



ULI Health Leaders Network

Celebrating Five Years of Learning, Collaboration, and Impact





URBAN LAND INSTITUTE

The Urban Land Institute is a global, member-driven organization comprising more than 45,000 real estate and urban development professionals dedicated to advancing the Institute's mission of shaping the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide. Learn more at www.uli.org.

BUILDING HEALTHY PLACES

The ULI Building Healthy Places Initiative leverages the power of the Institute's global networks to shape projects and places in ways that improve the health of people and communities. Building Healthy Places strives to cultivate champions, drive industry change, and shape cities and regions. Learn more and connect: uli.org/health and health@uli.org.

Cover photo: Cohort 5 Health Leaders in Santa Fe, New Mexico (2022). (ULI/Beth Nilsson)

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INTRODUCTION

Fall 2022 marks the five-year anniversary of the [ULI Health Leaders Network \(HLN\)](#). This document looks back on the leaders, convenings, and learnings that have shaped this network into an ever-growing collaborative dedicated to health and social equity in real estate and communities.

The ULI Health Leaders Network is a leadership and knowledge-exchange program created by the [ULI Building Healthy Places Initiative \(BHP\)](#) and generously supported by the [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#) and longtime ULI member and ULI Foundation governor Randall Lewis. The launch of the program was also made possible with support from the [Colorado Health Foundation](#) in 2017.

Aligning with one of three key [Building Healthy Places](#) goals, the network aims to cultivate champions for health and social equity among ULI's global membership. By fostering a compassionate, thoughtful, and driven group of leaders, the program helps participants weave health into every aspect of land use and real estate decision-making.



The Health Leaders Network convenes cohorts annually, with participants selected in the winter based on applications. All Health Leaders must be or become members of ULI to participate in the program.

Over nine months, leaders participate in in-person and virtual programming. These activities are designed to build knowledge, networks, and leadership skills; spur honest dialogue and exchange; facilitate team building; encourage learning across sectors; and provide opportunities to hear from experts in the field.

Cohorts form strong bonds with each other, and alumni are encouraged to stay involved.



The inaugural cohort of Health Leaders concludes its program during its closing forum in Denver (2017). *(Ayako Utsumi)*



Cohort 2 Health Leaders participate in group activities envisioning what it takes to build a culture of health (2018). *(Rodolfo Rodriguez)*



Cohort 5 Health Leaders await the Rail Runner train to Santa Fe, New Mexico, where they learned about community-centered planning and Indigenous youth mental health (2022). *(ULI/Beth Nilsson)*



Leadership programs like the ULI Health Leaders Network help foster what we call a Culture of Health, which is a guiding light to our work at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. We are proud to be a funder of this program that brings together key decision-makers and change agents to advance holistic health in the built environment.”

—**Abbey Cofsky**, managing director,
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



ULI Health Leaders are deeply committed to learning, sharing, and doing when it comes to health and the built environment. I’m honored and delighted to be a key funder of this program, which is creating a cadre of ULI members making change in their communities and in their work.”

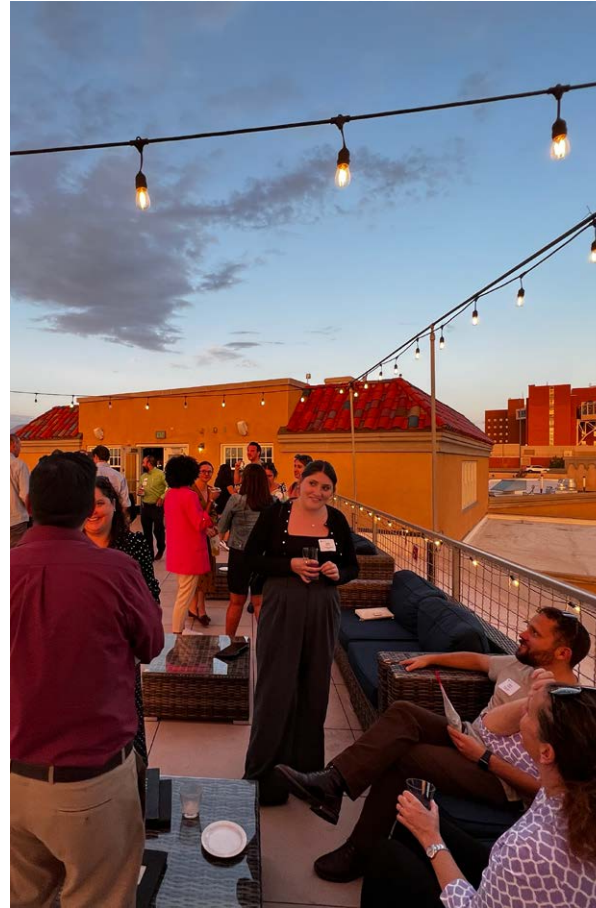
—**Randall Lewis**, ULI Foundation governor;
executive vice president,
The Lewis Group of Companies

