HERO ANNUAL REPORT 2017
Celebrating Twenty Years of Advancing Best Practices in Health Promotion
VISION
All workplaces will positively influence the health and well-being of employees, families and communities.

PURPOSE
Advancing health, well-being and performance through employer leadership.
Dear HERO Members, Stakeholders and Friends,

On behalf of the Health Enhancement Research Organization (HERO) Board of Directors and all of our HERO members who are so actively working to advance excellence in workplace health promotion, the HERO team is proud to share our 2017 Annual Report of Accomplishments. What follows are some best examples from this past year about how we are partnering with members, collaborating with allies in our profession and joining with kindred organizations throughout America to advance HERO’s vision: “All workplaces will positively influence the health and well-being of employees, families and communities.” Achieving this vision depends foremost on how engaged our members are in sharing their insights and success stories. This equates to attendance at committees and networking events, studying together and contributing to HERO’s research, education and publications agenda.

It should come as no surprise that, as a research organization, we track metrics related to each variable in the above paragraph, and we’re delighted that, in 2017, we reached new heights in each of these engagement opportunities. As HERO members, you benefit from our services but also double as volunteers, and you surpassed prior years’ numbers in committee involvement (235 active members) and co-authorship in journal submissions. Between co-authorship with our members and lead authorship by the HERO team, we published 19 articles in peer-reviewed scientific journals and 7 articles in trade publications. Your HERO team also delivered 18 presentations around the country. These speaking and writing efforts combined netted visibility for our field via nearly 3 billion media impressions following our articles, consumer press bylines (13) and mentions. And, no, 3 billion is not a typo, to be exact: 2,992,973,391 impressions! It is this influence and visibility that may explain why financial support to HERO from our sponsors has also surpassed our goals. This confidence in us is heartwarming, humbling and deeply appreciated as we couldn’t do this work without these benefactors.

As much as HERO’s Annual Forum and regular Think Tanks have long set a high bar in satisfaction, usefulness and relevance, 2017 also saw the highest levels we’ve recorded yet on these ratings. What’s more, we had record attendance at the 9 public webinars (907 attendees) and 5 members-only webinars (117 attendees) with HERO members and professionals from multiple disciplines interacting with leading
experts on topics ranging from “Integrating Big Data” to “Awakening Compassion at Work.” We preferentially draw many experts and faculty from our member ranks, so this serves as another testament to how effective HERO volunteers are in moving our vision forward. We have summarized our Proceedings from these events in this report, and we are already deeply ensconced in organizing 2018 events that build on these learnings. Positive psychology, love and joy were concepts we featured in 2017 with an aim of advancing psychologically healthy workplaces. Wondering how we will build on our learnings from 2017? We were delighted to recently announce that we completed our new HERO website that includes state of the art social networking features and updated membership management features via “NEON CRM.” Our website will keep you connected to our growing resources and member events. Watch for our next members only Think Tank, “Overdosed,” where we’ll examine how pain management begets addiction and how the opioid epidemic mirrors the viral, desensitizing influence of social media and smart phones.

HERO is anything but a trendy latecomer to these vital issues of employee engagement and well-being and, besides thanking our many longstanding members for enabling this past year’s achievements, this is also a year to celebrate our legacy leaders. On a Tuesday in November twenty years ago, Roy William “Bill” Whitmer was sitting in Suite 100 of an office building on Valleydale Road in Birmingham, Alabama, likely reflecting on the nascent state of employee health promotion. It’s safe to say this was on his mind because that day he signed the articles of incorporation for HERO, an organization he hoped might one day lead in the development of evidence-based best practices in worksite health. The next day, November 5th, 1997, Whitmer paid $26 dollars at the Office of Probate at the Jefferson County courthouse and got HERO’s first stamp of approval from probate Judge George R. Reynolds. Though the long-range strategic plan that is summarized in this 2017 report shows that much has changed over the two decades since Whitmer founded HERO, the essential vision from those articles of incorporation is essentially unchanged: “... to develop health promotion, disease prevention and productivity research ... and to disseminate education about health promotion and disease prevention research.”

We dare say Bill would be quite pleased to know that in addition to the growing metrics about our member’s engagement in leading in well-being, the HERO team has also had another banner year in representing the views and needs of our members. Based on extensive member input on our Five-Year Strategic Plan, one HERO goal we set in 2016 was one to “increase collaborations and partnerships between and beyond HERO member organizations.” To this end, in 2017, HERO staff have been advisors to the National Academy of Science’s “Business Action Collaborative,” to the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health’s “Building a Culture of Health as a Business Imperative” grant project, to the Institute for Health Improvement’s “Business Leaders Hub” for 100 Million Heathier Lives, to the “Global Women 4 Wellbeing” and to the CDC Workplace Health Resource Center.

Another new HERO goal is to “increase American
workplaces’ interest in, capacity for and involvement with community health improvement.” Our work in this area, supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, was detailed in an article first authored by Dr. Nico Pronk, a HERO Board member and Co-Chair of our Employer-Community Collaboration Committee. The article, published in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, is titled “Exploration into the Business Priorities Related to Corporate Engagement in Community Health Improvement Partnerships” and was co-authored by that committee’s Co-Chair, Dr. Cathy Baase along with HERO’s Paul Terry, Karen Moseley and Jeanette May.

