

Kellogg Foundation's Christopher and Joint Center's Smedley reflect on Place Matters

WASHINGTON, Sept. 27, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- When it comes to health, place matters. Data demonstrates that health and life outcomes for millions of families, especially people of color, are determined by where they live, work and play. In a new podcast, two experts on health inequities, Dr. Gail Christopher, vice president - program strategy at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and Dr. Brian Smedley, director of the Health Policy Institute at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, explain the significance of "place" in American society.

Christopher and Smedley also discuss the Place Matters project, an initiative led by the Joint Center, that builds the capacity of local leaders around the country to identify and improve social, economic and environmental conditions that shape health. Place Matters seeks to eliminate health inequities by identifying their underlying causes and defining strategies to address them through community action, policy development and measuring the indicators associated with these determinants of health.

During the broadcast, Smedley says, "Because of persistent residential segregation on the basis of race and class, we find that many people of color are living and working in places that are unhealthy due to no fault of their own.... We see that many communities of color are characterized as 'food deserts' lacking access to healthy foods, to healthy spaces for recreation and play, and many of these communities are overrun with environmental health threats from polluting industries."

The Place Matters initiative at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies is funded by the Kellogg Foundation, and also part of the foundation's America Healing initiative, working to promote racial healing and racial equity.

This podcast on Place Matters is available for download at www.wkkf.org and www.jointcenter.org

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W.K. Kellogg Foundation The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), founded in 1930 as an independent, private foundation by breakfast cereal pioneer, Will Keith Kellogg, is among the largest philanthropic foundations in the United States. Guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive, WKKF works with communities to create the conditions where vulnerable children can realize their full potential in school, work and life.

The Kellogg Foundation is based in Battle Creek, Mich., and works throughout the United States and internationally, as well as with sovereign tribes. Special emphasis is paid to priority places where there are high concentrations of poverty and where children face significant barriers to success. WKKF priority places in the U.S. are in Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico and New Orleans; and internationally, are in Mexico and Haiti. For more information, visit www.wkkf.org.

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