PROGRAM GOALS



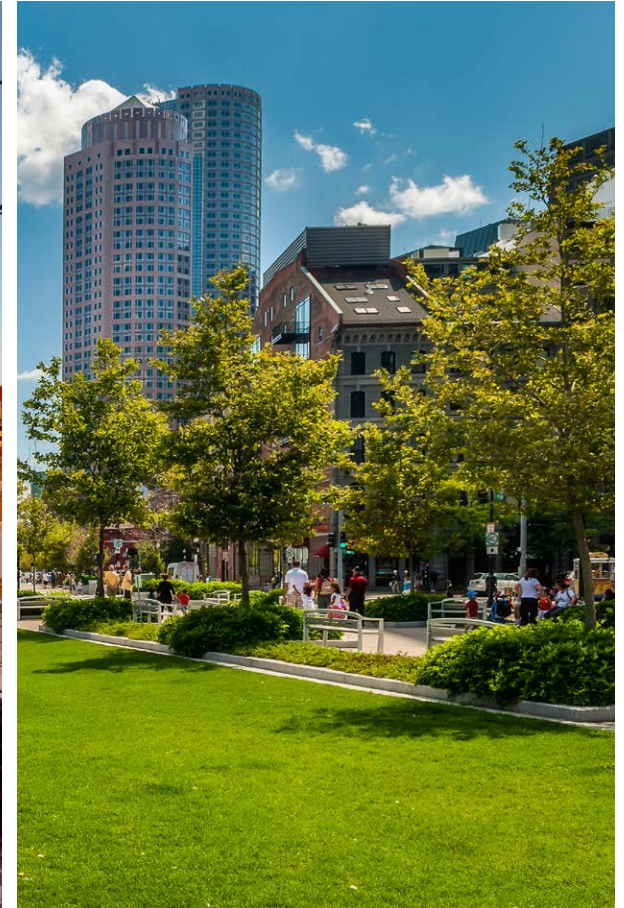
LEARN

Cultivate leadership skills to advance careers and learn about best practices, research, and actionable approaches to advance health and social equity.



NETWORK

Be part of a robust cross-sector network of land use and real estate professionals with knowledge about the connections between real estate, planning, and health.



MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Advance a culture of health in real estate and land use decision-making, equitably improving health and wellness for all.



Defining Health in the Built Environment

The network approaches and defines health in line with the [World Health Organization's Constitution](#):

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease.” For the real estate industry, this requires cross-sector collaboration to address the systemic, physical, and policy-related aspects of our cities and communities that have contributed to adverse health outcomes.

