

City of Bloomington, Division of Public Health

Promise of a healthier Bloomington relies on eliminating health inequities

April, 2014 – In February, the Bloomington Advisory Board of Health learned how Minnesota's generally positive healthy ranking hides some of the nation's worst health inequities.

Minnesota Department of Health's Assistant Commissioner, Jeanne Ayers, shared information about disparities identified in the report *Advancing Health Equity in Minnesota: Report to the Legislature*.

Assistant Commissioner Ayers said the report highlights the need to focus on making Minnesota a healthy place for all adults and children, regardless of race, income or where they live.

Following Ms. Ayers, a Bloomington Public Health representative discussed the social conditions that affect the health of Bloomington residents.

Social conditions that affect the health of Bloomington residents

- **High school graduation.** In 2012, the 4-year graduation rate for Bloomington Schools was 80.6%. For Black and Hispanic students the rate was more than 20% lower than White students (1). On-time graduation is a key indicator of future health status.
- **Income.** In 2012, the average income for Whites in Bloomington was about twice as much as the average income of minorities (2). Large disparities in income can set the stage for subsequent social conditions and health access which may affect the health of residents.
- **Poverty.** In Bloomington, 14% of all children lived at or below the Federal Poverty Line in 2012. Poverty rates are higher among Hispanic and African American children than among White and Asian children (2).
- **Lacking health insurance.** In Bloomington, the 2012 rate of uninsured was highest among the Hispanic and Latino population, six times higher than Whites. This despite only a 1.5% difference in the unemployment rate of the two populations (2). For many, having access to health insurance can make achieving positive health outcomes easier.

Sources:

1. Minnesota Department of Education, Data Reports and Analytics
2. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2010-2012



The selection of Ruth Evangelista (pictured above) to receive the Bloomington Health Promotion Award is timely in light of this story. As director of La Misión, a resource center located at Church of the Assumption in Richfield, Ruth is the lead organizer of a vast array of health-related programming and services that support the health and wellness of approximately 3,000 Spanish-speaking Bloomington and Richfield residents each year. Ruth received the award at the April 7 City Council meeting.

For more information, contact: Bloomington Public Health Division | 1900 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington, MN 55431 | PH: 952-563-8900 V/TTY | *Office hours:* Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. *Interpreters and transportation information are available upon request.*