

Report to the Community

May-August, 2025

Opportunity Awaits at MetroHealth



The MetroHealth Opportunity Center at Via Sana and the **Opportunity Center at Buckeye** are vibrant spaces dedicated to supporting our neighbors in overcoming social challenges that stand in the way of good health.

The Centers, part of the Institute for H.O.P.E., are a key component of MetroHealth's efforts to expand connectivity and collaboration with the neighborhoods we serve, while addressing the social drivers of health that impact our patients.

The Opportunity Center at Via Sana, opened in the fall of 2024, builds on the success of the Buckeye Opportunity Center, which was established in **2019** to serve as a community hub for residents of the neighborhood surrounding the Buckeye Health Center. The goal was to connect residents with resources and services to address the social needs – like housing, employment and economic stability – that can impact health.

Both Centers partner with community organizations to bring their services under one roof, where they can be most accessible to the people who need them.

The Centers offer educational workshops and training programs on topics including job placement and career development, health and wellness and personal growth. At the Opportunity Center at Via Sana, residents can take courses

through the Tri-C Access Center, a partnership with Cuyahoga Community College.

The Centers also host or co-host events and activities throughout the year that foster a sense of community and encourage collaboration among residents and community organizations.

Within only eight months of its opening, the Opportunity Center at Via Sana hosted more than **130** events that served more than **1,000** individuals. In August, the Center hosted financial literacy workshops conducted by Opportunity Center financial coaches and representatives from KeyBank.

In June, the Center at Via Sana held listening sessions to hear from residents of the Clark-Fulton neighborhood and share key Social Drivers of Health data collected by the Institute through an Ohio Health Improvement Zone grant. Institute staff highlighted the ways MetroHealth and its partners are working to address those social needs. The aim was to gather feedback and give residents an opportunity to voice their ideas about what programs and support would make a difference in their lives.

Similar listening sessions are planned for the Buckeye Opportunity Center later this year. The sessions are intended to be part of a larger campaign to raise awareness about the Buckeye Opportunity Center's offerings, including financial coaching and utility assistance as well as access to resources like MetroHealth's Trauma Recovery Center, the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County Job and Family Services.

"The Opportunity Centers at Via Sana and Buckeye are designed to empower our patients, employees and community, enhance collective impact and serve as a hub for innovation," says Marielee Santiago-Rodriguez, Director of Education and Training at the Institute for H.O.P.E. "Together, we can drive meaningful change in the community we serve and build a brighter future."

Vía Sana Mural Brings Childhood Rhyme to Life, Celebrating Community Roots



DayzWhun, the artist behind Via Sana's new mural, pictured with his completed work.

A whimsical new mural at **Vía Sana** near Main Campus pays tribute to a traditional Spanish-language children's poem and its message of encouragement and hope.

The mural is the tenth in a collection that brightens the neighborhood around Main Campus as part of the Clark-Fulton Public Art

Project, a partnership of MetroHealth, LAND studio and Metro West Community Development Organization.

Artist DayzWhun designed the mural depicting a child's encounter with a curious frog, inspired by a rhyme often recited to children to encourage them after a minor bump or scrape.

"Sana, sana colita de rana. Si no sana hoy, sanara mañana." ("Heal, heal, little frog's tail. If you don't heal today, you'll heal tomorrow.")

It's a playful image with a message of particular importance at a time that holds uncertainty for many.

"The message is, 'It's all going to be ok,'" said Greg Zucca, Executive Director, **Community Transformation and Real Estate**. "Tomorrow will be better."

Linda Jackson, Director of MetroHealth **Center for Arts in Health**, said the artwork and the poem's themes of comfort and hope represent the role MetroHealth plays in the Clark-Fulton neighborhood. The heat-applied vinyl mural covers a wall near the entrance to Vía Sana, the affordable housing development and Opportunity Center developed by MetroHealth in partnership with NRP Group and named for the Spanish phrase "healthy way."

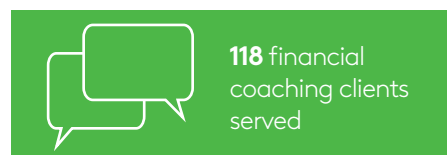
The \$235,000 Clark-Fulton Public Art Project, funded by MetroHealth and LAND studio, is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts. The Vía Sana mural also received funding from the ICF Foundation.

Program Update

In September, the Institute's Trauma Recovery Center (TRC) collaborated with the Buckeye Opportunity Center (OC) team to host a community resource and OC Open House event outside, in the Buckeye Health Center parking lot. Focused on reconnecting with community, OC organizational partners tabled alongside local, community partners to promote more visibility and transparency with Woodhill/Buckeye-Shaker residents. The event was open to all family engagement with a food truck, DJ, resources, community artwork, healing circles, and trauma education. Highlighted partners for this event included Neighbor Up, Buckeye Trauma Informed Coalition (B-TIC), the Office of Opioid Safety, and produce box distribution provided by the Greater Cleveland Food Bank.

In June, MetroHealth once again led Northeast Ohio's observance of National Gun Violence Awareness, shining a spotlight on a growing public health emergency—gun violence, now the leading cause of death among youth under 20. The event featured a resource fair organized by MetroHealth's Gun Violence Prevention Committee. Attendees heard powerful messages from MetroHealth leaders and community advocates, as well as experts from the TRC, community organizations working on violence prevention, and survivors who shared their lived experiences. To learn more about this work and event, [click here](#).

Opportunity Centers Impact



Data from January to August 2025

To learn more about the programs and services offered at the Opportunity Centers, visit metrohealth.org/institute-for-hope/opportunity-centers.