



POLLINATORS IN ACTION:

Building Bridges Through Delaware's State Health Improvement Plan

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DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
Division of Public Health



*Partnership for
Healthy Communities*
A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE

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STATE HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SHIP)

What is a SHIP?

- A SHIP is a strategic framework for state health departments and is a requirement for accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB)
- The SHIP identifies a state's health priorities and outlines the actions needed to address them

Purpose:

The SHIP focuses on reducing health disparities and increasing access to essential health services through the use of targeted goals and measurable objectives.

Who is responsible for conducting the SHIP?

- The SHIP is led by the Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) in partnership with the University of Delaware's Partnership for Healthy Communities (PHC) and Epidemiology Program
- The Delaware SHIP engages with stakeholders, partners and communities statewide to assess and address the health needs of Delawareans, forming a coalition to develop and implement the SHIP



STATE, UNIVERSITY, AND COMMUNITY: DELAWARE SHIP COLLABORATION



Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH)
SHIP Lead Agency



University of Delaware (UD)
Partnership for Healthy Communities



UD Epidemiology Program
Research & Data



SHIP Statewide Coalition
Community Organizations and Stakeholders



Community Groups



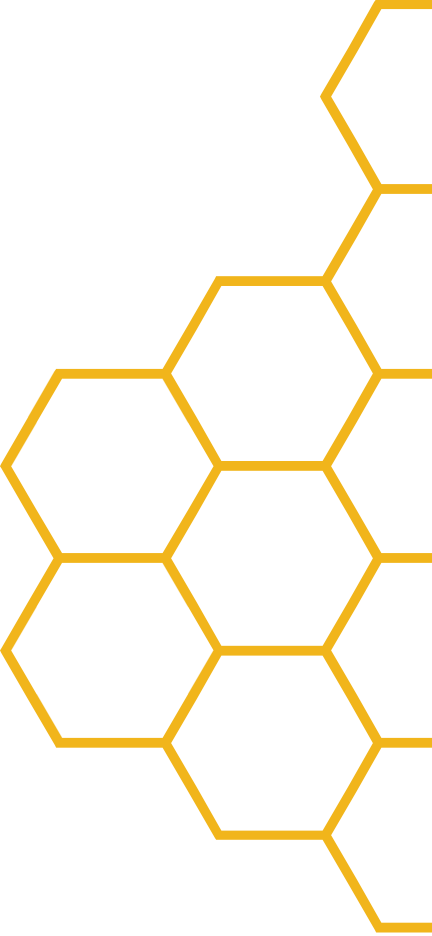
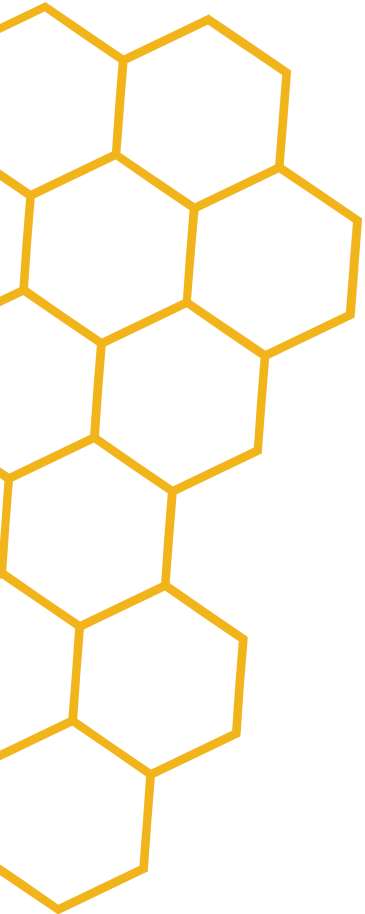
Healthcare Partners



Nonprofits & Advocacy



Local & State Agencies



POLLINATORS IN ACTION: BUILDING BRIDGES THROUGH DELAWARE'S SHIP

- Delaware State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)
- Co-led by University of Delaware Partnership for Healthy Communities (PHC) & Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH)
- A coalition of community, government, and academic partners
- A connector model without direct funding
- Our role
 - Move ideas
 - Build trust
 - Reduce fragmentation



WHY POLLINATORS? THE CHALLENGE OF ALIGNMENT



- Many organizations working toward similar goals
- Limited coordination across sectors
- Risk of duplication and burnout
- Gaps between community voice and institutional systems
- Need for a trusted connector



THE SHIP ECOSYSTEM: MANY PLAYERS, SHARED GOALS

**Community-
based
Organizations**

**Academic
Institutions**

State Agencies

**Students and
Emerging
Professionals**

**Residents and
Community
Leaders**

**Shared Goal:
Measurable Health Improvement**



WHAT POLLINATORS DO (AND DON'T DO)

Pollinators DO:

- Listen first
- Connect partners strategically
- Build trust across systems
- Support action planning
- Elevate community-defined priorities

Pollinators DON'T:

- Own every project
- Duplicate existing work
- Overpromise capacity
- Centralize power

FROM LISTENING TO ACTION: SHIP IN PRACTICE

- One-on-one listening conversations
- Coalition convenings and workgroups
- Identifying shared priorities
- Aligning student and faculty capacity
- Supporting partner-led action plans
- Following up consistently