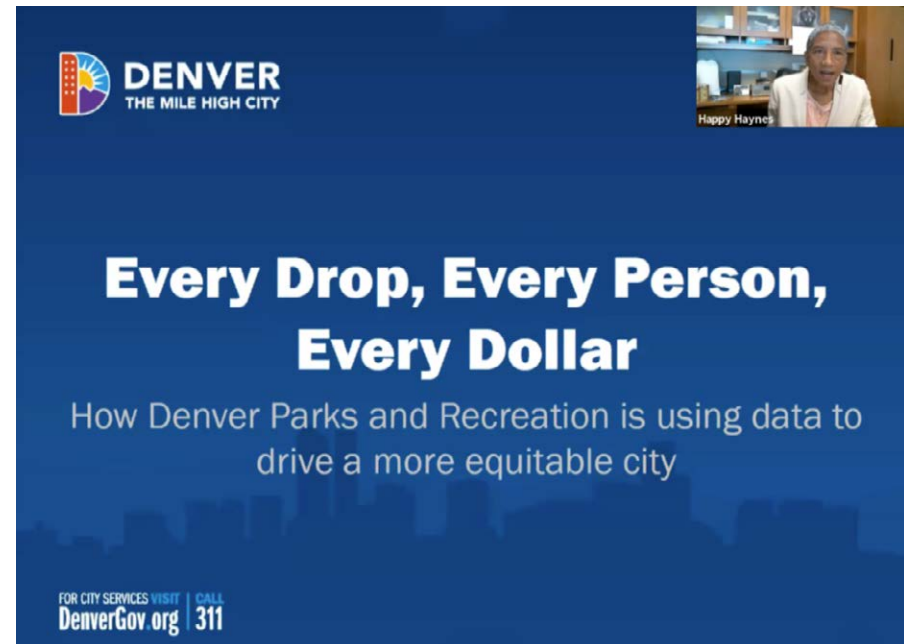
Get Involved

Learn more about the Health Leaders Network [here](#) and connect with the Building Healthy Places program at health@uli.org.

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Core components of the program include the following:

- **Webinars and podcasts** and their accompanying Q&A sessions are held with experts from the field. Among past topics are the relationship between zoning reform and health; enhancing access to food; racial justice in the land use context; building healthy and vibrant parks and public spaces; and the implementation of nature-based design strategies to address climate change and health holistically.
- **Small group presentations** allow Health Leaders to learn about one another's professional, volunteer, or community-based work that centers health and social equity. They also offer a way to exchange ideas and potential solutions on challenges or unanswered questions related to that work.
- **Individual assignments** encourage thought exploration related to the myriad connections among the built environment, health, and social equity. Health Leaders are paired with fellow cohort participants for each assignment. Together these pairs reflect on one another's experiences and stories and develop one-on-one relationships beyond the small groups.



Cohort 3 hears from Happy Haynes of Denver Parks and Recreation during an expert webinar on the opportunities of using data to drive more equitable outcomes for all residents of the city (2021). (*Happy Haynes*)

- **Forums** are deeply rooted in the places where they are held. At the forums, Health Leaders learn about transformative health and social equity–focused projects and initiatives of a city or region, as well as building leadership skills and understanding among participants. In 2020 and 2021, the network adapted to fully virtual forums, emphasizing skills building and practical training on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and cross-sector collaboration.
- **Healthy Happy Hours** are quarterly informal virtual gatherings that encourage current participants to engage with program alumni who are invited to lead presentations about their current work. Past events have led to the creation of new partnerships and connections beyond cohorts.



Bill Mahar, Cohort 1, leads a Health Happy Hour and shares best practices that the private sector can engage in to effect positive health outcomes (2022). (Norris Design)



Sometimes in professional settings you don't normally hear from other sectors in such a vulnerable way. I think everyone lets their guard down [in small group convenings and assignment discussions], and **we are really able to understand and appreciate different perspectives.**"

—**Molly Lanphier**, senior planner,
Denver Parks and Recreation
Cohort 3



It was fascinating to learn the history of Detroit and its neighborhoods and how it has informed new projects that are moving the city forward.

It's crucial to understand that lens in order to learn from history and ensure a more equitable future. I also really valued meeting my fellow HLN members and being able to process the forum's content through meaningful discussions."

