author Simon Silva closed things out with a thought provoking presentation sharing stories from his childhood as part of a farmworker family. Simon shared his art, excerpts from his book and inspired attendees to embrace and reimagine the power of creativity.

NWRPCA would like to thank all of the individuals and organizations, including our sponsors, partners, exhibitors, planning committee, presenters, and attendees, who contributed to the success of this year’s Forum. We hope you will join us for next year’s Western Forum for Migrant and Community Health, February 18-20, 2020, in sunny Sacramento, California.
Mercadito

Session

Victory Circle