

Season 2 Episode 2: Housing Part 1
[intro music Sun Through Shade]

Abby: You look out your window one day and see a buzz of activity around the abandoned warehouse building across the street. Construction workers dot the building with their colorful vests. Over the next few months, the building's broken windows and leaky roof are replaced, its rooms are outfitted with shiny appliances, and the entire building is redecorated. You wonder who can afford to move into these pristine new apartments. You wonder who cannot. You wonder what happened to the previous tenants...

Hannah: Housing is a critical issue in the U.S. The COVID-19 pandemic has made this issue even more pressing as thousands face threats of eviction. Having a roof over your head and a safe place to sleep is fundamental to human survival. Some examples of housing issues that connect to health include toxic chemicals in a house (like lead paint), pest infestations that spread disease (like rats), high crime in a neighborhood, high rent and mortgage costs threatening financial stability, and exposure to the elements from having poor shelter or no shelter.

Abby: For our two-part series on housing, we will hear first from Lou Weissert, a Resource Navigator at 16th Street Community Health Centers based in Milwaukee, WI. 16th Street Community Health Centers provides medical, behavioral health, and substance use care to low income individuals and individuals from all backgrounds. We will also hear from Jazi Foreman, the program director at Solid Ground. Solid Ground is a non-profit organization based in the Twin Cities Metro Area that uses a holistic approach to support families emerging from homelessness. We hope you enjoy our interview Lou Weissert, an amazing public health professional, advocate, and activist.

Hannah: Before we get started, though, here's a quick quiz. [quiz bell] There are about 21 million renter households in the US according to the Aspen Institute. On average, how many evictions are there in the US each year?

142

00:14:21.060 --> 00:14:33.060

Lou: My name is Lou, and I currently I'm working as a resource navigator at 16th Street Community Health Center and I'm working on a project called

143

00:14:33.660 --> 00:14:48.660

Lou: Social Determinants of Health and specifically working on addressing social determinants of health with regards to housing with regards to food access and food sovereignty as well as different allied health programs.

Abby: For context, social determinants of health are conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health.

Examples include access to healthcare and education, neighborhoods, connection to community, and economic status.

156

00:16:33.810 --> 00:16:48.180

Lou: We realized that 20% of someone's health comes from the direct healthcare that they receive 30% of that comes from health behaviors 10% of that comes from built and natural environment and physical environment. And then 40% come from socio economic factors. And so within that, that includes income.

158

00:17:01.710 --> 00:17:24.120

Lou: Familial relations workplace environments and housing and so it's well established that housing is perhaps the most important social determinants of health in terms of the impact that it has on one's overall quality of life and family quality of life. So what we're doing.

159

00:17:25.380 --> 00:17:42.780

Lou: In this pro in the project that I'm currently working on the Wisconsin partnership program is to address social needs screening program and patient navigation to address those needs. And so if you can see here there's in this

160

00:17:44.160 --> 00:17:52.080

Lou: In this poster. There is a sample of the screening document and it's a double sided in Spanish and English document that is presented to patients and then it's an eight question questionnaire which asks, different things about housing stress.

162

00:18:02.220 --> 00:18:18.390

Lou: Relationships legal needs. And then we take that information back and see if we can provide social service resources to patients that might not be privy to those resources that have a self described need

163

00:18:23.250 --> 00:18:26.220

Abby: And how did you become interested in in this work.

164

00:18:26.730 --> 00:18:34.950

Lou: Yeah, so I guess I got interested from I guess two different directions that kind of converged into this area of work is

165

00:18:35.550 --> 00:18:52.140

Lou: My interest in biology was mainly looking at epidemiology and looking at how structural determinants influence health and then also I got sort of interested from a grassroots

166

00:18:53.520 --> 00:19:02.460

Lou: Activism perspective because there has been increased. Oh well, I should say that I'm

167

00:19:03.570 --> 00:19:14.580

Lou: Housing activism and housing needs are something that are constantly undergoing vast changes, both in in my hometown in Milwaukee and also across the country.

Hannah: What forces do you think impact housing?

171

00:19:59.250 --> 00:20:09.930

Lou: We have these macro economic changes that are driving disparities in income and wealth and also expenses.

