

**The PRIME (Partnerships in Research Integration, Mentoring and Education)
Collective:
A Fresh Approach to Community Engagement Strategies**

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An unprecedented approach to community academic collaboration has been coined in North Carolina using community consultants. The PRIME Collective, LLC is a group of community experts with extensive experience in how to incorporate principles of engagement into all phases of a research project. Through a mechanism birth at NC TRaCs, two community advisory boards were developed to assist researchers with proposals. The CABs represent 17 NC counties and a broad spectrum of stakeholders including health care providers, community advocates, business representatives, policy makers, and the faith-based community.

Out of the CABs, the PRIME Collective was formed to facilitate the process at the community level whereby the community members did not have to endure the University bureaucracy.

PRIME facilitates the mechanism for the researcher to have pre-award dollars to consult with community members also allowing for continued collaboration throughout the proposal process. The role of the PRIME is to continue to identify opportunities and to facilitate the process between researchers and community members during pre-award, implementation, and post award. The consultation allows for optimal exchange to identify specific strategies to achieve the level of community engagement needed for the study/proposal.

Consultation sessions are guided by specific priorities requested from the investigator and results in recommendations tailored to the proposed project. The process involves pre-consultation preparation and a two hour consultation session.

The PRIME Collective along with a team from NC TRaCs is working to develop an evaluation plan; a level of collaboration that is the first of its kind.