Independent Health Journalism:

A Strategy to Lessen Racial Health Disparities in Allegheny County, PA

AJP AMERICAN JOURNALISM PROJECT

Image source: http://www.duquesneincline.org/

Why is Health Information Important?

According to Healthy People 2020, one of the Social Determinants of Health is, not surprisingly, Health and Health Care

The Health and Health Care research domain includes issues such as:

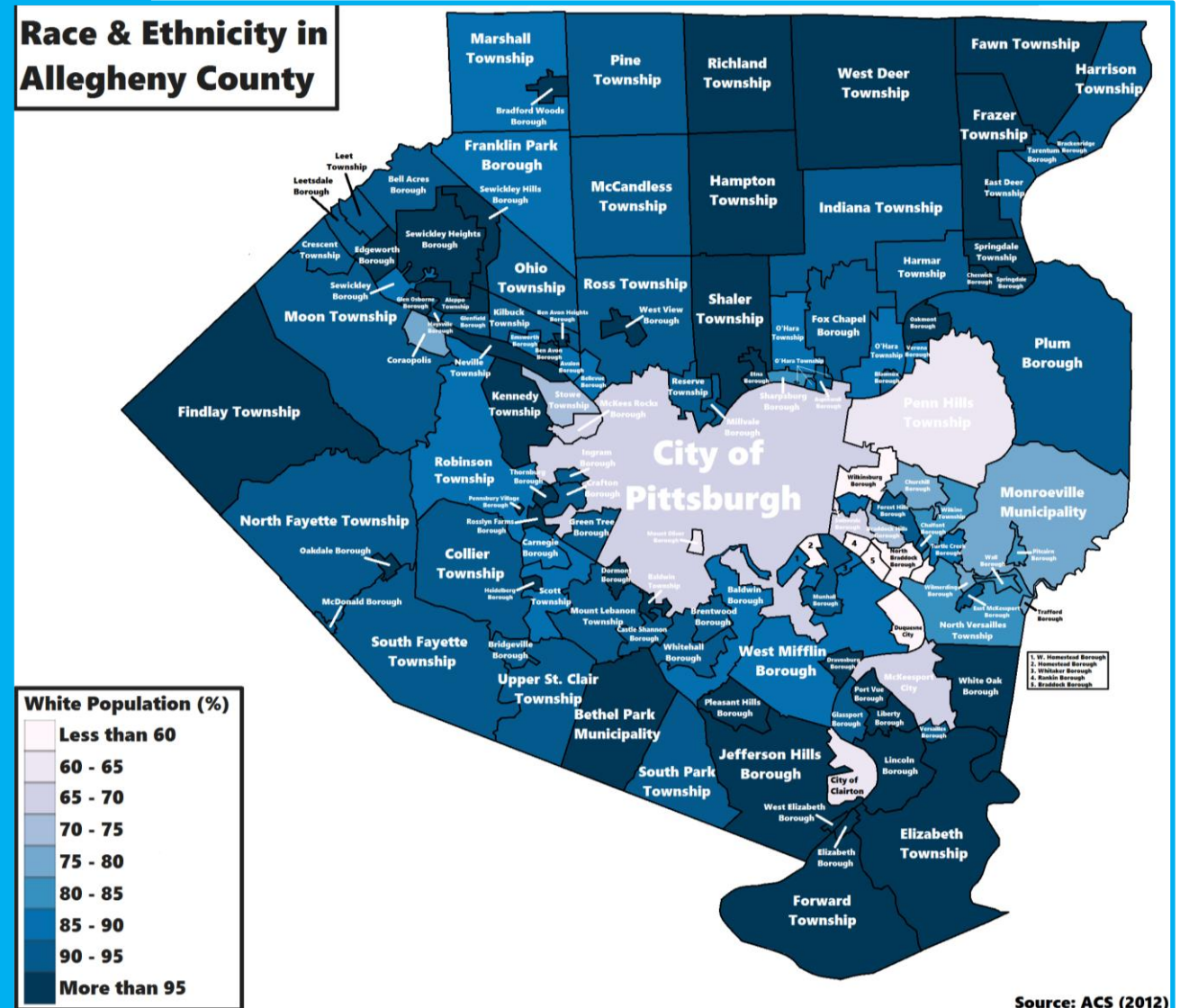‣ Access to Health Care, Access to Primary Care, and **Health Literacy**

Relating the organization's mission to research proven strategies for long-term health can help to drive its mission. Additionally, the crucial piece to providing what is needed is found by working alongside community members to learn what is most valuable. That is why the following research process was utilized:

‣ Familiarize with local demographics and health disparities

‣ Review strategies for closing health information gaps, especially for the most vulnerable

‣ Develop a plan that can benefit not only individuals, but promote long-term systemic change

ALLEGHENY COUNTY

Demographic Overview as a Foundation for Researching Info Gap & Solution

▸ Total population: 1,223,348
   Male: 52.13%, Female: 47.87%

▸ Racial breakdown in Allegheny:
   Black/African American: 13.23%,
   White: 81.52%,
   Other: 5.25%

▸ Median age: 41.3 with 19.75% under 18,
   and 16.76% ages 65+

▸ Pittsburgh is the largest city: 300,286 residents
   Black/African American in Pittsburgh: 23.3%

▸ People suffering from poverty (*below poverty level):*
   Black/African American: 30.24% vs. White: 8.33%

Race & Ethnicity in Allegheny County

White Population (%)
- Less than 60
- 60 - 65
- 65 - 70
- 70 - 75
- 75 - 80
- 80 - 85
- 85 - 90
- 90 - 95
- More than 95

Source: ACS (2012)

"Black adult mortality rates are higher in Pittsburgh than in 98 percent of similar cities."

Source: Howell, Junia, Sara Goodkind, Leah Jacobs, Dominique Branson and Elizabeth Miller, 2019. "Pittsburgh's Inequality across Gender and Race." Gender Analysis White Papers. City of Pittsburgh's Gender Equity Commission.

THE PROBLEM

Septic Health Disparities Exist in Allegheny County across Racial Lines and can Affect Long-Term Health and Civic Engagement

" *When communities and civil society are engaged, they bring lived experience, perspectives and expertise to knowledge generation, policymaking and health responses that are nuanced, effective and sustainable. When communities are mobilized, they bring bottom-up political incentives to demand action and accountability. Conversely, when communities are not effectively engaged, health threats and challenges can escalate...* "

Health inequities exist among different populations in Allegheny County. As an example, we can review troubling statistics for Black/African American community members versus their White counterparts.

7 years less

▸ life expectancy, on average

4 times more likely

▸ to be hospitalized for an asthma condition
▸ to suffer the death of an infant

Sources: World Health Organization's Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for all, Agenda 2030; https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/global-action-plan/acceletator-paper-3-community-civil-society-engagement-17062019-1.pdf?sfvrsn=aea20165_2; https://pittsburghpa.gov/equityindicators/documents/PGH_Equity_Indicators_2018.pdf; https://healthdataalliance.com/partners/; https://www.phaim1.health.pa.gov/EDD/WebForms/HospitalCntySt.aspx;
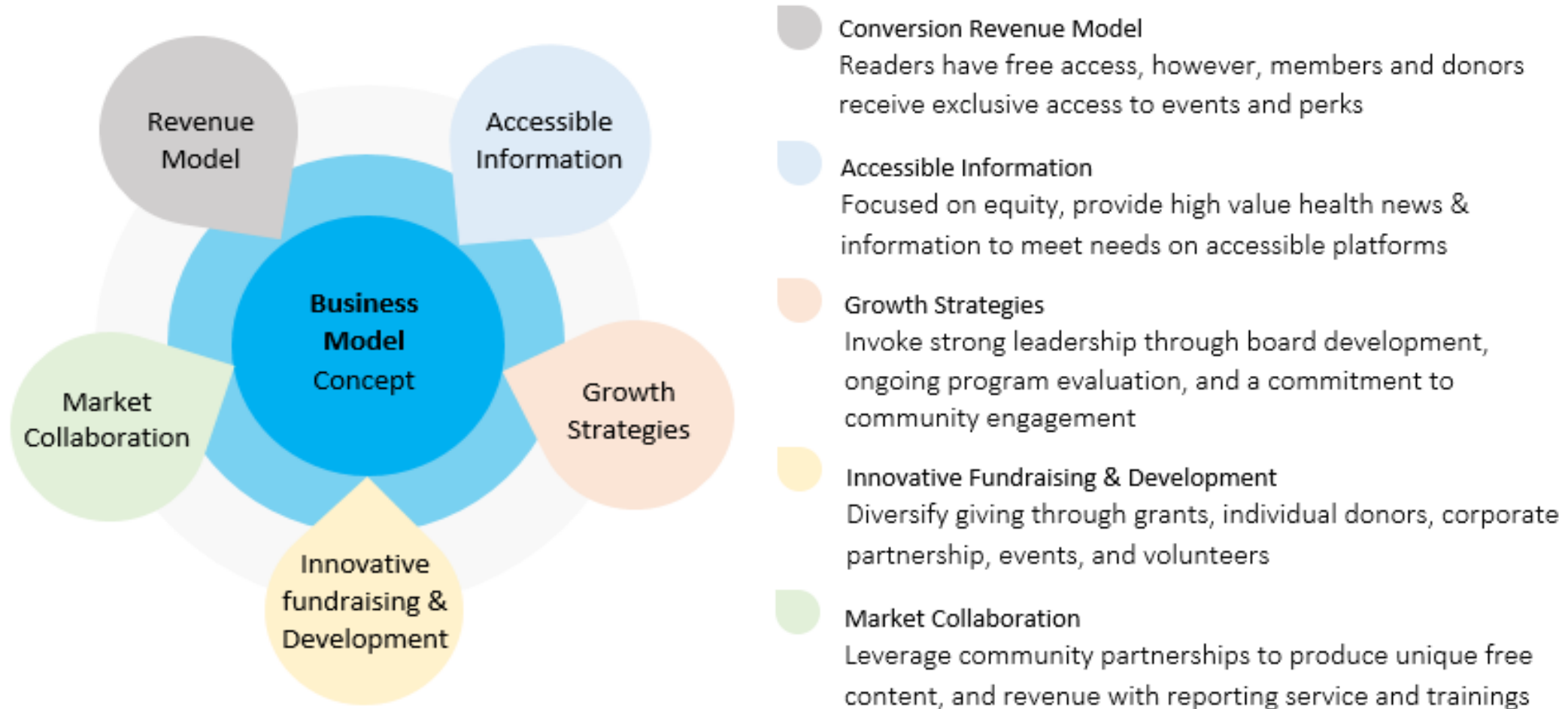
THE SOLUTION