172

00:20:11.160 --> 00:20:15.510

Lou: In part, and part of these forces are caused by

173

00:20:16.740 --> 00:20:19.530

Lou: Macro economic changes such as globalization.

174

00:20:21.000 --> 00:20:24.930

Lou: increased cost of higher education and deindustrialization

208

00:25:23.850 --> 00:25:39.630

Lou: The trend in my neck of the woods and much of the industrial Midwest and Northeast has been one of deindustrialization. Companies were that were the sort of bread and butter and the economic backbone of many towns from Detroit, Michigan to Akron, Ohio to Buffalo, New York to Milwaukee, Wisconsin to Dayton, Ohio.

209

00:25:41.490 --> 00:25:54.660

Lou: Are where the, you know, manufacturing, was that the core essentially the, the core of jobs in these areas.

211

00:26:00.900 --> 00:26:09.540

Lou: But as we've seen, because of these larger global capitalistic trends we see those jobs are no longer viable.

212

00:26:11.280 --> 00:26:15.600

Lou: There they no longer exist because they've either been automated outsourced

213

00:26:17.310 --> 00:26:28.740

Lou: Or eliminated altogether. And so you see sort of a combination of impersonal right the sort of impersonal.

214

00:26:29.730 --> 00:26:40.080

Lou: Forces that create situations of economic violence and also personal elements in states like in cities like Milwaukee, but also cities like

215

00:26:40.650 --> 00:26:58.530

Lou: Minneapolis and St. Paul. And frankly, almost every major city 200 cities across the US have been affected by intentional public policy through through forms of home ownership discrimination.

Abby: Lou mentioned a great resource here for those who are interested in learning more about home ownership discrimination. He recommends the film, Segregated by Design, which is based on the book The Color of Law by Richard Rothstein. They look at the history of law and policy, and the role of government in segregating housing in cities.

And so, you know, we think

220

00:27:30.360 --> 00:27:35.520

Lou: That sometimes segregation is sort of this de facto product of

221

00:27:36.630 --> 00:27:39.780

Lou: Individuals making choices that are not necessarily

222

00:27:41.100 --> 00:28:01.080

Lou: Intentionally meaning like intentionally malice, but actually we see segregation were actually the government and federal policy in for segregation and constructed the situation of segregation through also different practices such as blockbusting

223

00:28:02.130 --> 00:28:04.920

Lou: redlining and price gouging

224

00:28:06.540 --> 00:28:19.320

Lou: And so we see in in how this relates to housing, then as we see a disproportionate amount of people that are laid off and affected by these macro economic forces and then we see an erosion,

225

00:28:19.680 --> 00:28:26.910

Lou: Of the housing stock where people then aren't able to afford their mortgages, they're not able to afford to maintain a healthy

226

00:28:29.220 --> 00:28:38.400

Lou: Effectively, a healthy living environment, a healthy immediate environment we see an erosion and tax base, which then leads to the defunding of public schools.

227

00:28:42.810 --> 00:28:49.290

Lou: Should we see how all these forces, then you know they're not immediately present. And so you see sort of both ends.

228

00:28:50.550 --> 00:29:06.840

Lou: Or you might not be able to see how these different forces are linked together. But then we see how despair health disparities specifically health disparities in America are then driven by these massive capitalistic forces.

229

00:29:07.980 --> 00:29:16.050

Lou: And I believe in. I believe in us has the lowest overall life expectancy of

230

00:29:16.080 --> 00:29:16.920

Lou: Any country in the

231

00:29:17.790 --> 00:29:19.560
Lou: Despite having the highest

232
00:29:20.820 --> 00:29:23.610
Lou: Purchasing power and also the highest gross domestic product.

248
00:32:21.450 --> 00:32:28.020
Hannah T Kinzer: So looking at every case of, for example, a conviction as like a disease case mapping

249
00:32:28.080 --> 00:32:33.480
Hannah T Kinzer: Yeah, looking to see, like where that's higher and lower across the country.

250
00:32:34.380 --> 00:32:35.580
Lou: Absolutely. I think that

251
00:32:36.660 --> 00:32:40.170
Lou: Also looking at evictions is not just these isolated things that are

252
00:32:41.580 --> 00:32:55.410
Lou: That are responsible, um, that are the results of individual attitudes, but as a larger pattern and a larger structural issue that we need to confront collectively

233
00:29:29.070 --> 00:29:33.930
Abby: Important to see all those linkages and understand that everything is connected

234
00:29:35.100 --> 00:29:36.390
Abby: To our economic policy.

