

2004 “Friend of Public Health Award” Recipient



Reverend James Hightower

List of Public Health Accomplishments and Collaborations

Co-Chair of the Health Awareness and Improvement Workgroup (formed following the civil unrest that occurred in mid-June 2003)

1. Volunteered to be the co-chair of the workgroup during a period of distress and ambiguity.
2. Initiated a community approach to identifying issues in Benton Harbor by administering the Benton Harbor Health Survey. His dedication to the survey was exemplified by strategically handing our surveys where large portions of the Benton Harbor population would participate.
3. Provided leadership and direction in the development of the Health Awareness and Improvement Workgroup Strategic Plan which was included in Governor Jennifer Granholm’s Benton Harbor Task Force Report.
4. Under Rev. Hightower’s leadership, the Health Awareness and Improvement Workgroup has been publicly acknowledged by Greg Roberts (Governor Granholm’s liaison) as a model workgroup.

Member of the Citizens for Progressive Change

Director of Respiratory Therapy at Lakeland Regional Health System

Pastor of Word of Truth Deliverance Ministries

Pioneered and implemented a health education and awareness project in various churches in Benton Harbor.

1. Mobilized the faith-based community to incorporate health wellness in the churches of Benton Harbor.
2. Utilized an innovative approach to use lay people within the congregation to provide education on diverse health topics.

Brought awareness into the community of the growing epidemic of HIV/AIDS

1. Internationally known Global Research, Education and Training Networks (a component of Gospel Against AIDS) of Detroit, Michigan provided information and training. Gospel Against AIDS is a faith-based program that focuses on providing prevention-based education to curtail the spread of the world's most deadly diseases.
2. Funding opportunities for the faith-based community became available through this endeavor.

Rev. James Hightower's Character

1. Highly motivated to positively impact the health of the Benton Harbor community.
2. Provides meaningful direction to the Health Awareness and Improvement Workgroup.
3. Concentrated his efforts on linking the faith-based community with the health topics.
4. Solution driven.
5. Loyal to the citizens of Benton Harbor.