SCRA Community Psychology Practice Council

Community Psychology Practitioner Profiles Project

Vincent T. Francisco, Ph.D.

 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Job Title	Associate Professor
Workplace	Department of Public Health Education, University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Location	Greensboro, North Carolina
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Professional Affiliations	SCRA/APA Div 27
	Society for Public Health Education
	American Public Health Association

Please describe the work you do, for pay, as a community psychologist, including the setting(s) where you work?

I work as a professor at a university, as Director of Graduate Studies over MPH and DrPH programs, and focus my research on working with communities to build their capacity to create contexts in which all community members can be successful in their lives.

What training/education do you have in community psychology?

Actually, I have no formal training in community psychology per se. My masters degree is in human development, and my doctorate is in developmental and child psychology. I have been attending SCRA biennial conferences since 1991, and have been doing the same work as community psychologists since before then. If pressed, I would describe myself as a boundary spanner, working in the fields of behavioral science, community development, and health promotion.

Please describe how your training/education contributed to your work as a community psychologist. What do you view as the most important skills you learned in your training as a community psychologist.

To answer this question, I would have to point you to the Community Tool Box and all the contents. Being a co-founder and creator with Steve Fawcett, Jerry Schultz and the rest of the team that helped develop it over the years has been an important step to codify all we know about community improvement into a medium through which anyone can make a contribution.

What other experiences or training have contributed to or enhanced your ability to work as a community psychologist?

Seeking out, and working with others who are doing this work. Some of the background can be learned through courses, but working with other professionals and communities that need our help would be the most important.

Are there other ways you use your community psychology background and training, either unpaid or in paid roles other than your primary work?

The things I've learned working with communities carry over to all aspects of my professional and personal life. I hope that it is helping me to continue to become a better person.

What advice might you give to students or people considering community psychology as a career?

Find really good mentors! Start working with your own community. Don't let yourself get tunnel vision by only going to psychology conferences. Also go to other conferences where people are doing the same work (e.g., APHA, Socity for Applied Anthropology, Society for Public Health Education).

State/Country: North Carolina, USA

Primary Place of Employment: University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Areas of Practice Expertise: applied research and program development, collaborative research and community health improvement