

Natasha's final capstone project for her Master's in Public Health Program was on "Climate change and recurring floods: Using social capital to strengthen community resilience in Eastwick Philadelphia, a known floodplain." Her poster got selected for the 145TH American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. APHA's theme for this year was Climate Changes Health. Natasha's poster got awarded the Student Achievement Poster Session: Top 10 submissions Recognition for her work

According to the 2015 report produced by the Philadelphia's Mayor's Office of Sustainability, Climate change is going to make Philadelphia much hotter, wetter and warmer shortly. Our city requires a more structured, sustainable, and cost-benefit approach to mitigate the negative impacts of heavy rainfall and flooding on people's health and environment. We need a platform where local community members can raise their concerns and seat at a table to make crucial decisions alongside governmental agencies. Involving community members and leaders in planning for city's redevelopment plan, zoning permits, disaster management, and emergency preparedness strategy will result in transparent communication, reduce barriers and benefit both sides of the society.

Also, utilizing knowledge and resources from experts in the field and nongovernmental organizations to help develop stronger social networks. Thus, a collective approach to fight climate change, protect our environment and planet for our future generations is needed.

Increasing human activities such as the excessive burning of fossil fuels like coal and natural gas, deforestation, and extraction of natural gas from the Earth is causing climate disruption were natural hazards such as floods, heavy precipitation, wildfires, and droughts are becoming more frequent and extreme phenomena all over the world. Climate change causes air, water and land pollution that directly or indirectly affects human health and surrounding environment exposing them to a diverse range of chronic illnesses such as heart problems, respiratory diseases and mental health problems such as increased stress, anxiety, depression due to loss of habitat or migration. Millions of people, especially the vulnerable population such as people of color, children, and older communities across borders are at the front lines bearing the burden of climate change every day.

Developing trauma-informed resilient communities in times like these is key for future generation survival. Social Capital consists of three components Bonding, Bridging and Linking to Services. The main aim of social capital is to encourage community voice and provide necessary tools and resources to strengthen trust, nurture long-lasting bonds and develop effective communication relationships between communities and government all levels of the government. Having a robust and sustainable physical infrastructure to combat the impacts of changing climate is extremely important, but it is pivotal to have a healthy social support system that can provide hope for communities to be leaders and strive for a better, greener and cleaner future. A health planet starts with building healthy local communities.