

## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Dynamic Project Director and Researcher with over 10 years of experience in community health promotion and food justice initiatives. Proven track record in managing multi-million dollar grants, leading diverse teams, and driving impactful research in low-wealth communities. Skilled in project management, stakeholder engagement, and data analysis, with a focus on participatory approaches to enhance community resilience and equity. Passionate about integrating sustainable practices and fostering inclusive environments to elevate marginalized voices.

## RECENT WORK EXPERIENCE

### Project Director and Researcher

February 2014-present

*The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, Food Fitness and Opportunity Collaborative (FFORC)*

- Foundational member of programmatic/research team focused on policy, systems and environmental change (PSE) interventions to address food justice and physical activity in areas of low wealth and disinvestment in Eastern NC.
- Promoted to Project Director in 2019, developing team management and proposal writing skills. Prioritized addressing team culture to be more inclusive, collaborative and transparent.
- Executed \$1.5M+ SNAP-Ed grant as core funding source, annually. Worked closely with Principal Investigator and Budget Director to manage grant, team member performance and project execution, and regular reporting. Led regular team meetings.
- Supervised two full-time professionals and a continuous placement of graduate and undergraduate students.
- In addition to Project Director role, maintained Project Management in initiative focused on community development through small-scale agricultural production, working directly with community partner organizations in 10 counties.
  - Identified and trained leaders in basic project management, data management and community organizing.
  - Managed and generated regular reports on budget, program outputs and participation.
  - Developed and executed several workshop series on topics ranging from community gardening to project sustainability.
  - Beginning in 2024, co-led shift to Participatory Grant-Making, a process in which project partner/applicants are given a greater degree of control over budget and allowable activities.
- Led dissemination of findings in manuscripts for publication in professional journals and conference presentations.
- Spearheaded project exploring food and financial insecurity among college students, focusing on a campaign to increase SNAP applications within that population.
- Core team member of Whole Community Connection funding in 2023 to develop a new community garden to re-purpose flood plain lands in Tarboro, NC.
- Throughout, participated in projects where expertise was needed, including:
  - Leading three different Healthy Retail initiatives.
  - Employing customer service attributes in data collection on a 5-year study related to individual health changes tied to minimum wage increase.
  - Conducting interviews with participants in project measuring effectiveness of pandemic-related food assistance programs.
- Continually engaged in workshops and inner teamwork to develop and live out a DEI orientation, toward understanding positionality and systemic injustices, working to elevate voices of the marginalized.

### Wholesale Market Coordinator

May 2013-August 2014

*Farmer Foodshare, Durham, NC*

- Managed all aspects of food hub, sourcing products from local, limited resource farms to sell to mission-driven organizations and businesses serving vulnerable populations.
- Achieved 103% year-over-year sales growth. Researched and cultivated new buyers, and increased sales to existing customers, demonstrating a growth in buyer confidence.

- Added 17 small-scale farmers to core of sellers, demonstrating wholesale market legitimacy.
- Successfully wrote two grants to assist buyers with limited budgets to purchase more fresh food; managed 4 additional grants.
- Researched and wrote food safety plan to guide staff in warehouse, cold storage, and delivery vehicles.
- Managed 2 part-time assistants and 2 interns.

### **Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Manager**

**February 2010-March 2013**

*Spoutwood Farm, Glen Rock, PA*

- Managed all aspects of full-season vegetable production for 100-member CSA. Grew all produce for approximately 300 people on 2 acres, requiring a high degree of efficiency and organization. Taught and managed 2 apprentices from March through November each year. Managed 10-15 working shareholders seasonally.
- Created a comprehensive plan to guide the budget, marketing and scheduling of each season's production, based around emergent directions and the previous season's production records.
- Provided administrative management. Received member applications and managed membership database. Communicated with members and prospective members daily.

## **EDUCATION**

### **The United Nations' University for Peace, Costa Rica**

Master of Arts, Natural Resources and Sustainable Development

### **School of International Service, American University, Washington, DC**

Master of Arts, International Affairs

### **School of Engineering, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX**

Bachelor of Science, Civil Engineering

## **PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

Statia, G., Sheppard, B. (2025, February 24). *Ceding Power to Community: Utilizing Participatory Grantmaking to Decentralize Decision-making*. Workshop for Carolina Engagement Week. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Lu, I., Sheppard, B., Chapman, L., Barnes, L., De Marco M. (2024). Evaluation of a Sparkling Water Promotion Intervention on Sales at Convenience Stores in the Southeastern United States. *Journal of Nutrition and Education Behavior*.

