

# 2017 Highlights

## Year Nine Report to the Community



In 2017, The Heart of New Ulm Project's (HONU) Leadership Team, along with more than **80 volunteers** serving on **12 Action Teams** and representing **35 organizations**, helped guide the project to another fantastic year. This report shares just a few highlights from the tremendous work of these teams and *everyone* in the New Ulm community!

### January 2017

## Building on Our Community's Strengths

- To maximize reach, resources and ideas, and help advance work more efficiently, The Heart of New Ulm Project Leadership Team and the New Ulm Medical Center's Community Engagement and Benefit Committee merged to become a single leadership team with a shared mission. The two groups began work on an ambitious three-year plan developed for 2017-2019 to address healthy lifestyles, mental health and addiction and risky use of substances.



### HONU Leadership Team

- Jeff Bertrang, New Ulm Public Schools
- Carisa Buegler, New Ulm Medical Center
- Jeff Dittrich, New Ulm Foundation Board
- Lydia Drexler, Firmenich
- Dr. Nate Groebner, New Ulm Medical Center
- Karen Moritz, Brown County Public Health
- Matt Pearson, Martin Luther College
- Laura Schmidt, Hy-Vee
- Joey Schugel, New Ulm Park and Recreation
- Les Schultz, Brown County
- Audra Shaneman, New Ulm Area Chamber of Commerce
- Virginia Suker Moldan, Turner Hall
- Staff facilitators: Cindy Winters, Jen Maurer

### March 2017

## Sharing Impressive Health Outcomes

- Research results showed that, over a six-year period, New Ulm residents are doing better in controlling their blood pressure, LDL cholesterol, total cholesterol and triglycerides than residents in another Minnesota community. Staff from the Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation presented the results at the American Heart Association's EPI/Lifestyle 2017 Scientific Sessions.

**FACT:** New Ulm residents are doing better than residents in a comparable Minnesota community at controlling:

- ✓ Blood pressure
- ✓ LDL cholesterol
- ✓ Total cholesterol
- ✓ Triglycerides

**April – May 2017**

## Making Bicycling Easier and Safer for Everyone in New Ulm

- In an effort to encourage bicycling for physical activity and promote safety for both kids and adults, New Ulm hosted its second annual bike expo in April. The event was coordinated by the New Ulm Bike Group and other HONU Action Teams, New Ulm Park and Recreation and the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) serving Brown, Le Sueur, Nicollet and Waseca Counties.
- In May, the League of American Bicyclists recognized New Ulm's efforts to make bicycling safe and convenient for residents and visitors throughout the community by designating New Ulm as a Bicycle Friendly Community at the Bronze level. This means that New Ulm provides safe accommodations for bicycling and encourages people to bike for transportation and recreation, which helps improve public health, reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and improve quality of life. The Heart of New Ulm Project, The New Ulm Bike Club and the City of New Ulm all collaborated on the application.

### New Ulm Bike Group Action Team

- Mary Ann Baumgart, community member
- Terry Baumgart, community member
- Bob Beck, community member
- George Glotzbach, community member
- Aldean Hendrickson, community member
- Rayan McMackin, community member
- Tom Schmitz, New Ulm Park and Recreation
- Staff facilitator: Cindy Winters



**May and October 2017**

## Promoting Safety for Our Kids

- To help promote safer routes for students who walk or bike, schools in New Ulm participated in two National Walk or Bike to School Day celebrations and more than 280 kids walked or biked to school those days. The events, which were coordinated by the Safe Routes to School Action Team, also help to promote physical activity for students, and build connections between families, schools and the community.

**May 2017**

## Promoting Fitness

- To promote financial and physical wellness, the New Ulm Area Chamber of Commerce and Ameriprise Financial, with promotional support from The Heart of New Ulm Project, teamed up to sponsor the third annual "Poker Walks" with area businesses. A total of 85 people participated in the walks over four weeks.



