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**CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY**
Mary Ann Swetland Center
for Environmental Health

The Swetland Scoop

November 2025

Our mission is to accelerate pathways to vibrant and healthy environments through collaborative research, immersive training, and authentic community engagement.



News & Announcements

Meet the Swetland Advisory Council

We are pleased to announce the newest members of the Swetland Center Advisory

[Council](#). Our council members represent a range of organizations and disciplines integrally linked to the mission and vision of the Swetland Center. Council members advise the Center on strategic directions and partnerships and leverage connections for expanded impact.

SWETLAND ADVISORY COUNCIL



Emily Bacha

Fresh Water Institute



Karen Molly

Case Western
Reserve University



Nicole Burt

Cleveland Museum of
Natural History



Lucy Chamberlain

Philanthropist



Mark Chupp

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Dawn Visions



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Catalytic Change Link



Matt Zone

Western Land
Conservancy

Our Produce Prescription (PRx) initiative exists to rewrite the healthcare story across Cuyahoga County. The goal is to enable Cuyahoga County residents to easily receive PRx, no matter where healthcare is provided. The groundwork is being laid to make this goal a reality.

Building on infrastructure being developed through our CDC-funded REACH grant in partnership with Cuyahoga County Board of Health, we are finding ways to expand PRx to improve health outcomes, uplift local economies, and restore patient dignity and agency.

At its heart, PRx is driven by the belief that food is more than sustenance—it's powerful, preventative medicine. By prescribing fruits and vegetables to individuals with chronic conditions and limited access to nutritious food, PRx has the potential to transform healthcare into a system that addresses root causes, not just symptoms.

Check out the [new page](#) on the Swetland Center website highlighting real stories from local PRx programs.

Sunday Dinner, Reclaimed: How Fresh Produce Transformed Soul Food Traditions

Article Date: October 14, 2025

When Leora Porter learned she was pre-diabetic four years ago, she felt scared and uncertain about her future. What started as a concerning diagnosis became the catalyst for a transformation. Leora would not only reverse her pre-diabetes, but, also shift how she honored her African American food traditions.



"It literally changed my life, because I am no longer pre-diabetic."

[Read Leora's story here](#)

Beyond the Prescription Pad: How One Social Worker Became the Bridge Between Patients and Fresh Food

Article Date: October 14, 2025

Three years ago, Emily Durfey heard about produce prescription programs in passing. As a social worker in a leading healthcare provider's Endocrinology Department, she was intrigued but skeptical. Could fresh produce prescriptions really make a meaningful difference for her patients struggling with diabetes, pre-diabetes, and obesity?

"I wasn't really sure what to expect," Durfey admits. "But my patients really benefited from it."

[Read Emily's story here](#)



Dawn Glasco Assumes Leadership of Nourishing Power Network



Darcy Freedman and Tom O'Brien, Co-Principal Investigators of the Nourishing Neighborhoods Empowering Communities Study, passing the baton of the Nourishing Power Network. Dawn Glasco will coordinate the first phase of sustainability, ensuring the network's continued success.

Dawn Glasco, of Dawn Visions, was selected by a volunteer committee of Nourishing Power Network members to continue leading the network through a one-year grant to support its sustainability phase. Dawn officially started her role on November 1, 2025. You can reach Dawn at nourishingpowernetwork@gmail.com.

"I'm honored to lead the next phase of the Nourishing Power Network. This work is vital for our communities and our shared humanity. I am grateful for the opportunity to continue working alongside residents across neighborhoods who understand our collective effort to create the positive change we want to see. The goals of Nourishing Power Network to establish Nutrition Zones, increase access to fresh foods, cultivate community wealth in all aspects, and collaborate

- Dawn Glasco

New Partnership with Nationwide Children's Hospital

Swetland Center faculty and trainees, along with colleagues from CWRU's Center for Community Health Integration, are working with Linden residents in Columbus to understand housing's impact on infant and maternal health. Led by Dr. Deena Chisolm of Nationwide Children's Hospital and funded by NIH, this research explores solutions to root causes of infant mortality. The CWRU team is supporting development of a system dynamics model and decision support tools to shape future housing policies, programs, and practices designed to promote infant and maternal vitality.



Welcome our New Interns, Jugnu and Zhongyu!



Jugnu Shrestha is a Family Medicine Resident at University Hospitals. She is interning at the Swetland Center this Fall and Spring, primarily supporting PRx infrastructure development within the REACH Project. Jugnu is excited to be part of a project that can be applied in the primary care settings where she intends to work. Learn more about Jugnu [here](#).



Swetland Center. He will primarily work on the REACH Project. Originally from China, Zhongyu hopes to learn more about strategies to support policy justice and promote equity through community-based work. Learn more about Zhongyu [here](#).

Celebrating Swetland's SNAP-Ed Initiatives

The Swetland Center is wrapping up a decade of SNAP-Ed work due to changes in funding for this national program resulting from the "Big Beautiful Bill" passed by Congress in July 2025. In the federal funding bill, SNAP-Ed is no longer funded through a "mandatory" appropriation. All of our SNAP-Ed work will end November 30, 2025. However, the lessons learned and relationships established -- especially with our partners at The Ohio State University -- will continue. We look forward to innovating new approaches to make healthy choices the easiest choices for families in Ohio and beyond.

Highlights of our SNAP-Ed Evaluation Work

- Created and scaled the [PSE READI](#) - an online tool to tailor community nutrition interventions to community readiness and capacity.
- Created and scaled [Produce Path for Customers](#) - an app to support two-way communication about farmers markets and nutrition incentive programs between low-income shoppers and farmers market staff.