A Nonprofit Newsroom Dedicated to Health Equity & Community Enmeshment

The Pittsburgh area *Needs a narrowed stream* of health information to support populations facing disparities, *and* to offer specialized, systemic training to health professionals and service providers.

▸ No local newsroom is solely focused on health disparities,

▸ Not one provides 100% free content to readership with an investment in combatting racial inequities, and

▸ The reality is that the system is failing people – Although viable nonprofit news and health information is available, there is not one collaborative initiative focused on health news *and* equitable change from within the system
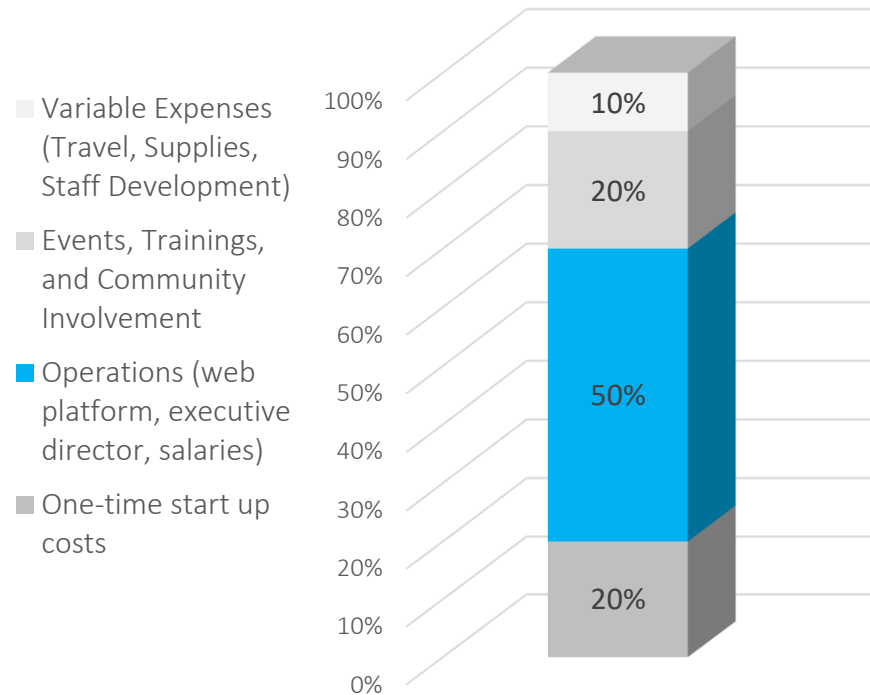
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A Business Modeled Rooted in Collaboration

Supply a Tailored, Community Service to Promote Equity and Civic Engagement

Conversion Revenue Model
Readers have free access, however, members and donors receive exclusive access to events and perks

Accessible Information
Focused on equity, provide high value health news & information to meet needs on accessible platforms

Growth Strategies
Invoke strong leadership through board development, ongoing program evaluation, and a commitment to community engagement