235
00:29:38.220 --> 00:29:43.500
Abby: Relevant, um, I'm wondering if you could talk a little bit. You already touched on this a bit but

236

00:29:44.700 --> 00:29:54.030

Abby: Talk a little bit more about how historic biases effect housing. I know you mentioned policies like redlining. I'm wondering if you could go in a little bit more detail about that and maybe

237

00:29:55.200 --> 00:29:58.710

Abby: You sort of Milwaukee as a case study for that.

238

00:29:59.880 --> 00:30:16.170

Lou: Yeah absolutely will have you may have. There are two excellent books, specifically about this topic. One is the Color of Law by Richard Ross time and the other one is Convicted by Matthew Desmond, and there's also an excellent resource that's done, I believe it's

239

00:30:17.760 --> 00:30:22.380

Lou: It's called the [eviction lab.org](http://evictionlab.org) which is a project.

240

00:30:24.000 --> 00:30:34.620

Lou: By Matthew Desmond to understand the linkages between eviction and housing and housing as a social determinants of health.

241

00:30:36.480 --> 00:30:55.200

Lou: And so the lack of affordable housing is considered one sits at a root cause of social problems from poverty to homelessness to educational disparities in health care. This means that understanding eviction crisis is critical to effectively addressing these problems and reducing inequality.

242

00:30:56.580 --> 00:31:10.050

Lou: However, before we had really good data on this information that was known about the prevalence of eviction in America. So studying these causes and consequences on a national level was impossible. And I think this is a right. I think that um

244

00:31:18.540 --> 00:31:36.840

Lou: I think the environment and built environment is is my sort of in this, my Silo right within public health, but I think one thing that we're seeing across the public health paradigm is understand looking at different

245

00:31:40.110 --> 00:31:50.010

Lou: Social determinants of health as epidemics. So poverty as an epidemic right sexism as an epidemic racism as a public health.

246

00:31:51.300 --> 00:32:03.060

Lou: Crisis and epidemic. And so if we begin to look at evictions and we begin to looking at housing insecurity as an actual epidemic.

247

00:32:03.960 --> 00:32:18.600

Lou: That is one that is socially constructed than that one than is perhaps constructed like a virus or infectious disease. We can think about how we can solve solve these social epidemics using social solutions.

272

00:36:10.200 --> 00:36:29.250

Hannah T Kinzer: So we've talked a little bit about like the forces behind the housing crisis. We've talked a little bit about the historical and the economic. So what are some Why is housing something we should be particularly concerned about what are the consequences of ignoring this?

Hannah: Lou talks about an image often used in public health here. Imagine a river where people are falling in and drowning. You can keep trying to pull people out of the river downstream or you can go upstream and try to stop people from falling into the river in the first place. Public health focuses on stopping people from falling in or changing social determinants of health to prevent people from having poor health in the first place.

275

00:36:44.130 --> 00:36:54.540

Lou: Okay, so another paradigm. Public Health paradigm here I'm just so the camera. We're kind of operating under the same assumptions is, you know, one public health paradigm right is upstream versus downstream.

276

00:36:55.170 --> 00:37:00.990

Lou: That, um, you know you you have people that are flowing downstream into danger.

277

00:37:01.620 --> 00:37:08.880

Lou: And I think downstream is getting them out of the water before that danger and upstream is asking why they're in the water in the first place.

278

00:37:09.720 --> 00:37:24.780

Lou: And so that's kind of social determinants of health. Um, and addressing those social determinants and and i think focus on housing really is one of the most important things that we can ask in addressing why people are in the water in the first place.

279

00:37:25.890 --> 00:37:30.240

Lou: Right is saying, Well, someone comes in with pneumonia repeatedly

280

00:37:31.320 --> 00:37:34.500

Lou: And before doctors weren't really addressing

281

00:37:35.610 --> 00:37:40.980

Lou: Well, why are you coming in and it's like okay, perhaps you have a drafty living conditions.