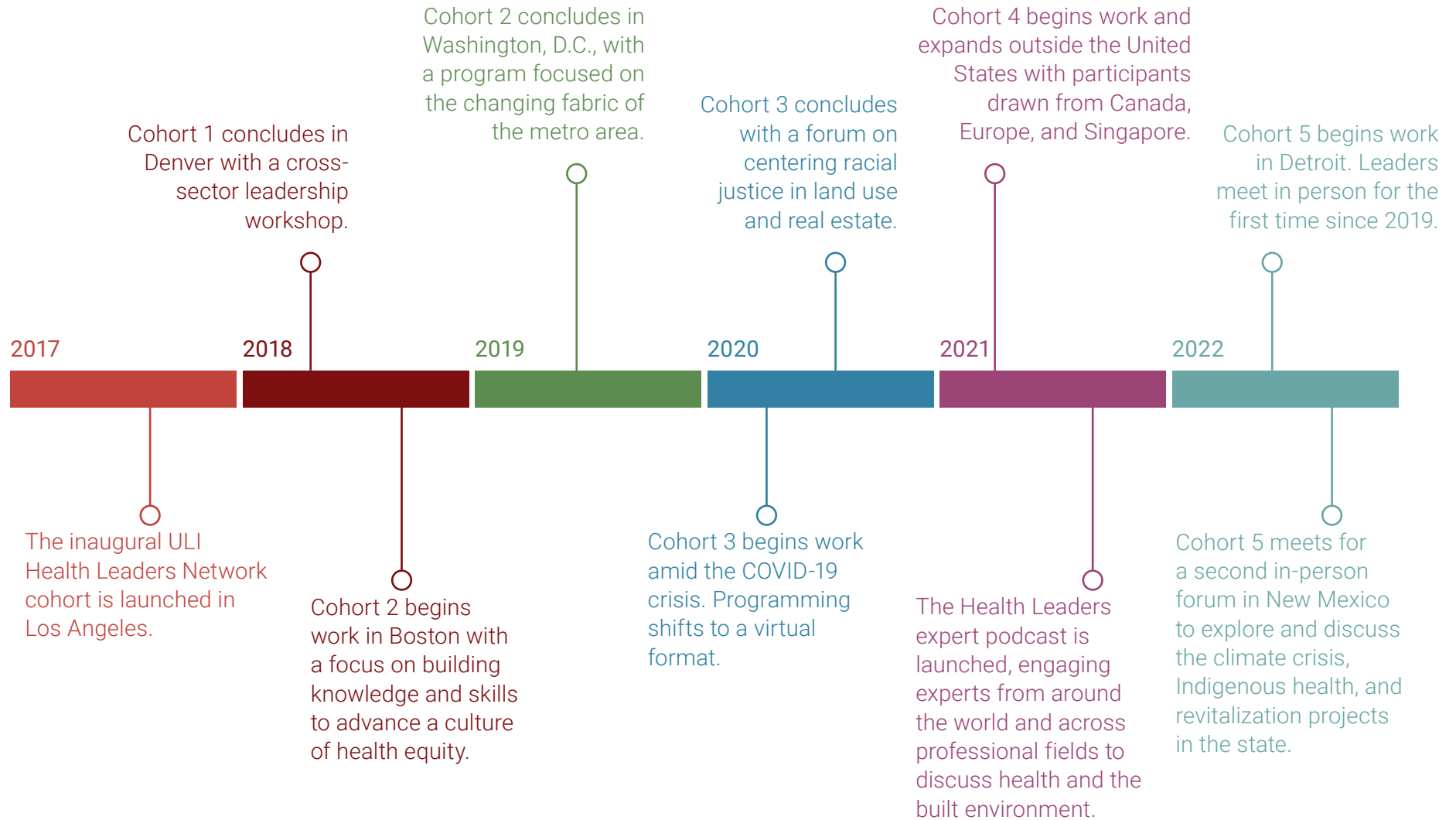
—**Ramune Bartuskaite**, Architect, FIFTEEN;
CEO, Spec Matters
Cohort 5



In Santa Fe, seeing what is possible with time and patience was important for me. Our work is often results-oriented, and it can be easy to get frustrated with the pace of a development. The Santa Fe Railyard was a reminder that good things take time."

—**Saranya Kanagaraj**, assistant project manager,
Consigli Construction
Cohort 5

A Timeline of Program Milestones





Top, from left: Cohort 1 gathers in Denver for its closing forum (2017) (*Ayako Utsumi*); Cohort 2 participates in a walking tour of National Landing in Arlington, Virginia, as part of its closing forum (2018) (*Sara Hammerschmidt*). Bottom, from left: Cohort 4 poses for a virtual group photo during the closing forum after reflecting on the leadership strategies members harnessed during the year (2021) (*ULI/Beth Nilsson*); Cohort 5 at the RiverWalk in Detroit as part of its introductory forum (2022) (*ULI/Beth Nilsson*).

“



The Health Leaders Network has exposed my work to a new audience and opened many doors for me. I have joined forces on projects with other Health Leaders and was asked to speak on my community work impacting health outcomes in New Orleans, including during Cohort 4’s midyear forum. HLN opened a door for me to the possibility of a connection between my experience in public health and development that has altered my trajectory in an overwhelmingly positive way.”

