The Community Engagement Core (CEC) works to address environmental concerns by partnering with the community to identify and discuss issues, developing intervention and prevention strategies and plans, integrating activities with ongoing educational programs, and sharing findings from research. Specific aims include:

**Aim 1: Engage East Chicago and Columbus Junction junior high students with health science and engineering education programs that highlight the sources, remediation, and human impacts of PCBS**

Activities over the past year have involved disseminating the inquiry-based, airborne PCB lesson materials provided in science classrooms at Columbus Junction Junior High School (Iowa) and East Chicago Junior High School (Indiana), expanding and tailoring this curriculum to the learning levels of 6th-9th graders enrolled in the Junior Scholars Institute Camp coordinated by the Belin-Blank Center at the University of Iowa, and community partner visits and tours of the ISRP labs.

A long-standing partnership with Columbus Junction has led to partnership interest from a nearby community, West Liberty. CEC continues to meet with leaders and agencies who can encourage new directions and enforcements pertaining to PCB concerns and remediation in schools across the nation.

For more information about PCBs and schools, please visit our [Links page](#). [2]

**Aim 2: Address community needs regarding the impacts of dredging in East Chicago, Indiana, in terms of potential airborne PCB sources, remediation strategies, human impacts, and relative health risk**
CEC is working with AESOP Study graduate student researchers Ezazul Haque (third from right in picture), Maggie Moran, and project leader Peter Thorne to address rising community concerns in East Chicago of environmental exposure to lead and arsenic.

**Aim 3: Facilitate engagement activities with the town of Altavista, Virginia, and the environmental remediation firm, Ecolotree, Inc.**[4]

The CEC is continuing to explore further engagement activities with AltaVista.

**Brandi Janssen, PhD, Core Leader**

Dr. Janssen is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Occupational and Environmental Health Department of the College of Public Health. Brandi’s research examines the production and marketing strategies of local food producers and their relationships with conventional agricultural production. She has collaborated with area school districts, nonprofits, and community agencies to promote and enhance sustainable food systems locally. As director of Iowa’s Center for Agricultural Safety and Health, she oversees the work of a statewide coalition of public and private organizations devoted to reducing injuries and fatalities on Iowa farms. Dr. Janssen will be responsible for CEC direction and management. As Core Leader, she will serve on the ISRP Executive Committee and work to ensure all CEC activities are well-integrated with the ISRP and supportive of the specific aims of all components, where applicable.

**Scott Spak, PhD**

Dr. Spak is the ISRP Research Translation Coordinator and assists with the closely related Community Engagement Core.

**Jessica Andino, MPH, Community Engagement Core Coordinator**

Jessica works closely with communities to identify and discuss issues and to help develop intervention and prevention strategies and plans. She also serves as a Clinical Trials Research Associate/Project Manager at the University of Iowa Health Care. She also directs the social media efforts of the Community Engagement Core.