June 2017

## Helping Families Eat Healthier and Be More Active

- A total of 30 families received the opportunity to enroll in a new family-focused program to learn practical information on how they can eat healthier and be more physically active together. New Ulm-Healthy Home Offerings via the Mealtime Environment (NU-HOME) is an 18-month research program being conducted by the University of Minnesota's Schools of Nursing, Public Health, and Kinesiology in collaboration with HONU.



### NU-HOME Study Action Team

- Kari Beran, Pro Kinship for Kids
- Jeff Bertrang, New Ulm Public Schools
- Jennifer Beaudette, Minneapolis Heart Inst. Foundation
- Dr. Daryn Collins, New Ulm Medical Center
- Lisa Compton, Brown County Public Health
- Nadia Crooker, Sleepy Eye School District
- Denise Kamm, Brown County Family Services
- Kelly Kunkel, University of Minnesota Extension
- Rebecca Lindberg, Minneapolis Heart Inst. Foundation
- Jen Maurer, New Ulm Medical Center
- Laura Schmidt, Hy-Vee
- Various staff, University of Minnesota School of Nursing
- Cindy Winters, Minneapolis Heart Inst. Foundation
- Facilitator: University of Minnesota School of Nursing

July 2017

## Making It Easier for Everyone to Access Healthier Foods

- To help advance its work to improve access and availability of healthier food choices throughout New Ulm, the Food Environment Action Team participated in a tour of various New Ulm food venues, including the New Ulm Community Garden, schools, the New Ulm Community Market and Co-op, the New Ulm Food Shelf, a local restaurant, senior dining service and aquaponics facility. The purpose of the tour was to determine the strengths of the food environment in the community, discuss barriers that people or organizations may encounter in finding or offering healthier options, and identify opportunities for improvement.



### Food Environment Action Team

- Jenny Beaudette, Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation
- Melissa Hoffmann, Brown County Public Health
- Teri Jespersen, New Ulm Public Schools
- Kelly Kunkel, University of Minnesota Extension
- Laura Schmidt, Hy-Vee
- Joey Schugel, New Ulm Park and Recreation
- Virginia Suker Moldan, Turner Hall
- Jo-Ann Taylor, First United Methodist Church/ NUMAS House
- Staff facilitators: Derek Hersch, Jen Maurer

August – September 2017

# Making Intersections Safer for People Walking and Biking

- To improve safety for pedestrians at two busy intersections, the Coalition for Active, Safe and Healthy Streets and the Safe Routes to School Action Team worked with the City of New Ulm to install a new crosswalk sign at 5th North St. and N. Washington St., and also at 4th South St. and Payne St.

The signs are intended to remind drivers that Minnesota state law requires them to stop for pedestrians in the crosswalk. If there are no pedestrians present, there is no need to stop. The signs were funded through a grant from the Minnesota Statewide Health Improvement Partnership serving Brown, Le Sueur, Nicollet and Waseca Counties.

- To help New Ulm residents experience how street design modifications can help slow traffic and make it safer for children to walk and bike to school, the Safe Routes to School Action Team, in partnership with New Ulm Area Catholic Schools, conducted a week-long safety demonstration project in September.

Temporary curb extensions, or “bump outs,” were installed at 5th N. St. and N. Washington St. The demonstration was funded with the help of Active Places funding from the Center for Prevention at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota.



## Coalition for Active, Safe and Healthy Streets (CASHS) Action Team

- Bob Beck, New Ulm Bike Group
- Dan Beranek, community member
- Jeff Bertrang, New Ulm Public Schools
- Dave Borchert, New Ulm Police Department
- Dave Christian, New Ulm City Council
- Dennis Fredrickson, Regional MN Dept. of Natural Resources
- Brady Gulden, community member
- Melissa Hoffmann, Brown County Public Health
- Jan Keaveny, New Ulm Library
- Cara Knauf, New Ulm Area Chamber of Commerce
- Steve Koehler, City of New Ulm
- Jen Maurer, New Ulm Medical Center
- Karen Moritz, Brown County Public Health
- Sam Parker, Region Nine Development Commission
- Sandy Scheibel, community member
- Tom Schmitz, New Ulm Park and Recreation
- Joe Stadheim, City of New Ulm
- Staff facilitator: Cindy Winters



September 2017

# Increasing Awareness and Promoting Rules of the Road

- To help ensure everyone's safety on New Ulm's sidewalks and streets, and encourage people to make smart decisions when encountering people walking and riding their bikes, the Safe Routes to School Action Team launched a year-long public safety campaign. The SEE.SAFE.SMART. campaign reminds people to SEE people walking and bicycling, act SAFE, and be SMART.