In addition to influencing community health, HERO’s plan challenges us to “strengthen evaluation and research in individual level data collection tools.” To this end, Dr. Jessica Grossmeier, in her new role as co-editor of “The Art of Health Promotion” (TAHP) section of the American Journal of Health Promotion, led the publication of the “The Wearables in Wellness Issue.” Look to the details in this report to see the wonderful visibility this issue brought to authors from the HERO Health, Productivity, and Performance Study Committee Wearables Workgroup, which was led by Jack Bastable. Similarly, look within for details about Grossmeier’s TAHP issue on “Healthy Worksite Culture Revisited” which featured leaders from HERO’s Culture of Health Study Committee including co-chairs Kathy Meacham Webb, Stewart Sill and Roshi Fisher along with HERO staffer Emily Wolfe. We hope you make time to revisit these articles because, if you read between the lines, you will grow in your appreciation for how serving on HERO committees can culminate into new ways of thinking, working and advancing the profession as well as your own professional growth.

We look forward to your review and feedback on HERO’s 2017 Annual Report and we encourage you to contact us with any questions or comments or additions you’d like to see in the online version of this report. HERO is a healthy organization due to your involvement and support, so if you see something that’s missing, especially those items you may have been personally involved with moving forward this past year, don’t hesitate to let us know as we’ll be most pleased to add them to the report for posterity. There are many markers of the well-being of HERO and of this profession. We are proud of these accomplishments because we achieved them through a spirit of comradery, mutual respect and companionate love. We hope that you find, in the pages of this report, recurrent examples of the passion, joy and positivity that defines and fuels the health promotion profession, and we invite you to continue to use HERO as your platform for innovation, meaning seeking and joyous engagement with fellow stewards of health and well-being for all.

Yours in Health,

Paul E. Terry, Ph.D.
President and CEO, HERO

Ron Goetzel, Ph.D.
Board Chair, HERO, Senior Scientist, Johns Hopkins University, Vice President, Truven Health Analytics/IBM Watson Health
Roy William “Bill” Whitmer Jr., 82, passed away February 18, 2017, following a brief illness. Bill was born in Harrisonburg, Virginia, served four years in the army and graduated from Bridgewater College in 1958. He was employed by Upjohn Pharmaceutical Company for 18 years. Bill was the co-founder and the first president of HERO until his retirement in 2010. Bill brought HERO to national attention in 2003 when the often quoted editorial, “A Wake-up Call for Corporate America,” was published in JOEM.

Bill continued to expand HERO’s charter from its origins in research to include leadership by creating the HERO Think Tank, education by hosting the first HERO conference in 2001, and measurement by launching the HERO Health and Well-being Best Practices Scorecard in Collaboration with Mercer.

Bill’s leadership in the field brought leaders from every facet of well-being together, insisting that acting together we represented a powerful force with the ability to positively impact the health of our nation. Bill will be greatly missed, but his spirit and goals live on through HERO.

“Service is the rent that you pay for room on this earth.”
Shirley Chisholm

2017 Dedication in Memoriam to R. William “Bill” Whitmer, Founder of HERO

Roy William Whitmer Jr. Alabaster, Alabama Dec 10, 1934 - Feb 18, 2017 (Age 82)
“The ‘I’ in illness is isolation and the crucial letters in wellness are ‘we’. Author Unknown”

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Thank you to our consultants: Barb Tabor, public relations; Jeanne Mettner, editorial; Jessica Johannes, graphic design
HERO’S VISION, GOALS AND RESEARCH AGENDA

This 2017 Annual Report of Accomplishments details how we advance best practices in workplace health promotion, advocate for improvements in organizational and public policies and provide practical solutions for employers who share our commitment to supporting health and well-being for employees, families and communities. In this annual report, we describe activities in research, education and outreach designed to advance our strategic goals. Here is a graphical summary of our 5-Year Strategic Plan (2016-2020), goals and research agenda.