—**Monique Brown**, founder and principal consultant,
Well Placed LLC
Cohort 2



Jeanette Pierce of City Institute shares the history of Detroit during the Cohort 5 introductory forum, combining historical facts and current conditions with individual anecdotes and statistics to help participants better understand the complexity of the city (2022). (ULI/Beth Nilsson)



Program facilitators Sara Daleiden and Ron Milam lead a collaborative exercise for Cohort 2 in Boston on pinpointing common and contrasting leadership traits across built environment professions (2018). (Sara Hammerschmidt)



Cohort 5 engages in a post-panel discussion with select key creators and stewards of the Santa Fe Railway in Santa Fe, New Mexico, after touring the site to better understand the decades-long community-based planning process and the impact on city residents and visitors (2022). (ULI/Emily Zhang)

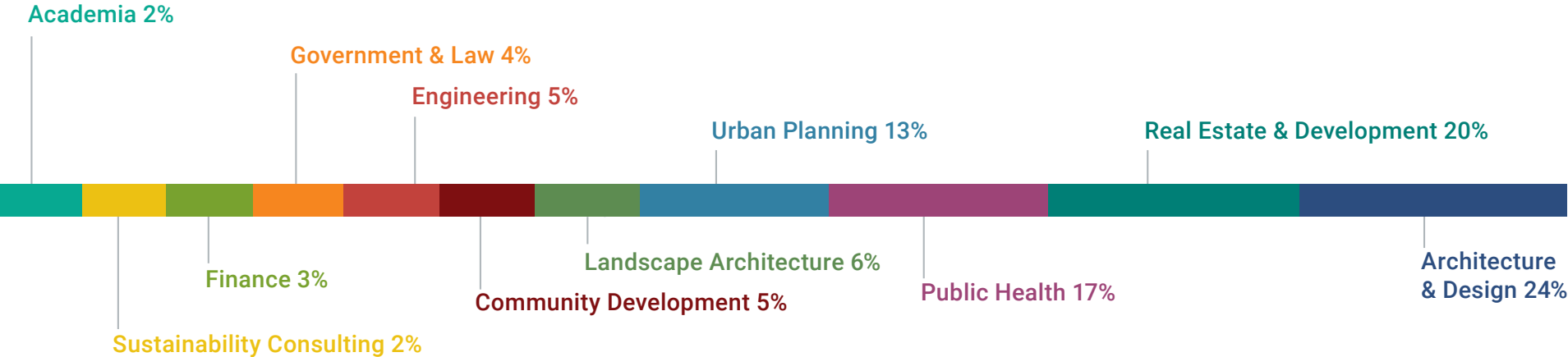
WHO ARE THE HEALTH LEADERS?

Brought together by a strong desire to learn—from one another, from experts, and from local projects and initiatives—the Health Leaders represent the entire spectrum of the real estate and land use profession (see figure below).

The network aims to identify shared goals and responsibilities and to mobilize individual and collective leadership to spur actionable steps toward health and social equity in professional practice and communities.

The network facilitates honest and open discussions about how the industry can move the needle on embedding health, well-being, and social equity into the mainstream practice of land use and real estate—beginning with the inception of a development, project, or plan.