Sheppard, B., Morton, B., & De Marco, A. (2024, February 27). *Layers Upon Layers of Impacts: Two Ways to Use Ripple Effects Mapping in Community-Engaged Research*. Workshop for Carolina Engagement Week. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Charles, E., Sheppard, B., Cominsky, R., Alvarado, J., Kearney, W., LaJeunesse, S., Sadeghzadeh, C., Bishop, J., Windley, T., De Marco, M. (2023). Disrupting the Practice: Antiracist Participatory Antidotes to Combat White Supremacy Manifestations in Community-Based Participatory Research. *Journal of Participatory Research Methods*. <https://doi.org/10.35844/001c.90109>

Lu I, B Sheppard, SW Ng, S Burstein, EL Charles, T Williams, M Demarco. (2022). "Did a fruit and vegetable incentive program support low-income households in North Carolina during the COVID-19 pandemic? A mixed methods assessment of the Healthy Helping program and other pandemic-related food assistance." *Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19320248.2022.2108742>

Sadeghzadeh, C., Sheppard, B., de Groot, J., De Marco, M. (2021). Evaluating the Benefits of a SNAP-Ed-Funded Community Garden Intervention Using Ripple Effect Mapping. *Health Education & Behavior*. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/10901981211058075>

Burstein, S., Chapman, L., Sheppard, B., Sadeghzadeh, C., & Demarco, M. (2021). Evaluation of a Healthy Checkout Lane “Nudge” on Grocery and Convenience Store Sales of a Price-Promoted Nutritious Food. *Health Promotion Practice*. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/15248399211048463>

Chauvenet, C., Sheppard, B., Siddique, N., Gallagher, B., Kearney, B. Demarco, M. (2021). A Qualitative Study of Rural Low-Wealth Participants’ Experiences with Community Gardens. *Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19320248.2021.1907641>

Gilbert, J., Chauvenet, C., Sheppard, B., & De Marco, M. (2020). "Don't Just Come for Yourself": Understanding Leadership Approaches and Volunteer Engagement in Community Gardens. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 9(4), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2020.094.019>

American Public Health Association, November 2019: A Novel Approach to Evaluating Complex Community-based Interventions: Ripple Effect Mapping in Rural Community Gardens

Association for the Study of Food and Society and the Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society, June 2018: Beyond the Health Benefits of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables: Rural community gardens as catalysts of community invigoration, new socio-economic pathways, and reclamation of tradition and food sovereignty

American Public Health Association, October 2017: Beyond the Health Benefits of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables: Rural Community Gardens as Avenues to Socio-economic Development, Renewed Interest in Cultural Traditions, and Community Cohesion

American Public Health Association, October 2015: Pulling Municipal and Organizational Policy Levers to Promote Community Garden Engagement Among SNAP Recipients

## **TRAININGS**

- Grant Writing Certificate Program, University of South Carolina, July 2023.
- The Management Center, Managing to Change the World online 2-day series, September 2021.
- Racial Equity Institute: Attended 4 trainings on identifying and understanding racism in American culture and society.
- The Rural Center’s Rural Economic Development Institute training, May 2017.
- UNC School of Government 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Basic Economic Development Course, July 2016.

## **VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES**

- Forest Steward, Duke Forest, April 2025 – present.
- Herpetofauna Monitoring Volunteer, Duke University Nicholas School of the Environment, July 2022 – November 2024.
- Co-Chair of workgroup for UNC Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Strategic Planning initiative, 2021.
- Community Engagement Fellowship and Disaster Recovery Project Grant reviewer: Reviewed and rated applications for \$2,000 community engagement grant for UNC students through the Carolina Center for Public Service, 2018 – 2023. Additionally, reviewed and rated applications for grants to address immediate need and develop more resilient systems in response to hurricane devastation in 2017, 2018 and 2019.
- Guest reviewer/respondent for APPLES Bryan Fellowship projects: Each semester volunteered to sit in on classes to hear presentations from student groups and provide feedback on ways to improve, particularly in regard to community engagement.
- Hurricane Relief, Oct-Dec 2016, multiple trips to help victims of Hurricane Matthew. Secured grant through Carolina Center for Public Service to purchase needed materials and supplies, and to give cash to impacted residents.
- Co-Chair and Board Member, North Carolina Community Garden Partners, 2015-2017.