| VISION | All workplaces will positively influence the health and well-being of employees, families, and communities |
| PURPOSE | Advancing health, well-being and performance through employer/employee leadership |
| GOALS | **Increase Collaboration**
Build more partnerships with organizations who are also leading in the advancement of employee health. Sustain HERO’s smart growth and high HERO Forum participation/satisfaction. |
| RESEARCH PRIORITIES | **Culture of Health**
Exploring the role of employee health and well-being (HWB) to influence a workplace culture that drives business success, including assessing associations between organizational culture, HWB, and business performance. |
| 2016/2017 ACTIVITIES | 1. Culture of Health Study Committee
2. Publication of Definitions & Elements
3. Review of Published Research
4. Culture of Health Case Studies
5. Engagement Study Committee
6. Engagement Environmental Scan
7. RWJF Culture of Health Measures Reports |
| VALUES | We Lead through Collaboration | We Pursue Excellence | We Act with Integrity |
| **Advance Best Practices** | Disseminate evidence informed best practices in the workplace that improve health and well-being. Publish research and consensus papers. Increase research in individual level satisfaction with wellness program. |
| **Promote Well-being** | Increase workplaces’ capacity for promoting well-being and a culture of health. Increase completions of HERO Health and Well-being Best Practices Scorecare in Collaboration with Mercer. |
| **Sustainability** | Understanding how organizations assess and advance workforce health and well-being alongside broader sustainability efforts that positively influence the enterprise, its people, and the surrounding environment. |
| **Workforce Performance** | Identifying health and well-being (HWB) best practices and demonstrating the relationships between workforce HWB efforts, strategic business performance objectives, and individual employee performance. |
| **Employer-Community Collaboration Study Committee** | 1. Workplace Performance Study Committee
2. HERO Scorecard Stock Performance Study Published in JOEM
3. International HERO Scorecard
4. Measurement Standards Beta Test
5. Wearables in Wellness Case Studies
6. Physical Inactivity Publications |
| 1. Healthy Workplaces Healthy Communities Website
2. The Well-being Issue of The Art of Health Promotion |
Because we are a member-driven organization, when we drafted our HERO goals, we opened them for your comments. After all, it is you, our members, who determine what we can realistically accomplish—both through your expertise and your contributions of volunteer time and talent to HERO and our field. We are always eager for your input on whether or not the following major goals are the right ones for advancing our shared vision:

1. Increase collaborations and partnerships between and beyond HERO member organizations by recruiting new, non-HERO member organizations to contribute to Think Tanks, the HERO Forum and webinars.

2. Improve evidence-informed best practices in the workplace that advance health and well-being worldwide by increasing the use of the HERO Health and Well-being Best Practices Scorecard in Collaboration with Mercer©, affecting an improvement in scores nationwide, and increasing our marketing and public relations efforts.

3. Strengthen evaluation and research in individual level satisfaction with wellness programs and strengthen individual level data collection tools in a future consensus guide for workplace health and well-being.

4. Increase American workplaces’ interest in, capacity for and involvement with community health improvement. We plan to do this by increasing the number of sessions dedicated to case studies of employer-community collaborations and the business case for involvement with community health at HERO educational venues—through HERO research projects and via dissemination of HERO research findings.

5. Strategic plans need to be responsive to changes in the organization, the business climate and the needs and interests of members we serve. Accordingly, the goals and objectives named in this long-range plan will be subject to regular reviews and specific metrics that will be monitored via HERO’s internal performance scorecard.

“

The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members. Coretta Scott King

”
Why should you complete the HERO Scorecard...again?

In 2017 HERO released a YouTube video on the HERO Scorecard, which summarizes ongoing research findings and how it can be a valuable tool in advancing the quality of health and well-being initiatives.

The HERO Health and Well-Being Best Practices Scorecard in Collaboration with Mercer© (HERO Scorecard) is designed to help employers, providers, and other stakeholders identify and learn about workplace health and well-being (HWB) best practices. The HERO Scorecard is a free web-based tool available via the HERO website. When employers submit their responses to the online system, they immediately receive a return email containing a free report that includes an overall score and a score for each of the six sections compared with national average scores. The sections represent the foundational components that support exemplary HWB programs. While no inventory of best practices will include all innovative approaches, the HERO Scorecard uses those most commonly recognized as drivers of successful programs among industry thought leaders and in published research.

Ongoing data analysis from the database provides unique insights about organizational use of HWB practices, associations between the six measured domains in the HERO Scorecard, and their relationship with self-reported outcomes. These analyses serve as a foundation for future research because they inform the development of new research questions and identify areas of promising practices that can be systematically tested and validated against other databases. These analyses also support the internal validity of the HERO Scorecard, which may pave the way for more rigorous validation research.
For example, one analysis of the normative database indicated that certain practices are associated with superior health care cost trends. This analysis based on self-reported data on the HERO Scorecard led to the development of a more formal research study that leveraged health care cost and risk data in a third party database. This formative study demonstrates that companies with higher scores on the HERO Scorecard had better health care cost trends and also informed changes in the scoring when the HERO Scorecard was updated in 2014. A more recent study tracked stock performance for publicly traded companies in the HERO Scorecard database and found companies with higher HERO Scorecard scores outperformed the S&P 500 Index over a 6-year period.

Each quarter HERO members work with the HERO vice president of research to author HERO Scorecard Commentaries, which are embedded in quarterly HERO Scorecard Benchmark Reports and posted to the HERO Blog. HERO published 4 commentaries in 2017 including:

- Gretchen Heacock from Mission Health System authored a commentary on *Influence of Incentives and Incentive Design on Participation and Satisfaction*
- Beth Umland from Mercer authored a commentary on *A First Look at Quantitative Outcomes Data from the HERO Scorecard*
- Elissa Rosenbaum from Mercer authored a commentary on *The Right Mix of Strategies for Participation in Health and Well-being Programs*
- Niki Hunt from Geneia authored a commentary on *Strategic Planning as a Fundamental Step for Achieving Outcomes*

Organizations that serve the wellness industry and wish to leverage the HERO Scorecard to support strategic planning and ongoing improvements to client wellness initiatives can become a HERO Scorecard Preferred Provider. This group of 9 organizations convened via webinar 4 times in 2017 to learn about updates and new resources available to support them in their use of the HERO Scorecard with their clients. They also engaged in discussions about findings from the HERO Scorecard Commentaries and identified new strategies for supporting their clients in using the HERO Scorecard.
MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Your membership in HERO puts you at the center of an evolving, dynamic profession. Together we drive continuous improvements in workplace health so that our results grow in impact and our profession grows in influence.