282

00:37:41.760 --> 00:37:43.020

Lou: And then how can we

283

00:37:44.550 --> 00:37:45.900

Lou: Get to those sources.

284

00:37:46.920 --> 00:37:55.800

Lou: And address those living conditions and, ultimately, I believe that, you know, we can we can sort of attack that issue piecemeal

285

00:37:56.970 --> 00:38:16.980

Lou: By addressing individual circumstances and even smaller communities. But again, I really think that this is the product of economic inequities is the reason for the, the erosion and housing and I believe that community wealth generation is perhaps the best way to approach.

286

00:38:22.110 --> 00:38:23.160

Abby: I'm wondering if you could

287

00:38:24.240 --> 00:38:32.460

Abby: Even you bring up a really important point about community wealth generation and wondering if you could talk a little bit about that and maybe give an example of something that you've seen that

288

00:38:33.540 --> 00:38:35.640

Abby: Worked during a new initiative.

289

00:38:36.240 --> 00:38:50.220

Lou: Yeah, so I think community wealth generation is creating wealth with in our communities with that is not so right, we have the Foxconn right is our like

290

00:38:51.240 --> 00:39:06.330

Lou: Globalization example and global capitalism example or you have this you have basically a huge investment in capital into a community and you expect

291

00:39:07.170 --> 00:39:22.920

Lou: A certain amount of productivity for your local economy as a result of that, which comes through an X number amount of jobs created and an X number amount of economic productivity, economic...

292

00:39:24.150 --> 00:39:37.950

Lou: revenue basically for that regional economy. Um, but I think what is what is what is really the actual value.

293

00:39:38.430 --> 00:39:49.920

Lou: In most cases, both on a supply and demand and is in most cases, most of that money doesn't stay in the community, most of it stays with the corporation.

294

00:39:51.450 --> 00:39:59.040

Lou: And the only reason why that corporation is there in the first place is because they're interested in profitability.

296

00:40:03.360 --> 00:40:15.540

Lou: And so that's sort of the art, you know, global capitalism example and then conversely, grassroots and community wealth generation is using sort of the immediate resources around us.

297

00:40:16.110 --> 00:40:25.410

Lou: And using principally actors from those communities to use those resources to create new products and services.

298

00:40:25.980 --> 00:40:32.790

Lou: By the people in those communities for, for the most part people in the community. So I think an excellent example of this.

299

00:40:33.630 --> 00:40:41.190

Lou: In Milwaukee. And I'm sure that there are examples in the Twin Cities and all across the country and the world for that matter.

300

00:40:41.820 --> 00:40:47.130

Lou: Is a organization called the Sherman Phoenix and that is a it was a

301

00:40:47.700 --> 00:41:08.310

Lou: It was a basically a foreclosed bank and several other for closed buildings that were then collectively bought by local entrepreneurs and then established an entrepreneurial hub of over 30 different small businesses and light businesses and restaurants.

302

00:41:09.480 --> 00:41:12.870

Lou: That are predominantly owned by

303

00:41:14.010 --> 00:41:27.990

Lou: Residents of the north side so you have an opportunity here to invest locally and you have an opportunity to sell a product that is created by basically your neighbors and you're selling that to your neighbors.

304

00:41:29.250 --> 00:41:36.690

Lou: And your and most then have the wealth or the, the economic vitality is retained.

308

00:41:50.820 --> 00:41:55.020

Lou: We like to think that these massive corporations and these massive

309

00:41:56.190 --> 00:42:07.200

Lou: Entities right these massive international organizations or corporations have the answers. But I think the more and more, we look to locally based solutions.

310

00:42:07.500 --> 00:42:17.130

Lou: And immediate solutions, that's actually in fact closer to what is going to create more equitable conditions and ultimately healthier conditions for our communities.

311

00:42:21.930 --> 00:42:36.300

Abby: kind of building on on what you said about local solutions. I'm wondering if you can share a specific example of how addressing housing may improve health in in the community that you

312

00:42:38.220 --> 00:42:41.880

Lou: Um, yeah, absolutely. So, um,

313

00:42:42.900 --> 00:42:52.950

Lou: So the lack of affordable housing. So I think affordable housing is something that we haven't really touched on yet, but I think affordable housing or sits at

314

00:42:54.660 --> 00:43:01.590

Lou: The root cause a lot of those social problems and the lack of affordable housing leads to increases in evictions

315

00:43:03.930 --> 00:43:13.920

Lou: And oftentimes evictions leads, who, being expelled from a community children have to switch schools families regularly lose their possessions.

