

# CHW Success Story

Germaine Gooden-Patterson, CCHW

Women for a Healthy Environment



This experience sticks out for the CHW because it was in the winter during the second surge of the pandemic. A young lady and her 10-year-old son inherited a home through the death of her son's father. She reached out and scheduled a healthy home assessment because she was noticing sewage smells in her home and was concerned about possible illness from the exposure. getting ill from the exposure. It was much worse than the CHW imagined. As soon as she walked into the home, she could smell the sewage. She and her son were sleeping in the living room because the smell was less noticeable there at night. The sewage problem was beyond Women for a Healthy Environment's (WHE) scope of work. The CHW was able to provide air filters, dehumidifiers and a filtered water pitcher; however, it did not help to resolve the issue. She referred them to temporary housing, but they both needed to be tested for COVID before being placed. WHE got them an UBER to Cornerstone care so that they could be tested and have their results in order to be placed in temporary housing. In addition, the CHW referred the woman and her son to the Salvation Army who was able to finance the cost to fix her sewage problem. A very dangerous situation was resolved because of the CHW.

Germaine Gooden-Patterson joined Women for a Healthy Environment (WHE) as a Community Health Worker in December, 2019 to focus on Air Quality and Asthma in the Mon Valley. WHE is a non-profit whose mission is to educate and empower community members about environmental risk so that they can make healthy choices and advocate for change. WHE's work is centered on protecting children and their families from harmful exposures in the environment and creating healthy places for them to live, learn and play. Through her Environmental Justice work at WHE, Germaine is a part of many collaboratives including VCAN (Valley Clean Air Now) and is on the steering committee. VCAN is a local grassroots organization whose mission is to fight for the residents of the Mon Valley who continue to suffer from severe health, economic, climate and environmental injustice. She has also been part of the ECHO-Hub Team for two years. Prior to joining WHE Germaine worked at the East End Food Coop (a natural & organic food market) for 23 years. Germaine is sole proprietor of Wellness Within where she encourages selfcare through services and products. Services include Certified Health Coaching and Yoga Instruction. She received her HC certification with the Institute of Integrative Nutrition and Yoga training at Yoga Roots on Location (Antiracism through Integrative Raja Yoga Training). Germaine is also the mother of 3 beautiful children, ages 23, 20 and 18. She has resided in Clairton, PA for over 18 years.