Each month, a different safety message reminds people to be aware of and alert to people who are out walking and biking in the community — especially kids. The safety messages feature photos of kids and adults from New Ulm and all of the schools in New Ulm are participating in the campaign.

The campaign was launched after Safe Routes to School Action Team members heard from parents who said it simply isn't safe for their children to walk or bike to school. They also heard concerns from parents and people throughout the New Ulm community that drivers just don't pay attention anymore, and that most everyone — whether they are walking, biking or driving — is simply not following the rules of the road.



## Safe Routes to School Action Team

- Shelly Bauer, New Ulm Area Catholic Schools
- Jeff Bertrang, New Ulm Public Schools
- Jamie Boelter, New Ulm Middle School
- Dave Borchert, New Ulm Police Department
- Dawn Brown, Washington Learning Center
- Amanda Groebner, community member/parent
- Doug Hazen, River Bend Education District
- Melissa Hoffmann, Brown County Public Health
- Dean Hosna, New Ulm Bus Company
- Julie Hull, Jefferson Elementary School
- Adam Kluver, Jefferson Elementary School
- Jen Maurer, New Ulm Medical Center
- Karen Moritz, Brown County Public Health
- Rachel Suess, New Ulm Police Department
- Staff facilitator: Cindy Winters

**October 2017**

## Promoting Social Connectedness

- To create more areas for people to connect socially, and also give shoppers a gathering area while in downtown New Ulm, the HONU Downtown Action Team and the HONU Mental Health and Wellness Action Team arranged for new tables and seating areas to be installed outside the New Ulm Area Chamber of Commerce office and Subway.

Research shows that social connectedness helps improve health by helping to decrease depression, improve self-esteem and create a sense of belonging. The idea for the tables originated from the results of a survey of downtown business owners done earlier in the year, which touched on a wide range of topics including possible aesthetic improvements. Funding was provided by New Ulm Medical Center's Charitable Contributions.



### Downtown Action Team

- Jeff Amundson, Bank Midwest
- Dave Christian, New Ulm City Council
- Amanda Groebner, community member
- Brady Gulden, Golden Home Care Plus
- Cara Knauf, New Ulm Area Chamber of Commerce
- Sandy Scheibel, KNUJ Radio
- Yvonne Weber, downtown building owner
- Ellwood Zabel, City of New Ulm
- Staff facilitator: Cindy Winters

**November 2017**

## Promoting Well-being Through Holiday Trimmings

- Nearly 290 people made a commitment to improve their well-being and manage their weight during the busiest time of the year by participating in the annual eight-week HONU Holiday Trimmings program. The HONU Community Health Challenge Action Team and Communications Action Team coordinated the program, which was offered through a collaboration of community partners, including Brown County Public Health, Firmenich, KNUJ Radio, Martin Luther College, Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation, New Ulm Area Chamber of Commerce, the New Ulm Journal, New Ulm Medical Center and New Ulm Park and Recreation.



### Communications Action Team

- Missy Dreckman, New Ulm Medical Center Foundation
- Crystal Fleck, New Ulm Public Schools Community Education
- Kitty Hietala, New Ulm Medical Center
- Lisa Pelzel, City of New Ulm
- Sarah Rotering, KNUJ Radio
- Sarah Warmka, New Ulm Area Chamber of Commerce
- Facilitators: Joey Schugel, New Ulm Park and Recreation and Jen Maurer, New Ulm Medical Center



December 2017

## Highlighting Connectedness and Suicide Prevention

- To promote discussion, learning and healing, the Mental Health and Wellness Action Team helped host “Fostering Connectedness for the Prevention of Suicide,” an event that was attended by more than 100 people. Connectedness — the degree to which a person or group is socially close, interrelated or shares resources with other persons or groups — has been identified as an important protective factor against suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

