

TITLE: Creating a Culture of Health: The Blue Zones Project in Four Oregon Communities

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STUDENT SUBMISSION: No

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Creating a culture of health using the Blue Zone Project Model in four Oregon Communities. Target audience is community-based public health professionals particularly those interested in population health

ABSTRACT: It has been suggested that our zip code is a better predictor of health than our genetic code. Rural communities across Oregon face barriers to healthy choices leading to poor health outcomes. To address this, community partners are seeking ways to influence the environment and create cultures of health. Blue Zones are geographically defined areas where people live measurably longer lives. Researchers studying these areas developed a well-being model for community transformation called the Blue Zones Project (BZP). This model focuses on people, places and policy through multisector engagement in schools, worksites, restaurants, grocery stores, faith based and civic organizations. Klamath Falls, Grants Pass, the Dalles and Roseburg are the first Oregon communities to pursue Blue Zone Certification.

Success of the BZP is measured by achieving sector and community specific goals and improved Well-Being surveys. Some BZP Certified communities in other states demonstrated lower obesity and smoking rates with corresponding decrease in health care costs.

This presentation will provide an overview of the framework, strategies and evaluation method used by BZP. A panel of Extension faculty will share examples of lessons learned from their participation. The BZP and other population based models can positively influence people, places and policies in a community.

OBJECTIVE(S): 1) Define the Blue Zone Project model for community wide health transformation including principles, framework, strategies and evaluation methods.

2) Identify the process and selection of Blue Zone community wide metrics for measuring health impacts

3) Describe one or more ways health professionals can build community capacity for developing a culture of health