



Anatomy of a Crisis: Impact of Racism on Public Health in America

Episode 4: Confronting Environmental Racism

Join Denesha Snell, Beto Lugo Martinez, and Dr. Elizabeth Friedman with [Clean Air Now](#) as they discuss the segregation of pollution and environmental justice.

Produced by Kansas City Public Library in partnership with the Kansas City, Missouri Health Department

Host: [Denesha Snell](#), Member, Library Board of Trustees and Program Director, American Public Square

Denesha Snell, a Kansas City native, is program director for American Public Square. Denesha has devoted her career to address community issues including parent advocacy, cultural diversity, causes of health disparities, violence prevention and improving relationships with community and civic partners. She holds a BS from Tennessee State University and a Master of Education from Rockhurst University.

Guests:

Beto Lugo Martinez, Executive Director, Clean Air Now

Beto is an environmental justice organizer and the executive director of CleanAirNow a grassroots environmental justice organization in Kansas City. Beto serves to raise community voices in the fight against environmental racism and to overcome systemic exclusion of frontline communities from the decision making process. His lived experience, growing up fenceline to a petrochemical facility continues to drive his work at the intersection of environmental justice, climate and public health.

He is a founding member of the California Environmental Justice Coalition, and member of the EJ Leadership Forum and the National Leadership Advisory Board Member of the Moving Forward Network. Beto's contributions to the movement include organizing, climate policy that prioritizes environmental justice and community led research amongst many other community engaged initiatives that directly influenced state policy. Beto has co-authored multiple academic publications on community based participatory research, air pollution, data accessibility, community engagement and guidebook on how to develop an air monitoring network. In August 2021 Beto was invited to serve on the Federal Clean Air Act Advisory Committee, to represent a grassroots frontline perspective. He also serves on the USC advisory board for the Southern California Center for Children's Environmental Health Sciences Translational Research (SC-CCEHTR) and the Advisory Board for the Community Engagement Core of the Southern California Environmental Health Sciences Center at USC (SCEHSC).

Elizabeth Friedman, MD MPH

Dr Friedman has received extensive medical training, first through an Internal medicine and pediatrics residency in Michigan, preventive medicine at University of California, San Diego and later as a fellow at the University of Washington where she trained in Reproductive and Pediatric Environmental Health and Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

Dr. Friedman has significant experience serving overburdened, underserved, environmental justice communities through her clinical experience, in public health service and as a former educator. A

combination of a strong foundation in exposure science and environmental studies and her passion for service, has led her to build a career at the intersection of community health and individual health. Her professional intent is to promote health and well-being through environmental health interventions and academic practices that integrate community driven research to advance climate justice. She has been fortunate to partner with CleanAirNow! to do this type of work in Kansas City. As an environmental health and exposure medicine specialist, she works as the Region 7 MidAmerica-PEHSU director and also as the medical director of the environmental health program at Children’s Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, MO.

References:

[Clean Air Now](#)

[Environmental Racism in the Heartland](#)

[CleanAirNow Environmental Justice Recommendations On The Kansas City Armourdale Land Use General Plan](#)

[Disparities in the Impact of Air Pollution](#), American Lung Association

[Superfund Sites](#)

Find Superfund Sites by state: [Superfund Site Search](#)

[Social Determinants of Health](#)

[Political Determinants of Health](#)

[Structural Determinants of Health Resource Guide](#)

[Kansas City Public Library Reading and Resource List](#)

Production/Credits

Editing: Denesha Snell, David LaCrone

Podcast Artwork: Jennifer Su



Original Artwork: [Lizbeth Alvarez](#) is an art studio major at UMKC. She chose this career because it's important for her to do what she loves and show others about art. She's an aspiring teacher because and loves to see the creativity of others and how we can use art to communicate and express ourselves. She is working on completing her portfolio and looks forward to new experiences and opportunities.

Development Committee: Kamera Meaney (co-chair), Jeni Starr (co-chair), Russell Anderson, Quint Hall, Cheryl Hampton, Amelia McDaniel, Monica Miller, Rita Strickland