



2016

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# *Annual Report*

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**ACTIVE LIVING BY DESIGN**

***Your strategic partner through  
healthy community change***

## *Neighborhoods, cities, and counties across the nation are changing shape.*

Local leaders are gaining visibility and voice as they unify efforts for improved community health and well-being. We are honored to have been an ally along their journey in 2016, providing strategic planning and collaborative support to ensure that wherever people live, learn, work, and play, they also reach their full potential.

Active Living By Design (ALBD) believes people have the power to shape their communities into healthier places to live. We have been privileged to witness and learn from the many successes of change agents doing just that. A few of those stories are included in this report.

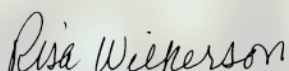
ALBD has also been inspired by the field's expanding definition of health to include social, economic, and environmental determinants. We, too, have broadened our areas of focus. In addition to assisting local leaders with healthy eating and active living strategies, our work in 2016 addressed other health-enhancing approaches. These included improving housing conditions, increasing community safety, and supporting restorative justice.

Throughout the year, we partnered with funders to make their investments in community-led collaboration stronger and more strategic. We also expanded communities' capacity to lead collaborative processes, which is vital for achieving our vision of healthy, equitable communities nationwide.

Drawing on lessons from our long history of work in hundreds of communities across the country, we also updated our Community Action Model. It reflects our deep understanding of the community change process and is now relevant for a variety of community health goals. Throughout the year, it offered funders a tested approach for planning and prioritizing investments. Community coalitions and local leaders used the model in their work to create healthier places. They recognized and amplified neighborhood assets. They addressed health equity. And they grew their efforts into sustained commitment and action.

This work is more important than ever. Poor health is draining our potential as people and a nation, especially for children and communities of color. There is no time to wait; efforts to bridge divides, build trusting relationships, and create collaborative change will impact lives for generations to come.

This is not just an urgent call to action—it is also an amazing opportunity to create a healthier future for all. We are inspired by and grateful for our partners who share this journey with us. Together, we will go so much farther.



**Risa Wilkerson, Executive Director**  
Active Living By Design





# *thanks for your support!*

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## **REFER US**

We value the trust you place in our team when you recommend us to others. Thank you for spreading the word about the transformative work we've done together.

## **PARTNER WITH US**

We're your strategic partner through healthy community change, from brief calls to long-term partnerships. Let's start a conversation to explore how we can collaborate.

## **CONTACT US**

Visit [activelivingbydesign.org](https://activelivingbydesign.org) to read our blog, learn about our projects, and explore our Community Action Model.

# County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION



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**Active Living By Design has a history of collaboration with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute through the *County Health Rankings and Roadmaps* national program. Together, we are helping to build a culture of health in communities at greatest risk for disparities.**

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Active Living By Design (ALBD) has supported 20 Roadmaps to Health Action Awards partnerships to advance and accelerate local action in their communities. We led the design, management, and provision of funding; organized collaborative learning opportunities; and offered other supports. In 2016, we expanded our focus with the development and launch of the Roadmaps Action Acceleration and Collaborative Learning initiative, which provided additional support to 29 communities. We will continue to help accelerate and advance community action while strengthening and expanding learning exchanges by engaging additional communities in 2017.

ALBD's collaborative learning services spark generative thinking, help develop new partnerships, and tap into wisdom and resources that inspire action. In our work with *County Health Rankings & Roadmaps*, we tailored our support for a range of learning and networking preferences, including face-to-face meetings and web-based convenings. Over time, we have seen the impact of on-the-ground action when communities receive a combination of supports. These include evidence- and practice-based lessons, coaching and collaborative learning, and flexible funding to act on emerging opportunities.

**“ALBD has provided valuable expertise, delivering high-quality collaborative learning experiences and managing funding opportunities. Our partnership with them has bolstered collective efforts to support communities learning from each other and building skills to advance health improvement strategies across the nation.”**

**Julie Willems Van Dijk, Director**  
County Health Rankings & Roadmaps and  
RWJF Culture of Health Prize

**“The energy and action in communities across the country is impressive! Community leaders and partners have been incredibly creative, strategic, and resourceful in seizing this opportunity to leverage funding along with coaching and collaborative learning resources. This work affirms that impactful and sustainable change must be community-led.”**

**Joanne Lee, Collaborative Learning Director**  
Active Living By Design





## *Alamance Wellness Collaborative* Technical Assistance, Training, and Planning IMPACT ALAMANCE

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**With leadership from Healthy Alamance, Impact Alamance, and Active Living By Design, the Alamance Wellness Collaborative has created a working coalition that is identifying and pursuing sustainable policies, systems, and environmental changes to make Alamance County a healthier, thriving place.**

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Alamance County, NC has many assets, including its history, relationships, and the clear sense that its residents want to live in a healthy community. In partnership with Impact Alamance and Healthy Alamance, ALBD has leveraged these strengths, helped facilitate collaborative processes, and shared evidence-informed strategies to inform the Collaborative's community change efforts. For some people, the concept of improving the population's health by changing the built environment is new. To help bring examples to life, ALBD shared stories from other communities, helping Wellness Collaborative members identify their own county's potential and navigate the path toward a broader culture of health and well-being.