Highlights of our SNAP-Ed Direct Education Work (in-field programming launched in January 2025)

- Engaged 2,300+ adults and youth in 300 direct education sessions
- Partnered with the following sites to deliver nutrition and physical activity programming in Cuyahoga County:

Greater Cleveland Food Bank
Hunger Network
CWRU Food Pantry
National Church Residences
Sisters of Charity
Haven Home
The Centers Recovery Housing
The Centers Workforce Development
The Centers Head Start
Catholic Charities Head Start
Catholic Charities Senior Programming

East Cleveland Neighborhood Project
East Cleveland City Schools
Saint Martin de Porres High School
University Hospitals Rainbow BabyCafe
Discovery Point Early Learning Center
AdvantageCLE

Events & Opportunities

Join our Final Seminar for 2025



11/18/2025
9 - 10 AM
Virtual

**REGISTER
HERE:**

<https://tinyurl.com/NovSwetland>



**Accelerating
Progress Towards
Environmental
Health for All
Communities**

CASE.EDU/swetland

Join us for the next Swetland Seminar

**Sociodemographic Composition
and Barriers to Advancements in
Water Treatment in U.S.
Community Water Systems**



Jahred Liddie, PhD
Postdoctoral Associate

*Water, Health & Opportunity Lab
Milken Institute School of Public
Health
George Washington University
[Website](#)*

Studies situated in the US have documented unequal access to safe drinking water and associations between elevated drinking water contamination and adverse health outcomes. However, the underlying data are often analyzed at non-ideal spatial scales, rendering it difficult to interpret and compare findings. Recently released data from the US Environmental Protection Agency offer valuable opportunities to develop nationwide estimates of sociodemographic composition for community water systems (CWS) at the preferred spatial scale, known as the service area boundary. In this talk, I will discuss geospatial approaches to estimate the sociodemographic composition of over 44,000 CWS service area boundaries nationwide. Data quality assessments indicate these approaches estimate total populations well. They hold promise for both improving the available resolution of drinking water quality data for communities in the US and standardizing drinking water quality research that use geospatial data. Next, I'll discuss the use of these estimates in an ongoing study to investigate sociodemographic disparities in the adoption of advancements to water treatment processes among CWS nationwide. Finally, the talk will zoom out and discuss improvements to the harmonization and accessibility of US drinking water data for researchers and the public.

This is a free learning opportunity that is open to the public. Visit youtube.com/@swetlandcenter9524 for a complete video archive of the series.

Register Here

September 23rd at Black Frog Brewery. The "Fill Your Cup" networking event gathered academics, organizational leaders and community partners to discuss future collaborations and opportunities to improve environmental health. The next networking event is planned for Spring 2025 (details coming soon).



Hot Off the Press

Check out our Latest Publications - Owusua add publications

Bold = Swetland Center Affiliates or Trainees

Whitehouse, P., George, D. R., & **Riegal, C.** (2025). [The Quest for Cure of "Alzheimer's": Reimagining the Goal by Changing Culture](#). *Hastings Center Report*, 55, S48-S56.

Johnson, D. A., **Yamoah, O.**, Raghuvanshi, Y., Barnett, T., Blanchette, J. E., & Hatipoglu, B. (2025). [The Associations Between Neighborhood Safety and Address Stability with HbA1c Levels among Adults with Diabetes](#). *AACE Endocrinology and Diabetes*.

Yamoah, O., **Gee, R.**, **Ruhde, N.**, & **Veerasekar, T.** (2025). ["You just made out with what you had": Experiences of food pantry patrons in Northeast Ohio during COVID-19 pandemic](#). *Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition*, 1-15.

Data Days Cleveland

Our Research Scientist **Dr. Emily Nelson** (left) teamed with **Dr. Francisca García-Cobián Richter** (right) to present on their project *FAIR2 Data Chats: A Participatory Research Tool to Advance Public Interest Technology in Data Analytics* at Data Days Cleveland at the Cleveland Public Library.



Infectious Disease Society of America

Swetland faculty Dr. Shannon Conrey presented at the Infectious Disease Society of America (ID Week) on the Prevail Project. Her presentation was titled: Optimizing the sensitivity of detection of respiratory syncytial virus infections in longitudinal studies using the combination of weekly sample testing and biannual serology.



Swetland Spotlight

Consider Using a Community Engagement (CE) Studio

The Community Engagement (CE) Studio team is currently recruiting investigators interested in receiving community input on their research. CE Studios are an evidenced-based consultative model utilized to gain valuable patient or community insight to inform study design, implementation, translation and dissemination. Dr. Darcy Freedman and Dr. Ivory Simms from the Swetland Center provide leadership to

For more information please contact **Dr. Ivory Simms** at ijs34@case.edu.



Community Engagement Studios

Are you engaged in research and looking for community input?

What is a CE Studio?

Community Engagement (CE) Studios are an evidence-based consultative model utilized to gain valuable patient or community insight to inform ongoing research. CE Studios are a one time in-person or virtual discussion with investigators, community experts, and a trained facilitator.

How will I prepare?

Throughout 3-month planning period you will prepare:

- 1-page research overview
- 1-minute video introducing your research
- 10-15 minute presentation

Contact

To request more information please contact Dr. Ivory Simms at ijs34@case.edu

What is the value of a Studio?

CE Studios can be utilized to inform study design, implementation, translation, dissemination, and/or sustainability of ongoing work. Studios support investigators seeking feedback in these areas and help to build community-academic partnerships

How Do I Apply?

Investigators can apply for a voucher through the CTSC for a CE Studio. Vouchers are awarded \$7,500 for an in-person studio and \$6,775 for a virtual studio.



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case.edu/medicine/ctsc



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