316

00:43:14.670 --> 00:43:25.890

Lou: Which is also very demoralizing right um I think there is a book called. There's a book called to health and poverty, where they they talk about how job loss.

317

00:43:26.430 --> 00:43:36.420

Lou: And being fired from a job that can have one of the most detrimental impact psychologically. And I think that's one thing that we're talking about to right now is

318

00:43:37.860 --> 00:43:47.190

Lou: In public health discourse is the impact of trauma and psychological trauma and also collective trauma and how trauma how negative

320

00:43:53.640 --> 00:43:57.960

Lou: Negative events basically become internalized into our health.

321

00:44:03.150 --> 00:44:18.720

Hannah T Kinzer: And I think this kind of goes in with that. Can you talk about some challenges to addressing housing in your community. I mean, you've been talking about how these big like macro forces are

322

00:44:20.580 --> 00:44:32.640

Hannah T Kinzer: pushing up against local efforts. I'm wondering if there are any other forces that you can think of, or things that you've encountered just in your daily work. It's been like a challenge to addressing addressing this

327

00:44:52.500 --> 00:44:55.800

Lou: Not just, um, well, I think that all of our primary needs in our society are provided to us because of the market and not because of social programs for the vast majority of that part. And so food right health care.

330

00:45:26.970 --> 00:45:28.200

Lou: Child Care.

331

00:45:29.610 --> 00:45:34.380

Lou: And housing and education for the most part are tied in to these

332

00:45:35.430 --> 00:45:48.540

Lou: To these to a free market economy and just like any other economy or any other commodity housing is a commodity, too. And I think housing is a bit of a unique commodity in the sense that it is immovable

333

00:45:49.740 --> 00:45:59.610

Lou: It's not a commodity that you can, that is easily portable like education or in some cases food or

334

00:46:01.080 --> 00:46:14.460

Lou: and so housing is permanent. And so if that housing degrades um and it loses value you are stuck to that housing.

335

00:46:15.720 --> 00:46:33.240

Lou: And so I think that that is um I think that is a huge issue in my community is because I'm actually housing is relatively affordable, but the housing that is affordable is um there's very little economic mobility.

336

00:46:35.160 --> 00:46:58.470

Lou: So in some cases, not a lack of the housing is affordable, but the housing is not quality housing and the housing that is affordable is not located anywhere near where the job opportunities are and what the job opportunities are there is very ineffective and frankly I'm politically.

337

00:46:59.550 --> 00:47:03.000

Lou: detoured or stunted mass transportation

338

00:47:04.500 --> 00:47:16.050

Lou: So you have a situation where I think in Milwaukee and also in the Twin Cities and Chicago and a lot of other northern cities such as Philadelphia.

339

00:47:18.240 --> 00:47:25.380

Lou: Is that you have a high degree of hoarding of economic opportunity.

340

00:47:26.820 --> 00:47:28.980

Lou: Away from low income communities.

341

00:47:30.270 --> 00:47:34.440

Lou: And so I think that that's a huge that makes a huge, huge impact on

342

00:47:35.970 --> 00:47:45.810

Lou: On housing and overall health disparities is because where we see the greatest disparities in different communities between

343

00:47:47.790 --> 00:47:56.790

Lou: Economic or housing or economic mobility, we tend to see the highest rates

344

00:47:58.260 --> 00:48:09.990

Lou: Of health disparities case in point is, Chicago, which is in many ways. I tend to think as an analog to Milwaukee. It's but scaled up

345

00:48:11.280 --> 00:48:21.300

Lou: Is that you know you in. I'm in Chicago, you know, from one end of the red line to another, you see a 30 year difference in life expectancy

346

00:48:22.470 --> 00:48:34.290

Lou: From I believe streeter Ville station to the southwest communities of the city of Chicago. One person would expect to live to 60 and the other person would expect to live to 90

348

00:48:56.070 --> 00:48:57.780

Abby: Wondering if you can

349

00:48:58.920 --> 00:48:59.490

Abby: Maybe

350

00:49:00.900 --> 00:49:06.780

Abby: Some hopeful activities that are being done to address housing, maybe in Milwaukee and Chicago

353

00:49:16.170 --> 00:49:25.080

Lou: Yeah i mean i mean it's it's sad, but I think it's only depressing. If we say that the circumstances today are what they will be tomorrow.

