

Community Engagement Institute (CEI) Monthly Newsletter

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PUTTING A BOW ON 2024

As 2024 comes to a close, we are putting a bow on the gift of this remarkable year. This year marked CEI's 40th anniversary—a milestone filled with reflection, gratitude, and celebration. Together, we collaborated on impactful community projects, made meaningful strides in advancing equity, and embraced opportunities to grow through challenges and celebrate our successes. With each effort, we strengthened our commitment to making a difference, learning, and building a brighter future. Thank you to our partners, supporters, and co-workers for being an essential part of this journey with us!

CEI HIGHLIGHTS

CEI Celebrates 40 Years of Impact and Innovation

This year, CEI marked a major milestone—40 years of service, growth, and impact. With the theme *Applaud, Appreciate, and Ascend*, the anniversary activities honored CEI's rich history, celebrated present accomplishments, and embraced the possibilities of the future.

The celebration included a wide array of activities, such as a robust social media celebration campaign, a commemorative webpage, and a souvenir historical journal. Staff and longtime partners were recognized for their contributions, and the community was engaged through initiatives like the *40 Acts of Kindness* in August.

The highlight of the year was the October community event, which celebrated CEI's history while showcasing the missions of its current centers and initiatives. The event fostered meaningful conversations, featured live music, and included inspiring speeches from Dr. Rick Muma, WSU President; Dr. Shirley Lefever, WSU Provost; and Dr. Scott Wituk, CEI's Executive Director. With over 100 attendees—including current and former staff, partners, and community members—the gathering embodied the collaborative spirit that has defined CEI for four decades.

As we look forward, CEI remains committed to innovation, collaboration, and community impact. Thank you to everyone who has been part of this journey—**here's to the next 40 years!**

The 40th Anniversary Committee: Adriana Lopez (CDT), Kendra Nguyễn (CPIH), Seth Bate (COD), Angela Gaughan (IMPACT), Megan Mickens (CDT), Patricia Houston (Organizational Culture)



CEI's Center for Public Health Initiatives Serves at Operation Holiday

CEI's Center for Public Health Initiatives team recently assisted HumanKind Ministries to help prepare boxes for their annual Operation Holiday program. The team worked diligently to fill these boxes, which will be distributed to individuals and families in need throughout the community. In total, around 6,000 boxes were packed, contributing to an initiative that serves approximately 15,000 people. Through their efforts, the team demonstrated a shared commitment to supporting neighbors and spreading hope during the holiday season, making a meaningful impact on countless lives.



THE POWER OF US

Thank you to all CEI staff!

Thank you to all CEI staff for an incredible year! Your dedication, collaboration, and passion have made a lasting impact on the communities we serve. Together, we've accomplished so much, and we look forward to continuing this meaningful work in the year ahead. Here's to a strong finish and an even brighter future! *(Pictured below is a portion of our dedicated staff)*



NEWEST MEMBERS OF CEI



Josh Villa
 Community Engagement Coordinator for CEI's [Prevention Initiatives](#)



Olivia Vest
 AmeriCorps Projects Specialist for CEI's [IMPACT Center](#)

WINTER BREAK ANNOUNCEMENT

CEI will observe a winter break from **Saturday, December 21, 2024**, through **Sunday, January 5, 2025**. During this time, our office will be closed, and staff may be unavailable. Regular operations will resume on **Monday, January 6, 2025**. We wish you a joyous holiday season and a happy new year!

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