Since the inception of the Wellness Collaborative, members have adopted a collective vision and a shared language. They have also embraced upstream goals that are feasible and will have meaningful impact. ALBD has provided tools to help members of the Collaborative share their ideas, speak with local policy makers, and implement strategies to improve health within their own organizations. Today, the Collaborative has increased its capacity to maintain a thriving community coalition as it continues to improve access to opportunities for healthy living for all of the county's residents.

**"ALBD is like a staff extension for us. They have added credibility to our work for our board and our community, and have increased my knowledge of strategies for change and the policies of other communities. They are helping us make better investments for a healthier Alamance County."**

**Marcy Green, Program Director**  
Impact Alamance

**"Alamance County's work is a great model for other mid-sized communities. While the Collaborative comprises individuals from government agencies that cannot 'advocate' in a formal sense, they are making change on a regular basis within their own systems."**

**Tim Schwantes, Project Officer**  
Active Living By Design

## Community-Centered Health

BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF  
NORTH CAROLINA FOUNDATION



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The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation is working to increase community-centered health in the state, with the ultimate goals of reducing disparities and improving population health. In partnership with Care Share Health Alliance, Active Living By Design provided technical assistance and strategic guidance to the Foundation and its grantees.

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A key success of this initiative is the development of reflective partnerships that actively and authentically engage residents and communities. Through coaching to the Foundation's staff and core partners, ALBD helped build a collective understanding of the importance of this essential practice. As a result, resident involvement has expanded dramatically.

When the initiative began, a few community residents were involved. Now there are dozens. Older community members who previously said little are now boldly speaking up and organizing meetings. Emerging community leaders, established neighborhood association leaders, and refugees still learning to speak English have worked together to pilot a health outreach team that is linking residents with the new clinics. And safety-net health providers, with the support of ALBD's technical assistance, have directly experienced the process of community-led planning. They are now asking, "How can we better connect our staff to the community? How can we spend more time understanding the lives of our patients and the environments they live in?"

**"ALBD has guided us through the complexities of keeping our work community-centered while trying to change institutional systems—navigating the personalities and policies that form barriers to empowering neighbors. They have connected us with key resources that significantly increased our capacity. ALBD is a great cheerleader for community transformation."**

**Beth McKee-Huger, Founding Partner**  
Collaborative Cottage Grove,  
A Community-Centered Health partnership

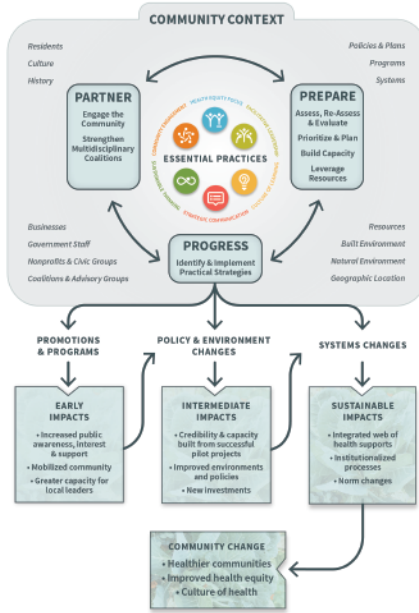
**"If healthcare organizations are going to produce better and more equitable outcomes, they will find the answers in communities and through closer relationships with those who live in them. With BCBSNCF, we are building the path forward by walking it together."**

**Rich Bell, Senior Project Officer**  
Active Living By Design



# Community Action Model

## ACTIVE LIVING BY DESIGN



Drawing on nearly 15 years of successful initiatives that deepened our understanding of the community change process, we updated and re-launched our Community Action Model (CAM).

Through a survey and series of interviews, ALBD checked in with former project directors and coordinators of the national *Active Living by Design*, *Healthy Eating by Design*, and *Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities* initiatives to learn how their work had been sustained and which practices had contributed to their successes. The new CAM lifts lessons learned from those conversations.

This model highlights the importance of a community's context, defines six essential practices that undergird success, and focuses the action approach to a "3P" process: Partner, Prepare, and Progress. It also presents expected impacts. The model is now relevant for a variety of community health goals, and can be useful to community coalitions and local leaders seeking a collaborative approach to creating healthier places, as well as to funders seeking an evidence-informed, practice-based approach for healthy community investments.

