Personal Statement

I am a community health researcher at the Kaiser Permanente Colorado Institute for Health Research that

has chosen to dedicate my career to eliminating disparities in risk factors associated with cardiovascular

disease (CVD). Early in my career, I realized that the downstream mechanisms associated with health

were only a small contributor to the CVD outcomes experienced in a population. This realization was

shaped by my previous training and research experience which highlighted the importance of a socialecological approach to research in addition to advanced research methods to address complex public

health problems. Broadly, my research interests include a focus on the role of neighborhood environment

factors in influencing population health. More specifically, I am interested in examining how upstream social

determinants of health influence CVD outcomes and health-related disparities across the lifespan and how

policy, system, and environmental interventions can impact health outcomes. As a result of my rigorous

academic training, I established a strong background in multiple disciplines including physiology, social

epidemiology, health behavior and promotion, and public health. My training and research experience has

centered around three focal points: 1) conducting social epidemiology studies and natural experiments to

examine the impact of neighborhoods and structural determinants on CVD-related health behaviors and

risk factors; 2) measurement and assessment of neighborhood environments; and 3) population

approaches to reducing health disparities and preventing CVD across multiple settings. During my doctoral

training and postdoctoral fellowship, I was exposed to numerous research studies that have employed

diverse methodologies to assess, measure, and collect environmental and health data as well as utilized

advanced statistical methods to address novel research questions. To date, I have served as a PI or Co-I

on 6 funded projects ($5.2M awarded), authored 25 peer-reviewed publications including 9 as first author,

and sought collaborations and service opportunities with national visibility. I have strategically designed my

research career to acquire essential skills to support my drive to build a deeper understanding of how

neighborhood environments influence disparities in CVD risk factors and to inform multilevel interventions

that account for society, neighborhood, and individual-level contributors to disparities in CVD risk factors

including blood pressure (BP). To further advance and support my program of research, I am submitting a

grant application to study how multilevel factors (including structural racism and neighborhood inequalities)

influence disparities in cardiometabolic health. My previous training and research experiences have well

prepared me to conduct this research. The proposed project is a logical extension of my previous work.