HERO membership allows organizations to:
• Provide leadership and direction for a Think Tank, one which creates corporate strategies and national policies that position health and well-being as a widely accepted and accurately measured approach to increasing engagement and improving organizational and individual performance and productivity;
• Learn about and offer professional guidance to current health and well-being research and emergent best practices;
• Network and share ideas with the nation’s health and well-being experts and informed colleagues;
• Access the exclusive HERO Resource Center, an online library of presentations, white papers and research that has been presented at HERO Forums, Think Tank meetings and in publications;
• Attend exclusive members’ only events and attend HERO Forum at a discounted rate; and
• Provide service and leadership on HERO committees. View HERO committee publications.

A detailed document that includes all of the analysis and related reports that went into these plans is available in our HERO Resource Center under recent library documents.

Discussing HERO’s vision is one of Paul’s favorite topics so feel free to call him at 952.300.6608 or email him at paul.terry@hero-health.org.

“Seek not greatness but seek truth and you will discover both.”

Horace Mann
2017 HERO EVENTS

HERO brings together a highly collaborative group of practitioners, scientists and innovators working together to advance best practices via committees and educational events. We hosted 5 events in 2017:

Winter Think Tank
“The Employee Experience”
February 23 – February 24, 2017
San Antonio, TX

The Voice of the Customer
Rick Johnson, J.D. Power and Associates; Dana Hyatt, Customer Experience Professionals Association and HERO Member Panel: Patty Ann Hawes, RN, MS, BSN, COHN, National Security Agency; Patty Purpur de Vries, MS, Stanford University; Shelly Wolff, Willis Towers Watson.

On February 23-24, HERO members gathered in San Antonio, Texas for our Winter Think Tank on the topic of “The Employee Experience.” While many industries are well known for their deep reliance on the voice of their consumers, employee health and well-being initiatives have arguably been oriented toward a business case responsive to the needs of the employer. Does the movement “from wellness to well-being” signal a shift away from costly employee risks to the organizational value added if we better tap employee assets, needs, and diversity?

Our subject matter experts introduced key concepts and approaches to measuring and applying “voice of the customer” to organizational change and ongoing product and process improvements. Read the session’s Proceedings and listen to the recording.

Reaching the Hardest to Reach
Andy Crighton, MD, Prudential; Kerry Mitchell, PhD, Moxy Solutions; and Pauline Dow, EdD, Independent San Antonio School System.

Too often our wellness committees attract wellness enthusiasts and too seldom are the voices of the disaffected on deck when employee engagement ideas are supposed to be batted around. We discussed the
challenge of reaching the hardest to reach with Pauline Dow, the chief of academic affairs, Andy Crighton, a chief medical officer, and Kerry Mitchell, a consultant and researcher who recently completed a study on the needs and values of millennials. Read the session’s Proceedings and listen to the recording.

Next Practices for Improving the Employee Experience

_Dexter Shurney, MD, Cummins and Reactor Panel: Rajiv Kumar, MD, Virgin Pulse Institute; Lane Yahchouchi, Southwest Airlines_

Seeking to learn from the experts on how to create an extraordinary customer experience, Cummins turned to experts at Ritz-Carlton to share how other industry sectors approach this. What resulted was a change in how Cummins staffed and trained their onsite clinic staff; the way the facility looked, smelled, and sounded; the processes implemented to drive convenience and customer service; a comprehensive array of services and offerings in one convenient place; and even the expected outcomes they strive to achieve. Imagine telling a physician that their goal is to help people to stop taking medicine! The following themes emerged from Think Tank discussion groups:
• We need to be creative about trying new approaches to getting ongoing feedback that is constructive and useful for ongoing process improvements.
• It’s also critical to be transparent about motivations for asking employees for input. Need to engender trust by using the information to make necessary changes.
• Culture of an organization is also important. Pandora’s box can be a fount of wisdom when there is an environment of learning and a growth mindset.
• There are measures employers can take to help by creating or educating about policies around respect and communication, conflict resolution skills training, and connecting people to EAP as a resource. Read the session’s Proceedings and listen to the recording.