354

00:49:26.340 --> 00:49:38.910

Lou: That if we say that if we allow ourselves to become complacent and in effect complacent. We become complicit in these oppressive and inequitable systems.

357

00:49:51.750 --> 00:49:58.710

Lou: I think that in terms of what it what you know where there are light spots in these initiatives. I think that

358

00:49:59.670 --> 00:50:15.690

Lou: Federalism and I think that, I , I DON'T THINK ONE Place has all the answers. I think that there are different communities both globally and in the US that are experiment have experimented with different things and

359

00:50:18.600 --> 00:50:26.490

Lou: Have you know some of those experiments have been failures. Some of them have been successes. I think we can learn from each other. And I think that that is

360

00:50:27.060 --> 00:50:40.140

Lou: In effect, perhaps one of the blessings of globalization and internationalism in an increasingly connected world is we now have the ability to connect and share information in a way that we never have been able to before. Case in point.

361

00:50:40.740 --> 00:50:44.340

Lou: Talking over this digital conference right now. During the midst of

362

00:50:45.150 --> 00:51:05.310

Lou: social distancing. And so we now have the ability to share information and hopefully then share solutions and share knowledge and share insights on our collective problems.

363

00:51:06.480 --> 00:51:07.440

Lou: For example,

364

00:51:08.460 --> 00:51:28.530

Lou: They're exempt examples of that in Seattle where there's rent control and New York, which is very high cost of living with rent control and also communities like Puerto Allegra and actually the south of Brazil, that has had very, very successful initiatives with

365

00:51:30.060 --> 00:51:38.070

Lou: Participatory Budgeting and participatory income and universal basic income.

Hannah Kinzer: According to ParticipatoryBudgeting.org, Participatory budgeting is a democratic process in which community members decide how to spend part of a public budget. It gives people real power over real money. An economics paper by Anthony Atkinson published in 1996 proposed participatory income as distributing income based on how much an individual contributes to a country's economy. This includes services like education and caretaking. Its similar to universal basic income except individuals have to provide a service in exchange for the money they receive.

Abby: Participatory budgeting is now used widely throughout the world, particularly in municipal contexts. For example, the New York City Council uses participatory budgeting to allocate around 35 million dollars of taxpayer funds annually (<https://council.nyc.gov/pb/>) <https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/what-is-pb/>

366

00:51:39.390 --> 00:51:50.160

Lou: And so I think that we are seeing in in the US. Um, I think that, personally, and this is a very, I think, a political opinion.

367

00:51:50.790 --> 00:52:02.190

Lou: I think universal basic income is one of the best possible solutions to address these inequities because it gives purchasing power to the people in those communities to make their own decisions which

368

00:52:02.850 --> 00:52:11.670

Lou: If you look statistically are oftentimes to provide basic needs, which the market does not provide them at an ethical cost.

369

00:52:13.230 --> 00:52:22.980

Lou: So there's a pilot program here in Milwaukee to provide several dozen families with universal basic income and those pilot incomes have been successfully addressed in both

372

00:52:35.070 --> 00:52:52.770

Lou: in Stockton, California, and I believe Sacramento, California. And so I think the more I think different solutions work different because every community has is has unique problems and unique circumstance similar problems but unique circumstances.

373

00:52:54.060 --> 00:53:04.860

Lou: And so I think people, we need to be thinking people in our communities need to be thinking critically about what we can be doing better.

374

00:53:06.450 --> 00:53:12.630

Lou: What are we doing to improve the circumstances of our neighbors of our own condition.

375

00:53:13.740 --> 00:53:25.920

Lou: And so we need to be figuring out grassroots solutions to meet the needs of our community in a way that is specific to our communities.

376

00:53:29.100 --> 00:53:38.940

Hannah T Kinzer: So you were talking a little bit about some really hopeful initiatives and some awesome work around like the universal income.

