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“Building Healthy Neighborhoods” in Tucson

How is your health and the health of your family impacted by your home and your neighborhood?

What makes a “healthy home” or a “healthy neighborhood” or a “healthy lifestyle”?

The Drachman Institute’s Community Outreach Planning and Design Center (COPC) has received a grant to explore these questions with the residents and neighborhoods of the ***Tucson Empowerment Zone*** and selected neighborhoods to the north and south of the University of Arizona.

The ***Building Healthy Neighborhood*** team includes students, staff, and affiliated faculty at the Drachman Institute and College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, and partners in the Colleges of Public Health, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Management, Agriculture and Life Sciences, and Medicine. This team will work with target area neighborhood residents to provide information and assistance to improve the health of neighborhood families and individuals, their homes and their neighborhoods.

This project effort will build on existing partnerships between the Drachman Institute and other team members and the target area neighborhoods, non-profit organizations, area businesses, and the governments of the City of South Tucson, City of Tucson, and Pima County.

Specific project activities will be determined by the interests of the participants but may include:

- Activities to address chronic diseases associated with obesity, poor nutrition, and unhealthy lifestyle choices;
- Activities to address the design, affordability, sustainability, and health impacts associated with housing;
- Screening mechanisms for chronic diseases associated with obesity, poor nutrition, and unhealthy lifestyle choices;
- Designing infrastructure (greenways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, parks, etc.) in neighborhoods and connecting neighborhoods to promote exercise and healthy lifestyles among children and adults;
- Developing policies and strategies to improve, support, and maintain the quality, design, affordability, and health-enhancing attributes of regionally-appropriate housing and neighborhood development.

While the team will work directly with neighborhoods that will be selected based on a demonstrated interest in establishing a neighborhood project, the team’s effort will also include a continuing series of workshops and other events in the target area over the next two years. Contact the Drachman Institute for more information, 626-5293.