Professional Backgrounds



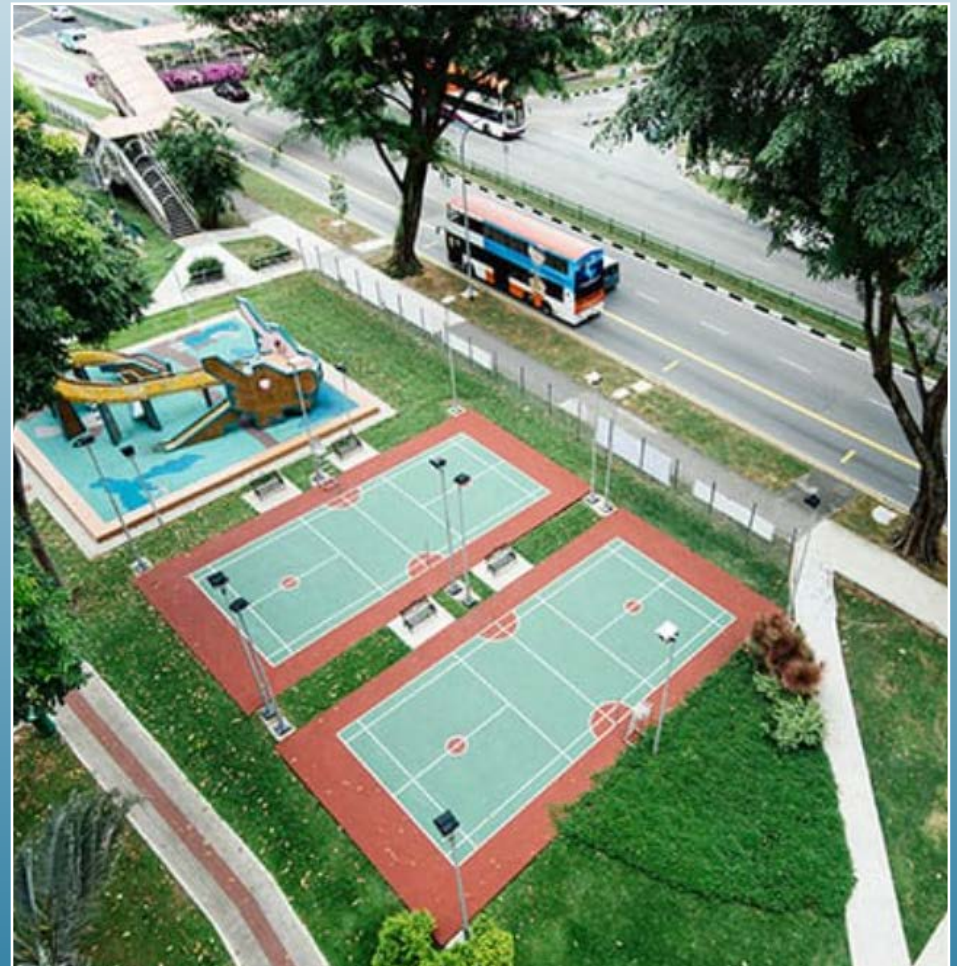
Beginning with the fourth cohort, the program has included members from ULI Europe and ULI Asia Pacific. This expansion brings more voices and perspectives to the table from professionals around the globe and provides the opportunity to explore different approaches to advancing health and social equity. The map on [page 20](#) shows the geographic distribution of the network across ULI's three regions.

Want to know more about the Health Leaders? Read their biographies and connect with Health Leaders through the ULI Member Directory by visiting the [Meet the Health Leaders](#) page.

While cohort years are bound by specific time frames, Health Leaders are applying their experiences from the program as alumni and in the field. From forming partnerships with one another, presenting at conferences together, and articulating the "Commitment to Health and Equity in the Built Environment" position statement ([see feature box, page 23](#)), the stories of impact highlighted below illuminate health leadership in action.

Reflections on Health and the Built Environment

Over the years, Health Leaders have reflected on their experiences and shared how the built environment and design of communities play a significant role in the ability to promote the health of both individuals and communities. You can see what select Cohort 1 participants say about the inextricable connections between the two areas and the opportunities for impact they present [here](#).





I have always been impressed by the quality and unique real estate perspective of ULI's Building Healthy Places Initiative, and **I had expected to connect and collaborate with talented and esteemed practitioners from across the States. I was not wrong!** In addition to strengthening my U.K. connections with fellow U.K. Health Leaders, I was inspired to have collaborated with two Health Leaders—Doug King and Dr. Erika Eitland—in delivering workshop sessions at conferences held in San Diego, California, and Greenville, South Carolina. I sincerely look forward to developing my connections with Health Leaders in the future and taking the best of both the American and U.K. practices to improve my work to plan healthier places.”

—**Michael Chang**, programme manager, Planning and Health, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, Department of Health and Social Care, United Kingdom
Cohort 4



Being part of the ULI Health Leaders Network has given me tools, insights, and a deeper understanding of how public health and the built environment are not only inextricably linked, but how they are connected to social equity. **The opportunity to share knowledge—including best practices, successes, and hurdles—with other individuals that are as committed as I am to making impactful health changes in our communities is invaluable.”**

—**Coreen Paul**, senior project manager and senior associate, HGA
Cohort 4

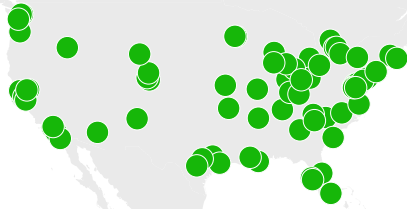


“

Out of the many remarkable educational experiences I've been privileged to have, being a member of the **Health Leaders Network** really stands out. I've moved what I learned from the network to the core curriculum I teach my graduate real estate students.