377

00:53:39.600 --> 00:53:48.150

Hannah T Kinzer: And and some research being done how two people that are working to address housing partner with other areas of public health. So I guess.

378

00:53:48.540 --> 00:53:57.120

Hannah T Kinzer: I think that initiative is a great example of how people who work kind of in economics are working with people who are addressing housing other any other like partnerships that you've seen

379

00:53:57.930 --> 00:54:02.910

Lou: Yes, in addition to the Milwaukee, Wisconsin partnership program, which is the umbrella.

380

00:54:03.990 --> 00:54:20.250

Lou: Partnership between the Medical College of Wisconsin. The another great organization is called the Center for Urban Population Health, which is a research think tank here in Milwaukee and that they are looking at creating

381

00:54:21.510 --> 00:54:30.330

Lou: And using research to better inform solutions to address urban health in Milwaukee and communities all across the country.

382

00:54:31.920 --> 00:54:48.120

Lou: And so I think that um I think that those kind of partnerships. Right. I think that there are partnerships that are knowledge, creating a knowledge building. I also think that there are partnerships in government and any sort of bureaucracy, whether it's higher education or government or

384

00:54:57.420 --> 00:55:10.020

Lou: Or nonprofits. You see a lot of silo-fication right you see like everybody is operating, even within one like I work

385

00:55:10.500 --> 00:55:17.820

Lou: At a community based health clinic and a lot of people are working on a lot of similar issues, but they're not communicating across departments.

386

00:55:18.360 --> 00:55:27.690

Lou: So I think we actually have more than enough agents working on this. I think it would be more effective if we pool our resources.

387

00:55:28.680 --> 00:55:31.860

Lou: And pool our knowledge to that we're working less

388

00:55:32.580 --> 00:55:46.680

Lou: On this plane of competition, we are where we are different organizations are vying for scarce resources, but instead working more collaboratively to pool our resources to develop common solutions.

389

00:55:47.490 --> 00:56:06.150

Lou: And you know I sometimes think that um I really question. You know, sometimes the whole nonprofit industrial complex because just like for profit companies nonprofits are vying sometimes for federal grant dollars which is operating again in an economy of scarcity.

390

00:56:08.100 --> 00:56:08.880

Lou: Instead of

391

00:56:09.930 --> 00:56:31.050

Lou: Asking why do we have a set amount of grant funding to begin with and who is responsible for allocating those funds, and why not have more funds to begin with and not have a competition between community organizations that are all trying to service poor and marginalized folks.

392

00:56:33.450 --> 00:56:39.780

Lou: So I think that, you know, we're um you know you know we're, we're, we're making

393

00:56:41.040 --> 00:56:44.250

Lou: I think sometimes we have these situations where we we

394

00:56:45.390 --> 00:56:58.950

Lou: Pit. We are pit against each other.

396

00:57:15.570 --> 00:57:25.350

Lou: So, you know, across the board, we operate under these economic terms and economic standards. And I think that if we really begin to think profoundly

397

00:57:25.650 --> 00:57:43.620

Lou: About ways we can structure society on a larger both on small scales, right, like thinking on the community. Think about that community wealth generation still and then think about in these larger scales on why it is that we have scarce resources for social services.

398

00:57:45.630 --> 00:57:48.330

Lou: Why do we have an abundance of consumer products.

399

00:57:49.770 --> 00:57:58.740

Lou: When we don't even have enough to allow for programs of social welfare and giving quality education to our children.

400

00:58:04.200 --> 00:58:10.080

Abby: I think you've given our listeners a lot to think about in terms of how his current situations come about and

401

00:58:10.530 --> 00:58:11.880

Abby: And what factors are

402

00:58:12.120 --> 00:58:19.260

Abby: Influencing it and and how can maybe change for the better in the future. I'm wondering, an individual basis.

403

00:58:20.280 --> 00:58:30.960

Abby: I think will will close with this question since I know we're running out of time but wonder if you could tell us how can individuals become involved in this work and support this work to address housing.

404

00:58:32.550 --> 00:58:45.660

Lou: A lot of housing inequities come down to local government and local decision making in policymaking so really get involved.

405

00:58:46.620 --> 00:58:53.250

Lou: You know, with your I'd say common councils, make a lot of these decision city council's make a lot of these decisions.