Summer Think Tank and Research Meeting

_“Advancing Systemic Approaches to Mental and Emotional Well-being”_

June 6 – June 7, 2017
Bloomington, MN

Each summer HERO convenes a meeting of Think Tank members and invited special guests to inform the ongoing advancement of HERO’s research agenda. Our June 7th meeting provided a brief update on HERO’s research activities, including research studies in progress or in development, as well as informed new attendees about how to get involved in HERO research initiatives. The primary focus for the meeting was on HERO’s measurement initiatives with the theme, “Advancing Systemic Approaches to Mental and Emotional Well-being.” The meeting opened with
a panel that shared information and updates about HERO’s primary measurement initiatives including the HERO-PHA Program Measurement and Evaluation Guide (Measurement Guide) and the HERO Health and Well-being Best Practices Scorecard in Collaboration with Mercer® (HERO Scorecard). Panelists included Dr. Ed Framer from HealthFitness and Dr. Steven Noeldner from Mercer. Their presentation was followed by a presentation by Dr. Ron Goetzel from IBM Watson Health on new and emerging measurement initiatives in the industry. The measurement panelists prepared attendees for 90 minutes of interactive discussion facilitated by Dr. Seth Serxner from Optum. Discussion focused primarily on understanding the measurement gaps and needs of employers and practitioners to support the measurement and evaluation of health and well-being initiatives. The meeting ended with a poll of attendees, indicating to HERO that HERO’s future measurement efforts must update existing measurement resources with a focus on augmenting the areas associated with mental and emotional well-being as well as develop new measurement resources. The discussion summary was shared in the August HERO Briefs.

HEROForum17 Pre-Conference Summits
September 11, 2017
Phoenix, AZ

• Chief Medical Officer Summit
  Marleece Barber, MD, Lockheed Martin

Wayne Burton, MD, formerly American Express
K. Andrew Crighton, MD, Prudential
Ron Goetzel, PhD, Johns Hopkins/IBM Watson Heath
Kyu Rhee, MD, IBM Watson Health
David Shepperly, MD, Bristol-Myers Squibb
Dexter Shurney, MD, MBA, MPH, Cummins

• Healthcare Summit
  Tim Butler, MS, MCHES, Intermountain Healthcare/SelectHealth
  Stephen Doyle, MS, MBA, UPMC Health Plan
  Linda McCauley, RN, PhD, FAAN, FAAOHN, Emory University
  David Schweppe, MPH, CPHIMS, Kaiser Permanente
  Ryan Sledge, MPH, OhioHealth
  Michael Staufacker, MA, CHES, Emory University
  Jennifer Wright, MPH, South Carolina Hospital Association

• University Summit
  Nancy Allen, MA, CHES, Michigan State University
  Patricia Benson, MEd, University of Louisville
  Megan Hammes, MA, CHES, University of Iowa
  LaVaughn Palma-Davis, MA, University of Michigan
  Michael Staufacker, MA, CHES, Emory University
  Joni Troester, MBA, MA, University of Iowa

The Forum Pre-Conference Summits attracted about 100 attendees who gathered for additional networking and
learning opportunities, especially for those working with hospitals and healthcare systems or university faculty and staff. We also hosted the First Annual CMO Summit on the CMO’s Role in Strategic use of Data.

**Fall Think Tank**

*“Parity in Health Promotion: A Focus on Diversity and Low-wage Workers”*

September 11, 2017
Phoenix, AZ

This Think Tank featured the “intersectionality” between income, race, and gender that makes addressing individual characteristics vexing. Employers need to understand how their health and well-being programs are performing, and whether their programs are responsive to the needs of everyone, not just the readily engaged. Lower-income workers present unique challenges, and we considered how employers can leverage available data sources to maximize the value of their greatest asset: their human capital. Research indicates that bias, prejudice, and discrimination are corrosive elements in many employees’ lives, including in their work lives.

Dr. Bruce Sherman, from Conduent HR Services, started our discussion by reviewing ways in which wage stagnation and growth in benefits costs are making healthcare less affordable for employees. Karen Lloyd and Shamayne Braman from HealthPartners presented on how diversity and inclusion can be considered as part of a healthy workplace culture. For a panel discussion led by Dr. Marleece Barber, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics, on “Cultural Competency and Wellness Programs Designed for Diversity” and for reflections on the outcomes from the Think Tank from HERO’s Emily Wolfe, Read On!

**HEROForum17**

*“Engagement and the Emerging Workforce”*

September 12 – September 14, 2017
Phoenix, AZ

Too often when we say engagement it seems like “little e” engagement, meaning how often participants take advantage of wellness program offerings. Participation is a great goal to be sure, but we are a profession marked by growing ambitions, and engagement is on our agenda as a vital outcome as well as a well-being indicator. At HEROForum17, our faculty and our audience embraced the premise that creating environments that evoke “big E” engagement, the kind of fulsome immersion in work and life that employees and employers covet alike, is about finding that path where health and well-being and productivity and high performance coexist.

It was not that long ago that learning tracks in health promotion conferences would have organized faculty according to “fitness interventions, nutrition, stress

**More than 115 organizations are Think Tank Members**

Helping to lead the charge on health and well-being
management or return on investment in wellness.” At Forum17, faculty organized their presentations to respond to our theme that engagement is changing in the emerging workforce. Our speakers reflected on generational differences, racial and ethnic issues, the “gig economy” and other emerging workforce issues in learning tracks organized around culture change; well-being; measures that matter; skills, motivation and autonomy; and diversity and workforce engagement.