**"The Community Action Model training provided our on-the-ground partners with common language, processes, and resources they can use to deepen the work they are already doing and sustain long-term community change."**

**Sarah L. Panken, Director of Network Programs**  
Michigan Fitness Foundation

**"What a joy it was to work on the design and re-launch of this model! It packs our team's broad knowledge of and deep experience with healthy community change into one useful resource."**

**Sarah Moore, Communications and Marketing Manager**  
Active Living By Design

## Geographic Focus



NATIONAL  
CLIENTS



STATE  
CLIENTS

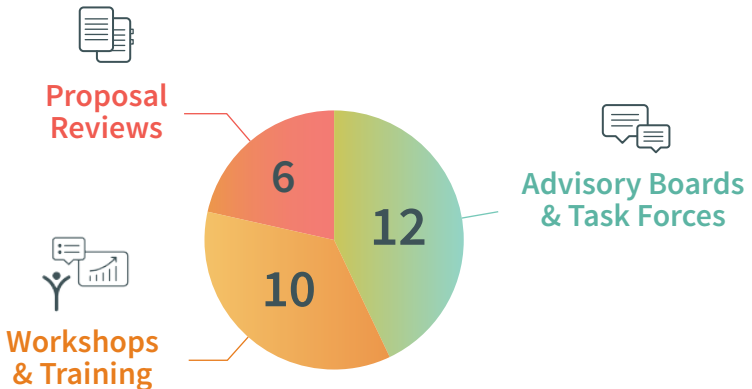


LOCAL  
CLIENTS

## Primary Services



## Other Services





## OUR 2016 TEAM



**Casey Allred, BS**  
*Operations Manager*

Event planner extraordinaire with southern hospitality and charm



**Sarah Moore, MArch**  
*Communications & Marketing Manager*

Eclectic creative and plant lady with incurable wanderlust



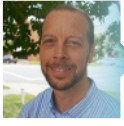
**Richard Bell, MCP**  
*Senior Project Officer*

Student of systems change and advocate of the small, slow, and connected



**Mary Beth Powell, MPH**  
*Senior Project Officer*

Environmental advocate, self-proclaimed policy wonk, and die-hard Carolina basketball fan



**Philip Bors, MPH**  
*Technical Assistance Director*

Recovering advisory board member, weeknight advocate, and active weekender



**Tim Schwantes, MSW, MPH**  
*Project Officer*

Life-long learner, connector, listener, privilege checker, and triathlete



**Sydney Jones, MSPH**  
*Evaluation Associate*

Sprouting gardener and equity-driven epidemiologist



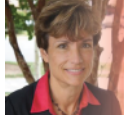
**Danielle Sherman, MPH**  
*Project Manager*

Community advocate, planning superstar, and work-life balancer



**Julia Katz, MCRP, MPH**  
*Research Assistant*

Health equity advocate, multisector collaborator, and cycling enthusiast



**Sarah Strunk, MHA**  
*Strategic Advisor*

Healthy communities networker, integrator, and distance runner on the go



**Joanne Lee, MPH, RD**  
*Collaborative Learning Director*

Adventurous strategist, cross-cultural explorer, and human and animal welfare champion



**Risa Wilkerson, MA**  
*Executive Director*

Action-driven optimist, abundance thinker, simplicity seeker, and weekend wanderer

## ADVISORY BOARD

## EXTERNAL ADVISORS



**Donna Chavis, BS**  
*Chair*

Co-Founder, The Center for Community Action



**Chuck Alexander, MA**

Principal and Director, Public Health Team, Burness



**Niiobli Armah IV, MA**  
*Vice Chair*

Managing Director, We-Collab



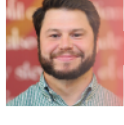
**Jamie Busse, MPH**

Senior Program Officer, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



**Geni Eng, MPH, DrPH**

Professor of Health Behavior, Gillings School of Global Public Health, UNC Chapel Hill



**Josh Sattely, JD**

Compliance and Legal Affairs Specialist, Third Sector New England



**Kate Kraft, PhD**

Executive Director, America Walks

ALBD's multidisciplinary team members have backgrounds in public health, public policy, planning, community development, communications, nutrition, design, architecture, business, and social work.

Our advisory board members and external advisors represent a variety of disciplines and perspectives. They provide valuable input and expertise related to our work.



**Tyler Norris, MDiv**

Vice President, Total Health, Kaiser Permanente



**ACTIVE LIVING  
BY DESIGN**

*Catalyst for a culture of health*

## **CONTACT US**

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Active Living By Design advances community-led action  
and proven, place-based strategies  
to ensure health and well-being for all.



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