



Building Community Resilience

Milken Institute School
of Public Health
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Sumner M. Redstone
Global Center for
Prevention & Wellness



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Wendy Ellis is an Assistant Professor in Global Health and the Founding Director of the Center for Community Resilience at the Milken Institute School of Public Health at George Washington University. Dr. Ellis has spent the last decade developing and working to grow a 'resilience movement' to address systemic inequities that contribute to social and health disparities that are often transmitted in families and communities from generation to generation.

The [Building Community Resilience \(BCR\) collaborative](#) and [Resilience Catalysts](#) networks are implementing the BCR process and CCR's Community Resilience framework-- strategic approaches for cross-sector partners to align resources, programs and initiatives with community based efforts to address adverse childhood experiences and adverse community environments-- or as Ellis has coined it "[The Pair of ACEs](#)". The strengths-based approach is aimed at building the infrastructure to promote resilience in communities by improving access to supports and buffers that help individuals 'bounce back' and communities thrive. The BCR process and Community Resilience framework are being used in 17 urban and rural regions areas including New York City, NY; Cincinnati, OH; Dallas, TX; Portland, OR; Washington, DC; Baltimore, MD; St. Louis and Kansas City, MO; Seattle and Tacoma, Washington; Leon County, FL; Watauga County, NC; Louisville, KY; Jersey City, NJ; Lee County, IA; Cleveland, OH and Deschutes County, OR. [Dr. Ellis' Community Resilience framework is featured in a special issue of the Journal of Public Health Management and Practice focused on addressing structural racism as a public health initiative.](#)

Leveraging her extensive background in communications, Dr. Ellis produced a documentary that will be released in 2022, "[Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation: Cincinnati](#)" that follows her team's innovative approach to centering conversations on structural racism as a means to further resilience movement and foster equity through systems and policy change. Dr. Ellis holds leadership positions in public health including Chair of the National Academy of Science's Community Resilience in the Gulf States Committee, Scientific Advisor to the Centers for and Prevention's Prevention and Injury Center and the National Academy's Culture of Health Board. In 2018 Dr. Ellis was selected as an [Aspen Institute Ascend Fellow](#) to support her leadership in developing cross-sector strategies to address childhood trauma, foster equity and build community resilience.