—**Chuck Schilke**, director and senior lecturer,
Edward St. John Real Estate Program,
Johns Hopkins University Carey Business School
Cohort 1

Where in the World Are the Health Leaders?



ULI AMERICAS:

Albuquerque, NM
 Alexandria, VA
 Arlington, VA
 Asheville, NC
 Atlanta, GA
 Austin, TX
 Bainbridge Island, WA
 Baltimore, MD
 Baton Rouge, LA
 Berkeley, CA
 Boise, ID
 Boston, MA
 Boulder, CO
 Brookline, MA
 Brooklyn, NY
 Buffalo, NY

Casper, WY
 Charlotte, NC
 Chicago, IL
 Clarendon Hills, IL
 Clearwater, FL
 Cleveland, OH
 College Station, TX
 Collingwood, Ontario,
 Canada
 Columbia, MD
 Columbus, OH
 Davis, CA
 Dayton, OH
 Denver, CO
 Detroit, MI
 Fort Collins, CO
 Fort Wayne, IN

Ft. Lauderdale, FL
 Greenville, SC
 Houston, TX
 Indianapolis, IN
 Ithaca, NY
 Kansas City, MO
 Laguna Beach, CA
 Lexington, KY
 Long Island City, NY
 Los Angeles, CA
 Louisville, KY
 Memphis, TN
 Milwaukee, WI
 Minneapolis, MN
 Mississauga, Ontario,
 Canada
 Mount Pleasant, SC

Nashville, TN
 New Orleans, LA
 New York, NY
 Newark, DE
 Norfolk, VA
 Oakland, CA
 Olympia, WA
 Orlando, FL
 Pasadena, CA
 Philadelphia, PA
 Phoenix, AZ
 Portland, OR
 Raleigh, NC
 Rogers, AR
 Sacramento, CA
 Saint Paul, MN
 San Antonio, TX

San Diego, CA
 San Francisco, CA
 San Jose, CA
 San Leandro, CA
 San Pablo, CA
 Santa Rosa, CA
 Seattle, WA
 South Bend, IN
 St. Louis, MO
 St. Paul, MN
 St. Petersburg, FL
 Toronto, Ontario, Canada
 Upper Marlboro, MD
 Washington, DC
 Winchendon, MA

ULI EUROPE:

Amsterdam, Netherlands
 Frankfurt, Germany
 Leeds, England, UK
 London, England, UK

ULI ASIA PACIFIC:

Singapore, Singapore

By the Numbers



192

HEALTH LEADERS



6

COUNTRIES



110+

EXPERTS ENGAGED



18,000

MINUTES OF IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENT



83

CITIES



I credit HLN for helping push my career to the next level. It provided me with confidence to continue pursuing and improving my health planning and food systems work. In particular, HLN's equity emphasis has influenced my post-cohort work. This year, I was appointed to the American Institute of Architect's Annual Awards jury because of my experiences with equity and well-being. Moreover, I have also become more involved with my local ULI district council by chairing its REDI [Real Estate Diversity Initiative] program. I doubt these opportunities would have been available to me without the Health Leaders Network."

—**Luis Nieves-Ruiz**, FAICP, director of economic development, East Central Florida Regional Planning Council
Cohort 1



I recall amid the pandemic and racial reckoning that followed in 2020, **I was grateful that HLN was able to pivot to ensure that the content and conversations were true to the moment writ large.** One highlight was hosting a Healthy Happy Hour on wellness, nature, and access. We explored how COVID-19 has underscored the need to address systemic racism's destructive impact on health. Through the discussions, we heard firsthand from diverse and dedicated practitioners and began to forge relationships that carried through collaboration on the HLN 'Commitment to Health and Equity in the Built Environment' spearheaded by Cohort 4."

—**Rogean Cadieux-Smith**, AIA EDAC, architect/planner, LRK
Cohort 3



Commitment to Health and Equity in the Built Environment

Inspired by the desire to take action, several Cohort 4 members—looking to create a tangible call to action and articulate the importance of centering health and equity in the work of real estate and land use professionals—generated a position statement, the “Commitment to Health and Equity in the Built Environment.”