One of the opening poll questions for our Forum audience was: “Most agree that individual, organizational and community health are keenly inter-related. Where do you consider you are able to exert the most influence?” Interestingly, most (43%) felt they had the greatest influence changing “organizational health, i.e. via policy, environmental and leadership practices.” The next greatest influence (38%) was on “individual health, i.e. via caring and offering support and programs.” Trailing these (19%) was influence on “community and social, i.e. via volunteerism, sustainable corporate practices.”

Since engagement is fundamentally a psychological construct, our opening panel featured three psychologists. David Ballard, an expert and author in psychologically healthy workplaces, shared data showing that the demise of employee engagement has been highly overstated. Sara Johnson, an accomplished scholar who studies the interaction of culture and individual behaviors, showed how sustainable habit change can be profoundly abetted by our environment. Ben Miller, an expert in health policy, explained how policies and economic incentives are conspiring to block improvements in mental health services as well as prevent us from getting upstream where the fight for parity in psychological health promotion needs to be waged.

**What Drives Engagement?**

Among the plethora of mental and emotional factors that influence engagement, experiencing organizational support and having control over one’s work are concepts that are taking hold in workplace based health and well-being initiatives. Speakers reflected on the next generation of employees and a “gig economy” where loyalty takes a back seat to worker autonomy. This trend may accelerate the shift already underway from a focus on individual health practices to organizational and environmental strategies that advance engagement and well-being.

It has always been the case that health promotion is a dynamic discipline led by eclectic professional teams serving varying organizational priorities. While evidence-based “best practices” have emerged, there will likely never be a precise mix of interventions given how organizations naturally have differing priorities relative to
employee well-being, productivity and performance. This variation was apparent in a panel led by Seth Serxner, Optum’s Chief Health Officer and Vice Chair of the HERO Board of Directors. As executives from Shell Oil, Johnson & Johnson and Goldman Sachs all attested, keeping employee well-being initiatives vital and fresh for the long term is not a one-size-fits-all proposition.

We also polled the Forum audience on this question: “What is the current most compelling value proposition for your health and well-being initiatives?” Retaining human capital followed closely by improving health status are key priorities. It is noteworthy that this forced choice approach showed that the legacy priorities in health promotion of containing health care costs and improving productivity are just that, a legacy that’s still relevant but waning in importance relative to other organizational values. Affirming this, one of our keynoters, Mandy O’Neill, a professor from George Mason University, shared her research on how “companionate love,” that vital mix of friendship and affinity and perceived organizational support in the workplace, all relate to greater performance, productivity and profitability. Similarly, our keynote Stephen Post, a best-selling author and academic researcher, taught us about the health benefits of altruism, particularly volunteerism. Post and O’Neill both offered compelling examples for why our health and well-being strategic plans should include socially connecting employees with each other and coalescing all levels of staff and leaders around community needs.

The HERO team is grateful for our tremendous keynoters, faculty and the many planning committee members and friends of HERO who made HEROForum17 such a rousing success.

On behalf of all of us at HERO, we are indebted to our partnership with the American Heart Association and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. We could not have achieved the quality we aimed for in the Proceedings without their amity and financial support.

Read on for the full Proceedings from HEROForum17.
HERO actively and continually provides leadership critical to advancing the well-being and performance of the nation’s workforce. Much of the good work that HERO does is achieved through the efforts of its volunteer committees.

Through the following volunteer committees, HERO is actively involved in the creation and dissemination of evidence-based health and well-being research, education and best practices.

**HERO Standing Committees**
In co-op fashion, volunteer members provide direction and support to HERO operations via standing committees for Research Education and Policy.
- Research Committee: Chair – Steven Noeldner, PhD, Mercer
- Research Advisory Group: Chair – Seth Serxner, PhD, Alliant Clinical and Wellness Team
- Research Study Subcommittee: Co-chairs – Kristi Rahrig Jenkins, PhD, MPH, University of Michigan; Colleen Saringer, PhD, Alliant Clinical and Wellness Team
- Awards Committee: Chair – Philip Swayze, MS, HUB International New England, LLC
- Education Committee: Chair – David Ballard, PhD, American Psychological Association
- New Member Committee: Chair – Greg Howe, MS, Lincoln Industries
- Policy Committee: Chair – Laurie Whitsel, PhD, American Heart Association
- Public Relations Committee: Chair – Barb Tabor, APR, taborPR

**HERO Study Committees**
Based on member interest, study committees discuss, analyze and investigate topics to produce reports, presentations and, often, peer-reviewed journal

“Human relations are built on feeling, not on reason or knowledge. And feeling is not an exact science; like all spiritual qualities, it has the vagueness of greatness about it.”

