



## COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH

### PATHWAY: HEALTH EQUITY

#### Project Description

- Identifying key environmental health needs & disparities
- Conducting environmental and occupational health assessments
- Developing interventions and solutions to environmental health challenges
- Promoting environmental health awareness in the community

#### Annual Student Activities

- 8 students per cohort
- 2018 – partnership formed with ODU to provide EVMS students with access to laboratory & equipment
- 2019 – students conducted well water sampling in Suffolk that tested for contaminants
- Field trips to various local sites
- Environmental Health Speaker Series: lunch talks with field experts on topics including vector- and water-borne illnesses, occupational health, and climate change

#### Community Outcomes/Results

- ↑ Improve potable water quality in rural areas, areas prone to flooding, or areas with inadequate wastewater treatment facilities
- ↑ Students understanding of needs assessment, risk communication, and risk management
- ↑ Environmental quality
- ↑ Student understanding of how environment impacts health
- ↓ Disease related to environmental health issues

#### FACILITATORS

- Maryanne Gathambo, MPH
- Dr. Sean Banacee, PhD, CIH, CSP – ODU

#### PARTNERS

- Old Dominion University
- Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action
- Virginia Department of Health
- EVMS Environmental Health Safety

#### THE NEED

- Environmental health directly impacts overall health
- Environmental factors can often be controlled or mitigated to improve health outcomes and reduce harm
- Those living in rural or low-income areas are more likely to experience health disparities
- 8.2 million out of 12.6 million deaths annually are caused by non-communicable diseases linked to environmental factors (WHO)
- Patients frequently look to their health professionals for guidance related to environmental health and its consequences, necessitating increased awareness of among clinicians