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## Press Release

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### **Cook County Department of Public Health Unveils Graphic Novel Campaign to Raise Awareness About Public Health**

BRIDGEVIEW, IL – Today, Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) launched a fresh campaign to address an age-old problem: Explaining the role of public health in building healthier communities.

“Our research and engagement with the community during the COVID-19 response revealed the public has limited understanding of the work we do and the resources and services we offer,” said CCDPH Chief Operating Officer Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck.

Enter the Public Health Heroes League campaign, featuring a diverse cast of fictional graphic novel characters rendered in saturated, vibrant color, to convey the story of how the health department works with the community to tackle real public health challenges and prevent illnesses, injuries and deaths.

Over the next couple months, the Public Health Heroes League will be “visiting locations near you,” on suburban Cook County buses, billboards, websites and social media sites. The graphic narratives show the heroes fighting the opioid epidemic and tuberculosis, guarding against lead hazards, promoting immunizations, conducting community outreach and providing resources to schools.

There will also be a series of three, 30-second animated videos. [Episode 1](#), “Dawn of Vigilance,” introduces the league’s main characters – like Community Engagement Specialist Nia Jackson, “empowering communities to take charge of their health,” Epidemiologist Dr. Tahira Al-Zahid, “unraveling health mysteries, keeping us steps ahead of diseases,” and Public Information Officer Gabriela Torres, “spreading the word, not the virus, to keep us informed and safe.” In [Episode 2](#), “Smoke and Mirrors,” the league stops the illegal sale of flavored nicotine products to minors, and in [Episode 3](#), “Outbreak Detected,” they tackle a measles outbreak.

“Representation matters,” said Dr. Hasbrouck. “It was important to us for the characters to represent the diversity of our team and the breadth of our work, and the diversity of the people and communities that we serve. We would like to thank the residents and community leaders that

participated and provided invaluable feedback in focus groups conducted in south, west and north suburban Cook County.”

Learn more about CCDPH and the Public Health Heroes League campaign at [PublicHealthHeroesLeague.com](http://PublicHealthHeroesLeague.com).

CCDPH is the nationally accredited, state-certified local health department serving 2.3 million residents and 127 Cook County suburbs. This education campaign is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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