Amelia Barr
articles. With HERO members as authors, these committees are focused on providing understanding and guidance to employers. Currently active study committees include:

- **Culture of Health (CoH):** Co-chairs – Stewart Sill, MS, IBM Watson Health; Kathy Webb, Limeade
- **Employer-Community Collaboration (ECC):** Co-chairs – Cathy Baase, MD, The Dow Chemical Company; Nico Pronk, PhD, HealthPartners
- **Engagement:** Co-chairs – Megan Amaya, PhD, The Ohio State University; Dan Cave, PhD, Envolve PeopleCare; Bruce Sherman, MD, Conduent
- **Workplace Performance (WP):** Co-chairs – Josh Glynn, MBA, Google; Jack Groppel, PhD, Johnson & Johnson Human Performance Institute; Shelly Wolff, MS, MBA, Willis Towers Watson
2017 COMMITTEE WORK

Culture of Health (CoH)
• The CoH Research Workgroup completed a manuscript reporting on a literature review of the key elements that was submitted for publication in the American Journal of Health Promotion.
• The CoH Values Workgroup continued authoring employer case studies demonstrating the value of a culture of health in the workplace. Seven case studies are currently in process, four of which have been finalized and published to the HERO website.
• A complete report highlighting four CoH case studies, the literature review, and definitions and elements was published in the November 2017 issue of the American Journal of Health Promotion’s practice section, The Art of Health Promotion.
• A CoH case study video was developed to promote the work of the project and can be found on the HERO YouTube Channel.
• Committee members attended six webinars hosted by the Workplace Performance Committee. Presentations included topics such as compassion, mindfulness, resilience and mental health, and were provided by industry leaders from Shell Oil, the American Psychological Association, The University of Michigan’s Ross School of Business and Aetna.

Employer-Community Collaboration (ECC) Study Committee:
• After providing oversight for the successful completion of a grant from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to develop the website, Healthy Workplaces Healthy Communities (get-HWHC.org), HWHC continues to receive consistent traffic with 39,973 visitors.
• In 2017, the ECC Study Committee also published a new report identifying 20 health improvement-related priorities for businesses, and six factors business leaders look for as they consider lending corporate support to a community health initiative. The report, “Exploration into the Business Priorities Related to Corporate Engagement in Community Health Improvement Partnerships,” was published in the November issue of the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."
Mahatma Gandhi
Karen Moseley and Nico Pronk have co-authored a Media Planet byline related to the same work that appeared in a Sept. 12 USA Today insert on employee well-being.

Workplace Performance (WP) Study Committee, formerly the Health, Performance and Productivity (HPP) Study Committee:

- The WP Study Committee was refreshed for 2017 and is in the process of developing a new charter, exploring the relationships between employee emotional well-being and workplace performance. In 2017, the WP Committee hosted six webinars and guest presentations to first better understand the landscape of emotional well-being in the workplace. Presentations included topics such as compassion, mindfulness, resilience and mental health, and were provided by industry leaders such as Shell Oil, The American Psychological Association, The University of Michigan’s Ross School of Business and Aetna. Currently the WP Study Committee has formed an Emotional Well-being Workgroup charged with developing a working definition of emotional well-being with the following mission statement: “HERO has recently shifted its focus from “employee health management” and “health promotion” to “health and well-being”. To help reinforce this shift and underscore the critical importance of behavioral health and emotional well-being, the Emotional Well-being Workgroup will focus on how this construct influences every facet of “traditional well-being” (social, physical, financial, community and purpose) and its influence on workplace performance.”

- A Wearables in Wellness article was published in the 2017 American Journal of Health Promotion’s practice section, The Art of Health Promotion.

Engagement Study Committee:

- In 2017, the Engagement Study Committee hosted guest presentations by industry leaders conducting research in the area of employee engagement. Speakers included Laura Hamill, PhD with Limeade and Dan Witters, MS with Gallup.

- In 2017, the Engagement Environmental Scan Workgroup identified and reviewed 222 published articles as part of an environmental scan exploring research around organizational success, business outcomes and engagement with employee health and well-being, employee engagement in health and well-being, and employee engagement in organizational success and business outcomes. The group is currently in the data analysis phase of the work, identifying knowledge gaps and opportunities for additional research. A preliminary report of findings is being presented to the Engagement Study Committee in early 2018.
Research Committee:
• In February, the Research Advisory Group (RAG) published its annual Research Agenda update. The RAG is chaired by Dr. Seth Serxner from Optum. The RAG convened its annual teleconference meeting in October 2017 to debrief discussions at the June 2017 Research Meeting and identify emerging opportunities to support employers on their program evaluation and measurement efforts.
• The Research Study Subcommittee (RSS) convened five times via teleconference in 2017. These calls were focused on providing HERO study committee updates, recruiting RSS members to support development of HERO Scorecard Commentaries, and developing a research proposal that would leverage HERO Scorecard data to identify best practices associated with organizationally reported turnover, employee satisfaction with wellness programs, and employee perceptions of organizational support for their well-being.
• RSS members contributed to development of two HERO Scorecard Commentaries in 2017, which leveraged data from the HERO Scorecard Database.
• RSS members provided research guidance and support to three HERO study committees including:
  ◦ Colleen Saringer, PhD and Gregg Gascon, PhD provided support to the Culture of Health Study Committee
  ◦ Stefan Gingerich, MPH provided support to the Workplace Performance Study Committee and the Engagement Study Committee
  ◦ RSS members provided oversight of two in-progress HERO Research Studies including:
    ◦ Incentives study – This study aims to examine how various types of incentive structures influence population-level health outcomes after accounting for contributing factors like organizational support for health and wellness program characteristics. Three data suppliers completed data preparation and sent de-identified organization-level data to HERO using industry standard methods for secure data transfer. RSS members providing oversight of this study include Stefan Gingerich, MPH from StayWell, Colleen Saringer, PhD from Alliant Employee Benefits, and Gregg Gascon, PhD from Ohio Health Group.
    ◦ HERO Scorecard Retention and Engagement Study – This study aims to leverage data from the HERO Scorecard Benchmark Database to identify practices within the HERO Scorecard that are associated with organizationally reported turnover rates, employee satisfaction with wellness initiatives, and employee perceptions of organizational support for their well-being. RSS members conceptualized the study and developed a full study proposal, then supported moving the science and understanding of health and well-being forward.
selection of third party research partners to support execution of the study in 2018. RSS members providing oversight of this study include Shawn Mason, PhD from Johnson & Johnson, Kristi Rahrig-Jenkins, PhD from University of Michigan, and Colleen Saringer, PhD from Alliant Employee Benefits.