### Mental Health and Wellness Action Team

- Theresa Brown, Brown County Human Services
- Kari Castleman, Brown County Human Services
- Jessica Christenson, Mayo Health System — Springfield
- Gigi DeBerg, Springfield Public Schools
- Sandy Domeier, Sleepy Eye Medical Center
- Jennifer Eckstein, New Ulm Medical Center
- Doug Fox, New Ulm Medical Center
- Julie Hogen, Brown County Human Services
- Jen Maurer, New Ulm Medical Center
- Lori Pickell-Stangel, United Way
- Jeff Schone, Martin Luther College
- Abigail Schwab, Underage Substance Abuse Coalition
- Judy Surprenant, Sleepy Eye Schools
- Bonnie Timm, Brown County Public Health
- Danna Trebesch, Brown County Human Services
- Jesse Vanleeuwe, Eunoia Family Resource Center
- Sandy Walsh, Sioux Trails Mental Health Center
- Facilitator: Karen Moritz, Brown County Public Health

All Year-round in 2017

## Bringing Wellness to Workers Throughout New Ulm

- The HONU Worksite Wellness Action Team hosted quarterly networking and training events that inspired wellness leaders at companies throughout New Ulm to consider new ways to bring wellness into worksites and make it easier for employees to be well at work. A total of more than 96 people from 35 organizations attended throughout the year.

“Every event put together by HONU has been beneficial for our wellness team by providing ideas and resources!”  
— Worksite event attendee



### Worksite Wellness Action Team (and former Community Health Challenge Action Team; teams now combined)

- Jeff Allerson, New Ulm Medical Center
- Jenny Beaudette, Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation
- Lydia Drexler, Firmenich
- Melissa Hoffmann, Brown County Public Health
- Greg Orear, New Ulm Journal
- Joey Schugel, New Ulm Park and Recreation
- Audra Shaneman, New Ulm Area Chamber of Commerce
- Staff facilitators: Derek Hersch, Jen Maurer, Cindy Winters

## All Year-round in 2017

# Bringing Together People, Partnerships and Resources to Support Our Work

- Community partners donated a total of 538 hours of volunteer time in 2017 — valued at approximately \$16,979 — to further the project's mission.
- Brown County Public Health, the New Ulm Area Chamber of Commerce and New Ulm Public Schools donated meeting space totalling 60 hours in 2017.
- People throughout the community donated generously to help ensure that HONU can maintain its momentum and sustain the work. Thanks to local fundraising efforts in New Ulm, \$125,000 was raised in 2017 to fund the project after 2018, when the project's research phase led by the Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation will end. The need is to raise \$500,000 locally by Fall 2020.

## Our Mission

“To improve the health, well-being and quality of life of all New Ulm-area residents through education, available resources, initiatives and partnerships that empower people of all ages to take responsibility for their own health in a supportive environment.”



## Long-term Sustainable Funding Action Team

- Carisa Buegler, New Ulm Medical Center
- Nate Groebner, New Ulm Medical Center
- Shannon Hillesheim, Bank Midwest
- Jen Maurer, New Ulm Medical Center
- Sara Rieland, New Ulm Area Catholic Schools
- Staff facilitator: Cindy Winters

## Improved Health for All (Health Equity) Action Team

- Kari Beran, Pro Kinship for Kids
- Carisa Buegler, New Ulm Medical Center
- Karen Moritz, Brown County Public Health
- Joey Schugel, New Ulm Park and Recreation
- Staff facilitators: Cindy Winters, Jen Maurer



Creating a world without heart and vascular disease



Hearts Beat Back: The Heart of New Ulm Project is a collaborative partnership of the community of New Ulm, the Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation and Allina Health.

[www.heartsbeatback.org](http://www.heartsbeatback.org) • 507.217.5945



[Facebook.com/HeartOfNewUlm](https://www.facebook.com/HeartOfNewUlm)

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