Innovative Fundraising & Development
Diversify giving through grants, individual donors, corporate partnership, events, and volunteers

Market Collaboration
Leverage community partnerships to produce unique free content, and revenue with reporting service and trainings

A $650k Investment may Provide Long-term Stability

YEAR 1 HIGH-LEVEL EXPENDITURES

- Variable Expenses (Travel, Supplies, Staff Development)
- Events, Trainings, and Community Involvement
- Operations (web platform, executive director, salaries)
- One-time start up costs

Stacked bar (top to bottom): 10%, 20%, 50%, 20%

THE FIRST 5 YEARS

$- , $25,000.00, $75,000.00, $125,000.00, $175,000.00

Year 1*, Year 2, Year 3, Year 4, Year 5

- Budget from Initial Investment
- Budget from Revenue
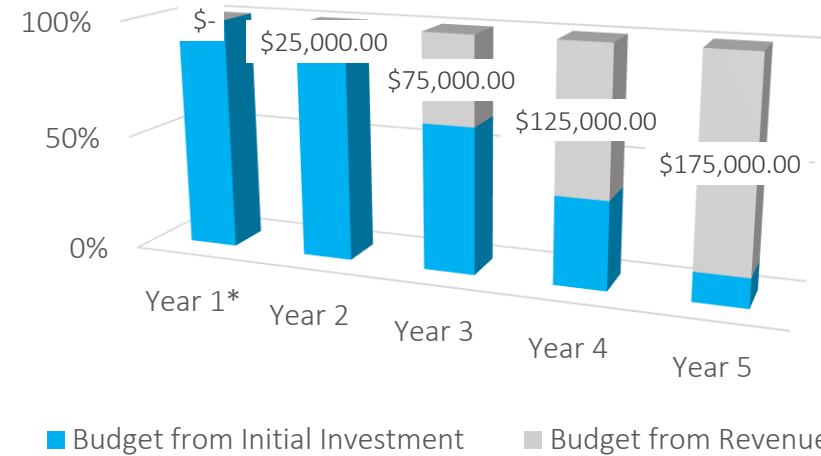
Year	Budget from Initial Investment	Budget from Revenue
Year 1*	$ 250,000.00	$ -
Year 2	$ 175,000.00	$ 25,000.00
Year 3	$ 125,000.00	$ 75,000.00
Year 4	$ 75,000.00	$ 125,000.00
Year 5	$ 25,000.00	$ 175,000.00
	$ 650,000.00	

*Year 1's budget includes startup costs such as branding costs, equipment, web-based application development, events, and outreach.

In addition to traditional nonprofit revenue tactics, the newsroom will leverage partnerships to save costs, provide reporting services, and specialized training

Potential Partnerships

PublicSource – Viable nonprofit newsroom in Pittsburgh focused on social justice, community, and in-depth analysis
> Partnership potential: Content co-creator, event collaborator, reporting services, talent share

UPMC – PA's largest supplier of health services, and second-largest employer, supporter of health equity and community
> Partnership potential: Recipient of specialized training, project partner, community events space

Pittsburgh Health Data Alliance – data and research partnership between UPMC, University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University
> Partnership potential: knowledge share, data talent share, research partner

Allegheny County Health Department – Nationally accredited public health department
> Partnership potential: knowledge share, data talent share, research partner, content co-creator, event collaborator

Opportunities for Collaboration and Revenue Streams are endless, however, reliable leadership must be in place to continuously evaluate and sustain relationships with entities, such as:

▸ **Newsrooms**

▸ **Community Organizations**

▸ **Health Nonprofits**

▸ **Government**

▸ **Health Providers**

▸ **Researchers**

▸ **Local Business**

Community Drives Content and Change from Within

All Allegheny County Residents fall within a Potential Audience Group, and population numbers are on the rise after a decade downfall

‣ Underserved populations

‣ Related news beats and journalists

1,223,34ǧ people

‣ Advocates of people in need

‣ Local business owners

‣ Health systems and providers

‣ Community partners

‣ Government agencies and staff

Source: https://pittsburgh.cbslocal.com/2019/12/20/survey-suggests-pittsburgh-population-growing/#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20most%20recent,U.S.%20Census%20Bureau%20is%201%2C225%2C561.

THANK YOU

Next steps:

▸ Deepen understanding of underserved communities

▸ Identify and Initiate community partnerships to co-create and implement in-depth research

▸ Review findings with stakeholders to identify desired outcomes of health journalism project

▸ Define audiences, messaging, brand & content focus

▸ Re-evaluate business plan based on review of findings

▸ Questions?

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