406

00:58:54.300 --> 00:58:59.670

Lou: In much the same way that actually that is coming into national discourse about public safety.

407

00:59:00.720 --> 00:59:07.020

Lou: Is, you know, and that that's and that's another instance where we have a deeper circumstances of

409

00:59:12.840 --> 00:59:22.350

Lou: Creating a more deeply democratic society is putting power more into the hands of everyday citizens to

410

00:59:23.460 --> 00:59:26.580

Lou: Have agency in our reality and agency.

411

00:59:27.930 --> 00:59:31.410

Lou: To better the lives of ourselves and our families, and our communities.

413

00:59:34.950 --> 00:59:45.000

Lou: In Milwaukee at I want to say 53 to 54% of our \$700 million city budget goes to policing.

414

00:59:46.800 --> 00:59:51.510

Lou: And two to 4% two to 4% goes to public health.

415

00:59:53.730 --> 01:00:08.310

Lou: So take a hard look at the place that you're living, I would say that sometimes we think about these issues being maybe far away from where we are. But really, the front line is in your neighborhood.

416

01:00:09.630 --> 01:00:17.040

Lou: The front line for creating a more equitable society is in your backyard. It's on. It's in your

417

01:00:18.120 --> 01:00:27.810

Lou: City Hall of where you live, because chances are that is a reflection of our larger priorities

418

01:00:30.030 --> 01:00:44.670

Lou: And so take a hard look at that budget and see what it is and write to people, you know, ask why it is that way and get involved. We're about to be entering entering in the fall. The season, sort of a budgeting.

419

01:00:45.780 --> 01:00:48.660

Lou: This is a time when a lot of city budget gets passed a lot of

420

01:00:50.220 --> 01:00:57.330

Lou: Town budgets gets passed. And so this is really a time to get involved, especially coming up with the coming election.

421

01:01:00.450 --> 01:01:08.580

Lou: And so yeah, take a do a little bit of investigative research and I think that, you

422

01:01:10.800 --> 01:01:17.490

Lou: In much the much the same way that different different communities and different circumstances can be the canary in the coal mine.

423

01:01:18.030 --> 01:01:33.090

Lou: For these broader issues, right, like for instance like Flint was a alarm for the prevalence of environmental justice and environmental water issues in urban communities that have been experienced divestment.

424

01:01:34.410 --> 01:01:50.640

Lou: You know, if you look at your city budget, you look at the cost of housing versus wages in your community. If you look at the prevalence of lead laterals in your community. You might not be pleased with what you see

425

01:01:52.800 --> 01:01:53.400

Lou: And

426

01:01:54.480 --> 01:02:05.610

Lou: I believe that is not entirely your fault and not entirely my fault, but I believe that is also a diffusion of responsibility not to do something about it. Once you know.

[outro music Night Air]

Abby: Thank you so much, Lou, for taking the time to speak with us. We hope that this episode has helped our listeners better understand the topic of housing. Please join us for our next housing episode, where we will hear from Jazi Foreman about her work as the Program Director at Solid Ground, a non-profit organization in the Twin Cities metro area committed to families experiencing housing instability. Thanks for listening.

[outro music Night Air]

Resources:

16th Street Community Health Center - <https://sschc.org/>

Social Determinants of Health definition - <https://www.cdc.gov/socialdeterminants/about.html>

Segregated by Design - <https://www.segregatedbydesign.com/>

Book Review for The Color of Law by Richard Rothstein -

<https://kenyonreview.org/reviews/the-color-of-law-by-richard-rothstein-738439/>

Book Review for Convicted by Matthew Desmond -

<https://www.pulitzer.org/winners/matthew-desmond>

Sherman Phoenix - <https://www.shermanphoenix.com/>

Participatory Budgeting definition - <https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/what-is-pb/>

Article on participatory budgeting by Atkinson, 1996 -

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1467-923X.1996.tb01568.x>

Milwaukee Universal Basic Income Pilot -

<https://www.wpr.org/milwaukee-considering-universal-basic-income-pilot-program>

Wisconsin Partnership Program - <https://www.med.wisc.edu/wisconsin-partnership-program/>

Center for Urban Population Health - <https://www.cuph.org/>

City Health Dashboard - <https://www.cityhealthdashboard.com/>