

COMPASS study seeks to measure community spread of COVID-19 in general population

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Andrew Poland of the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine sets up a testing tent for the COMPASS Study at the Salvation Army Family Store on Jefferson

Highway.

Researchers from the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine and the School of Medicine will be in randomly selected public locations around Orleans and Jefferson parishes during the next three months for the nationwide [COMPASS Study](#) – Community Prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 Study (CoVPN 5002). On Jan. 28, they were at the Salvation Army Family Store on Jefferson Highway. Professor and Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Development Patricia Kissinger, an infectious diseases epidemiologist, said the study will help public health workers find the true prevalence of current and past infections of COVID-19 to better understand how people feel about vaccines and COVID-19 control measures.

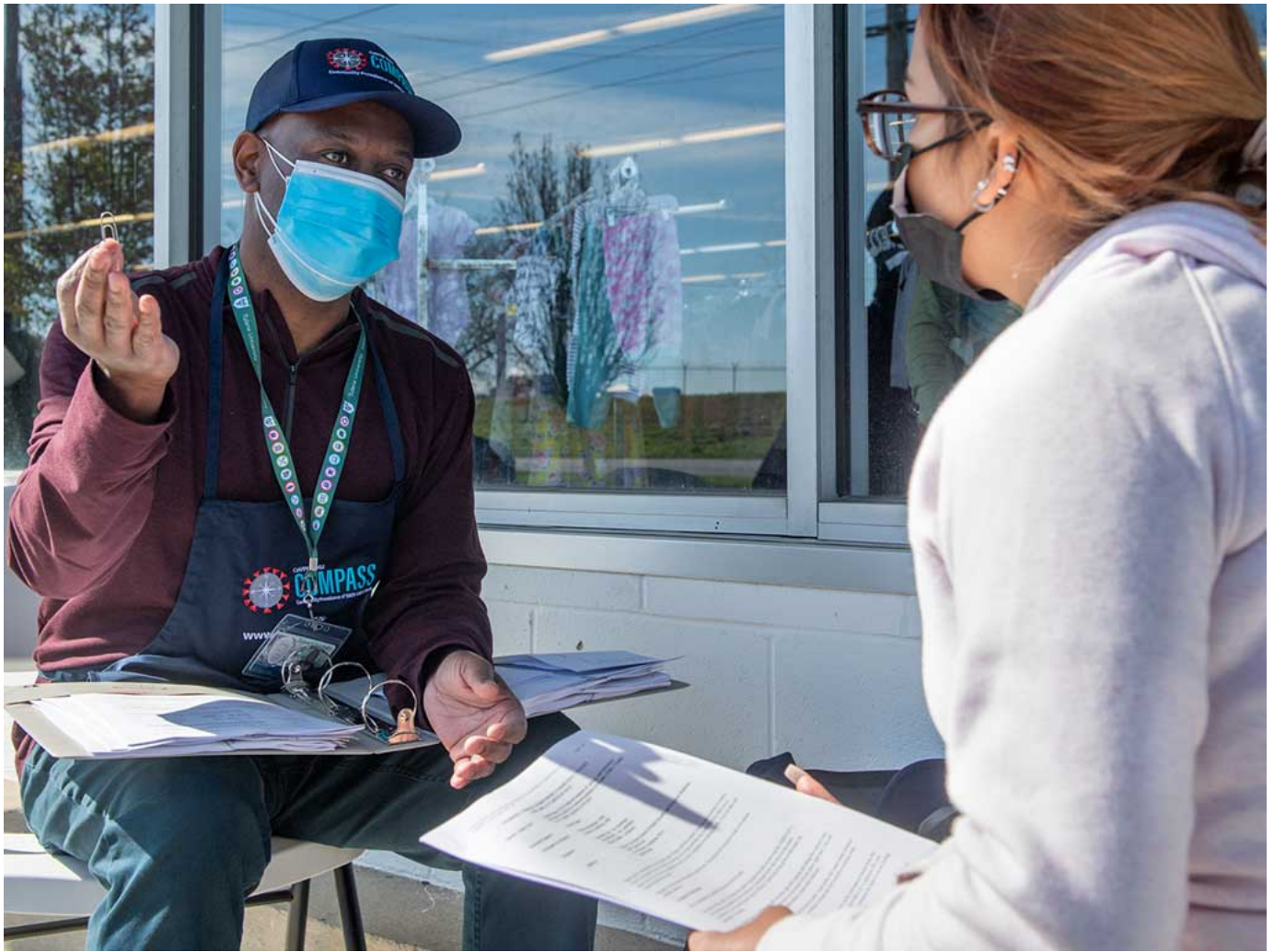
“COVID-19 rates can be hard to interpret since not everyone gets tested. Many of those who had the virus didn’t have symptoms or may have only had mild symptoms that they might have dismissed,” Kissinger said. “This study will give people an opportunity to contribute to the fight against the pandemic by helping us get a more inclusive and accurate estimate of how the virus has spread within neighborhoods and communities across the New Orleans area. By randomly selecting the sites, we hope to get a representative sample, and we hope to enroll about 4,000 people in the study.”

People enrolled in the study will receive a COVID-19 PCR and antibody testing for free, will answer some questions, and will receive compensation for their time. Look for the pop-up COMPASS tents throughout the city and help fight the pandemic.

Photos by Sally Asher.



Keri Cranor of the Department of Epidemiology (center) and Professor and Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Development Patricia Kissinger (right) talk with a participant outside the store during the COMPASS Study.



Albert Moten Jr. of the Department of Epidemiology talks with participant Angie Zelaya at the testing location.



Phlebotomists Courtney Woodell (foreground) and Patrice Felton (background) set up the testing tent before the COMPASS event.



Andrew Poland conducts an interview during the day of testing.