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Home » News » Charleston conference addresses community health

# Charleston conference addresses community health

**HEALTH SCIENCES**

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2016**



## Economic and community developers, educators, health experts and activists meet Nov. 30

More than 160 West Virginia and regional leaders will meet in Charleston Nov. 30 to learn about the connections between geography and public health, and to work on engaging community development and financial institutions in the effort to create a healthier population.

“The Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond uses its role as a convener to provide insight on issues and data that help us to better understand communities,” said Jen Giovannitti, the bank’s regional community development manager. “The role of health and how health outcomes are affected by where a person lives will inform both public health and community development fields in new and powerful ways. I hope this event shows how holistic we have to be to seek stronger, healthier communities for all.”

The conference includes sessions on social determinants of health, obesity and trauma among children, health and housing, aging, neighborhood strategies and accountable health communities.

“It’s been demonstrated repeatedly that the people you interact with each day – your friends and coworkers, your neighbors and community members – have a profound impact on your health,” said Clay Marsh, M.D., vice president and executive dean for health sciences at West Virginia University. “At this event, we’re going to learn from each other how to harness that power to help each other make West Virginia a healthier place.”

Dr. Marsh is the keynote speaker for the "West Virginia at the Intersection of Health and Community" conference. The meeting was organized by the Federal Reserve Banks of Richmond and Cleveland; West Virginia University; the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation; the Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation; and the West Virginia Primary Care Association.

Other speakers and discussion leaders include Dr. Derek Chapman of Virginia Commonwealth University's Center on Society and Health; Dr. John Linton, Rochelle Goodwin and Joshua Austin of WVU; The Rev. Matthew J. Watts of Grace Bible Church; Dr. Michelle Foster of the Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation; and Mary Hunt and Kim Barber Tieman of the Benedum Foundation.

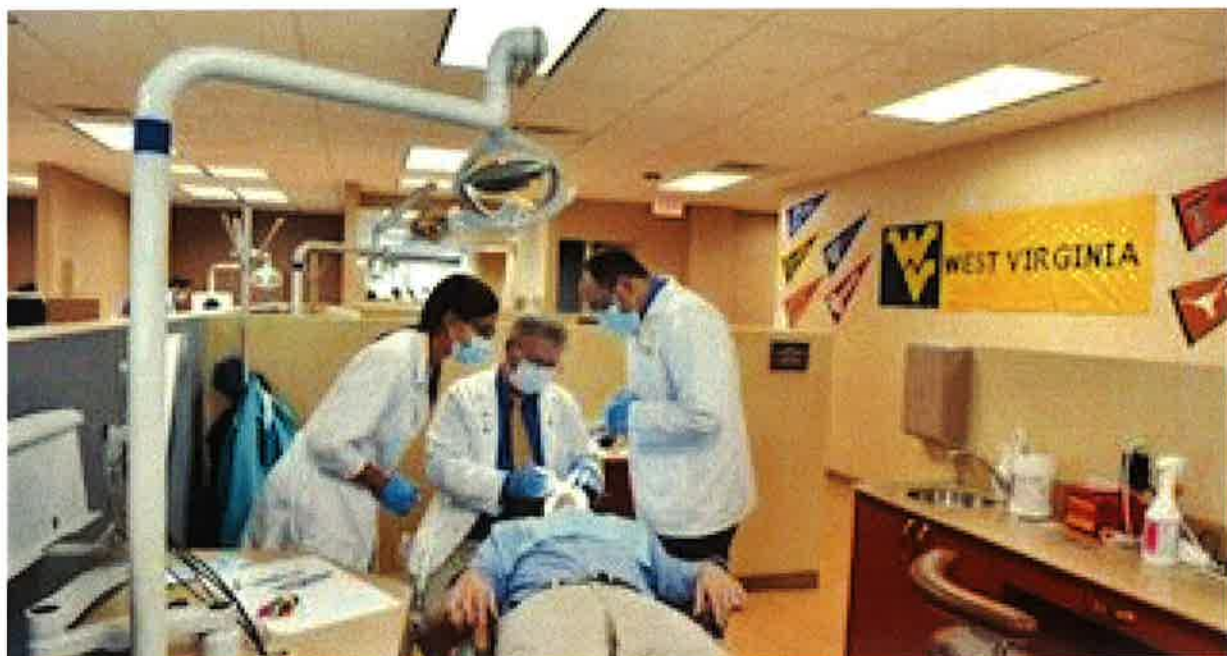
The registration numbers for the conference show a broad interest in health, Marsh said. "We will have people in the room who have never worked together before, and that's powerful. West Virginians realize that health is crucial to our success in many other aspects of life as individuals and communities," he said.

The conference runs 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Nov. 30 at the Columbia Gas Building, 1700 MacCorkle Ave, SE, Charleston.

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