The 102 Health Leader signatories to date call on ULI members and nonmembers alike to commit to embedding health and equity in all aspects of real estate and land use decision-making processes. Read the [“Commitment to Health and Equity in the Built Environment”](#) and join the call to action.

The Impact of the Health Leaders Network

ULI surveys of Health Leaders Network participants found that across the five cohorts, **95 percent of program participants** agree that HLN has advanced their knowledge of health and social equity in the built environment.

Across cohorts **3 to 5**, **100 percent of program participants** agree that HLN has provided at least one valuable insight they look forward to using and applying to their work.



I am very appreciative that [BHP] let ULI Chicago know of my involvement in the network. They offered me a great opportunity to be a volunteer on the technical assistance panel [TAP] program. I was one of the panelists of a Chicago neighborhood community planning TAP, providing an urban design and public health perspective. **I am thrilled that I have the chance to contribute to a public health topic in such a practical way.**

—**Ruijie Ma**, senior project designer,
Myefski Architects
Cohort 2



My advocacy for international public space design in service of social health, and my research on building a Conscious Cities Index, benefited immensely from being a member of the ULI Health Leaders Network. **ULI's Building Healthy Places Initiative is a good reflection of ULI's differentiated approach in shaping a sustainable built environment** through curated content and networks. I am now playing a role in bringing this work to Asia Pacific and hope this becomes a global focus for ULI."

—**Anupam Yog**, managing partner,
XDG Labs
Cohort 4

GET INVOLVED

Health and social equity are undeniably gaining more attention and traction as cities around the world grapple with recovering from COVID-19, addressing deeply rooted structures and legacies of racially unjust land use policies and practices, and prioritizing human- and community-centered design and development.

As this work continues to grow, adapt, and meet the moment, leadership across sectors remains pivotal to the realization of healthier, more equitable, environmentally responsible, and resilient communities. The Health Leaders Network seeks to support these efforts and looks back at the first five years of the program in reflection and celebration of the progress made. The program also looks forward with both hope and excitement to the work that lies ahead.

Are you eager to get involved and want to learn more about becoming a future ULI Health Leader? Find out more about the application process and program [here](#).

Are you curious about how land use and real estate can be an advocate for healthy and equitable communities and would you like to get involved in this work? Learn more about the ULI Building Healthy Places Initiative [here](#) or connect with us at health@uli.org.



Cohort 1 Health Leaders discuss strategies for effective cross-sector collaboration with facilitator Sara Daleiden (2017). (ULI/Matt Norris)



To really move the needle on ensuring that health and equity are central to decisions that impact our built environment, we knew we needed to break down silos between land use disciplines and create ambassadors who felt empowered to do that work. **We wanted to create a robust network of professionals who could learn from each other and amplify health within their projects.** It's thrilling that the program is now global and now over 190 professionals are program alumni!"

—**Sara Hammerschmidt**, former senior director,
ULI Building Healthy Places Initiative



ULI is at its best when it brings members together to learn, share, and network. We wanted to leverage the passion members feel about health and social equity and provide a dedicated space for collaboration and exploration on these topics. Five years in, we're so proud of the network we've built and thrilled by all of the amazing work that the Health Leaders are doing."

—**Rachel MacCleery**, co-executive director,
ULI Randall Lewis Center for Sustainability in Real Estate



“

Over the last five years, our Health Leaders have driven the conversation and practice of embedding health equity into their work and communities through their involvement in the network and the relationships and networking that continue today. There is still more work to do and progress to be made in the industry, and **I look forward to continuing to help facilitate cross-sector collaboration and leadership and bringing voices around the globe together to make impactful improvements to health outcomes in our communities.**”

—**Beth Nilsson**, director,
ULI Building Healthy Places Initiative

Acknowledgments

ULI is grateful to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Randall Lewis for their continued support of the Health Leaders Network.

ULI would also like to thank all who have made HLN possible over the years including our founding Advisory Group, program facilitators Sara Daleiden and Ron Milam, and our expert speakers and presenters. Lastly, to the members of the Health Leaders Network: thank you for your dedication to and enthusiasm for this work and for your feedback and ideas in continually shaping the program for the better.

If you are interested in supporting the further development and expansion of the Health Leaders Network, please contact health@uli.org.

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