

The logo for 'all in' features the words 'all in' in a bold, blue, lowercase sans-serif font. A small blue square with a white corner bracket is positioned at the top right of the 'n'.

CHICAGO



communityhealth



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**All In Chicago: Partnering to Improve Access to Health Care –  
a community partners post from The Chicago Community Trust**

*The Chicago Community Trust has been leading change in our local community for over 100 years. CommunityHealth was founded in 1993, and from the beginning, the Trust recognized the potential for our clinic to support a need for quality care for the uninsured. We are incredibly grateful for our 25 year partnership with the Trust and continuously humbled by their philanthropic efforts to make every day better for all Chicagoans.*

*Today, Dr. Helene D. Gayle, President and CEO of The Chicago Community Trust, shares more about the impact of health inequities in our community and the imperative of supportive partnerships and collaborations to make access to health care a reality for all Chicago residents.*

When I started my career in medicine as a pediatrician, I didn't know where it would lead – just that I wanted to contribute to positive social change in a tangible way. My “a-ha” moment came as I listened to the commencement speech at my younger brother's graduation ceremony. D.A. Henderson, one of the leaders of the worldwide campaign to eradicate smallpox, opened my eyes to how the tools of public health could help to eradicate an entire disease and improve the lives of millions. This speech, along with seeing the effects of poverty and inequity on health in the inner city hospital where I worked, inspired me to pursue a career in public health.

Since then, my career has taken me all over the world in a number of different roles, all with a focus on tackling inequity and furthering social justice – first, as a

public health physician in the federal government; then, as a program director at a global foundation focused on health disparities; later, as the head of a global nonprofit focused on fighting poverty; and now, as the President and CEO for a community-based philanthropy, [The Chicago Community Trust](#).

Throughout its 100-plus year history, the Trust has recognized that addressing health disparities and inequity is interconnected to other critical quality-of-life factors – such as housing, safety, violence, and education. However, we also recognize that across all Chicago communities, investments made in these critical areas are themselves not equitable.

Through recent findings from the Metropolitan Planning Council's [Cost of Segregation Study](#), Prosperity Now's [Racial Wealth Gap](#) and University of Illinois at Chicago's [Tale of Three Cities](#), to name a few – the Chicagoland region is collectively coming to the realization that we cannot be competitive unless we address the acute inequities that impact daily life for far too many of our residents.

This realization has made us even more cognizant of the significant impact that social and economic factors have on individual and community health. At the Trust, our work on this issue is focused in three main areas:

- **Supporting policies and reform** that enhance health systems, remove barriers, and ultimately improve quality of care for the most vulnerable populations in our region.
- **Improving access to health care** – supporting health care partners such as CommunityHealth who provide coordinated primary and specialty care and behavioral health services – for low-income, uninsured, and socially marginalized families and individuals.
- **Supporting the work of community-based partners who focus on reducing health disparities** in communities with high rates of chronic disease through access to healthy food, culturally relevant nutrition education, and accessible year-round physical activity.

If my background in public health has taught me anything, it's that if we want to truly be all in to improve health status and decrease health disparities, we can't just treat the symptoms. We also have to look at the root causes behind these complex issues.

Providing people with the opportunity to be healthy allows them to be better parents, employees, neighbors, and citizens. The Trust is proud to support CommunityHealth's work to make Chicago a major metropolitan city that has a fully functioning public health system in place to ensure that everyone has access to the right care, at the right time, in the right place. Together, we can build a healthier Chicago.

**Helene Gayle, M.D, M.P.H.**

*President and CEO*

*The Chicago Community Trust*



***Dr. Helene D. Gayle*** is President and CEO of The Chicago Community Trust, one of the nation's leading community foundations. The Trust works with donors, nonprofits, community leaders, and residents to lead and inspire philanthropic efforts that improve the quality of life in the Chicago region.

*Previously, Dr. Gayle was CEO of McKinsey Social Initiative, a nonprofit that builds partnerships for social impact. For almost a decade, she was President and CEO of CARE, a leading international humanitarian organization. An expert on global development, humanitarian and health issues, Dr. Gayle spent 20 years with the Centers for Disease Control, working primarily on HIV/AIDS. She also worked at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, directing programs on HIV/AIDS and other global health issues.*

*Dr. Gayle serves on both public company and non-profit boards, including The Coca-Cola Company, Colgate-Palmolive Company, the Rockefeller Foundation, Brookings Institution, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, New*

*America, and the ONE Campaign. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the American Public Health Association, the National Academy of Medicine, the National Medical Association, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.*

*Named one of Forbes' "100 Most Powerful Women," she has authored numerous articles on global and domestic public health issues, poverty alleviation, gender equality, and social justice.*

*Dr. Gayle was born and raised in Buffalo, NY. She earned a B.A. in psychology at Barnard College, an M.D. at the University of Pennsylvania, and an M.P.H. at Johns Hopkins University. She has received 15 honorary degrees and holds faculty appointments at the University of Washington and Emory University.*

*Are you in? Join us as we continue the conversation to build a healthier Chicago in 2018. To learn more, please visit [www.allin-chicago.org](http://www.allin-chicago.org).*