**HERO Research & Publications**

Workplace health and well-being is now well-established as a prime factor that distinguishes great organizations from good ones. And while the growth of wellness was driven by corporate concerns about the cost of healthcare, the maturation of workplace health and well-being comes from an employer desire to more deeply engage employees in achieving a sustained culture of health.

The **HERO Research Agenda** remains focused on answering questions about the future of work and the advancement of well-being in the face of extraordinary changes in technology, demographics and generational needs and values.

Recent Practical Initiatives Driven by HERO include the following (view Committee Publications and Research Studies):

- Defining a Culture of Health: Key Elements that Influence Employees Health and Well-being
- Developing Employer Case Studies Illustrating a Culture of Health
- Developing Employer Case Studies Illustrating Effective Use of Wearables
- Identifying Business Priorities for Corporate Engagement in Community Health
- Study Linking Corporate Investment in Health and Well-being and Organizational Financial Performance

**HERO Research Committee members** and **HERO staff** provide ongoing guidance to HERO study committees to support publication of committee work in peer-reviewed publications including 19 articles in peer-reviewed scientific journals. These publications were developed in addition to reports posted on the HERO website. Summary abstracts for each of these articles are available on the HERO website. The complete list of all 19 published articles are listed below in order of most to least recent publication.

- Terry PE. Incentives and Big E Engagement.


Based on media interest in these articles in peer-reviewed scientific journals, HERO’s work was also featured in the following industry trade publications.

HERO hosts a monthly webinar series called Wednesday Webinars: Ideas and Outcomes. Some are offered to members only, while others are open to the public. Recordings and presenter slides are available in the HERO Webinar Archives. In 2017, HERO hosted 14 webinars.


Giving, Health and Happiness. A discussion with Dr. Steven Post and Tracy Hoover, CEO of the Points of Light Institute and Paul Terry, HERO and the American Journal of Health Promotion. April 4, 2017.


Advancing Well-being through a Model for Professional Fulfillment. A discussion with Patty Purpur de Vries, MS, Director of Strategic Projects, Stanford Medicine WellMD Center and Jessica Grossmeier, HERO. June 8, 2017.


A Randomized Trial of Social Comparison Feedback and Financial Incentives to Increase Physical Activity.” A discussion with Mitesh Patel, MD, MBA, MS, Perelman School of Medicine and Kevin Volpp, MD, PhD, Perelman School of Medicine and Paul Terry, HERO. July 12, 2017.


Building Cultures of Resilience One Manager at a Time. A discussion with Sara Johnson, PhD, MA, Behavior Change Systems, Inc. and Megan Hammes, MS, MCHES, University of Iowa and Paul Terry, HERO. August 10, 2017.
Resilience and Care for People: How Caring Impacts Engagement and Safety at Shell with Mark Poindexter and Krystal Sexton, Shell Oil. HERO. August 17, 2017.

Making Healthy Eating Policy Practice. A discussion with Michael W. Beets, Med, MPH, PhD, Arnold School of Public Health, University of South Carolina and R. Glenn Weaver, PhD, Arnold School of Public Health, University of South Carolina and Paul Terry, HERO. September 26, 2017.

Building a Culture of Emotional Health: AMEX’s Healthy Minds Campaign. A discussion with Dr. Charles Lattarulo, PhD, Global Director of the Healthy Minds Program, American Express and Paul Terry, HERO. November 1, 2017.

The Association of Employee Engagement at Work with Health Risks and Presenteeism. A discussion with Dr. Wayne Burton, MD, former Corporate Medical Director for American Express, and Alyssa Schultz, PhD, The University of Michigan Health Management Research Center and Jessica Grossmeier and Paul Terry, HERO. November 15, 2017.

Tailored Outreach and Employee Engagement: How Big Data Analytics Can Transform Health and Business Outcomes. A discussion with Dr. Michael Parkinson, UPMC, Dr. Marleece Barber, Lockheed Martin, and Dr. Wendy Lynch, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center with Karen Moseley, HERO. December 7, 2017.

Professional Presentations


Terry P. Systemic Approaches to Advancing Mental and Emotional Well-being. Hosted expert panels and conference proceedings. HERO Think Tank, Bloomington, MN, June 6, 2017.


Sources for Quotes: brainyquote.com