METAPHORS THAT GUIDE OUR WORK

“Taking the Ticket”

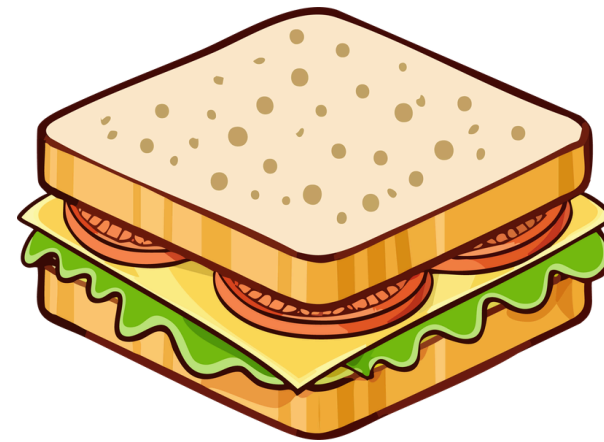
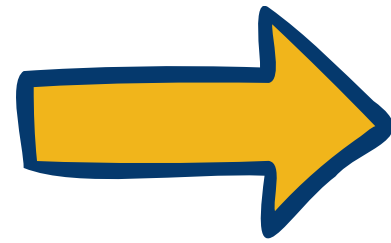
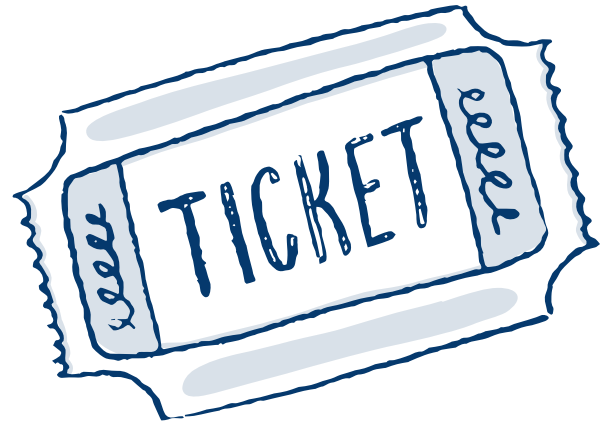
- Listen
- Clarify the need
- Don't overcommit

“Building the Sandwich”

- Layer community need
- Institutional capacity
- Timing and readiness
- Trust as infrastructure

PARTNER PROJECT EXAMPLE: MARIPOSA ARTS

Supporting community-led, arts-based healing in Delaware



Mariposa leads the project
SHIP supports without taking over

SHIP Assists:

- Listen
- Clarify the need
- Assess capacity
- Avoid Overcommitting

BUILD THE SANDWICH:

Community Need

Institutional Capacity

Timing & Readiness

Together we defined:

- Project vision
- Collaborators and resources



New partnership - led by Mariposa

STUDENTS AS VESSELS OF CHANGE



- **Translators between community and academia**
- **Capacity builders without long-term burden**
- **Applied, community-engaged learning**
- **Professional development through service**
- **Mutual benefit model**



MAPPING YOUR OWN POLLINATORS

Who connects across silos in your ecosystem?

Where are ideas getting stuck?

What relationships need strengthening?

What underused capacity exists (students, conveners, data)?

What role could you play?

ECOSYSTEM MAPPING WORKSHEET



Partnership for
Healthy Communities

POLLINATORS IN ACTION: ECOSYSTEM MAPPING HANDOUT

Identify connectors, gaps, and opportunities in your organization or community.

1. KEY PLAYERS

Community Organizations: _____
Government/State Partners: _____
Academic Institutions: _____
Students/Volunteers: _____
Residents/Community Leaders: _____

2. POLLINATORS

Who connects across sectors? Why are they effective?

Name / Role: Trusted Responsive Neutral Well-Networked Other

Name / Role: Trusted Responsive Neutral Well-Networked Other

3. MOMENTUM & GAPS

Where do ideas get stuck? Where is duplication happening?

4. YOUR POLLINATOR ROLE (CHECK ALL THAT APPLIES)

Listener Convener Advocate
 Connector Capacity builder Translator

One action you could take in the next 30 days:

REFLECTION:

What **would change** if connection improved?

Remember:

- You **don't need** funding to lead connection.
- **Trust** is infrastructure.
- **Small**, consistent follow-through builds impact.



WHAT YOU CAN TAKE HOME

- ✓ **Connection can be led in many ways**
- ✓ **Trust-building is strategic work**
- ✓ **Small, consistent follow-through matters**
- ✓ **Students are strategic assets**
- ✓ **Coordination reduces burnout and duplication**

HOPE FOUND HERE: CONNECTION AS ACTION

- **Compassion through listening**
- **Action through partnership**
- **Unity through shared ownership**
- **Collective impact over individual ownership**
- **Hope grows where systems connect**



THANK YOU!

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 **LinkedIn**

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[delawareship_org](https://www.instagram.com/delawareship_org)

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Website: dhss.delaware.gov/dph/