

The Connection Community Consultant Group 2011-2012 Projects

Blue Water Baltimore (literature review)

Description: Blue Water Baltimore's (<http://www.bluewaterbaltimore.org/>) mission is to use community based restoration, education, and advocacy to achieve clean water in Baltimore's rivers, streams, and harbor. Their goal is to help citizens of the Baltimore region create and enjoy a vibrant natural environment, livable neighborhoods, and a healthy, thriving Inner Harbor and Chesapeake Bay. They work towards a future when Baltimore's neighborhood streams are safe for fishing and swimming and the clean harbor is the pride of the city.

Project: Connection Consultants helped Blue Water Baltimore understand the relationship between a healthy environment and a healthy community. Students conducted an evidence-based literature search that focused on how participation in and exposure to environmental projects are related to health outcomes. The literature review also looked at how the influence of participating in environmental projects and improved environmental conditions affect community and individual health.

Connection team: 3 JHSPH students, 1 JHSPH/SON student

Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning (case study reporting)

Description: The Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning (<http://www.lead-safe.org>) is committed to the creation of resources, programs, and policies to prevent childhood lead poisoning and home-based environmental health hazards. They work in collaboration with families, community organizations, educators, government agencies, insurers, property owners, and health care providers to construct real, attainable and cost-effective means to create lead-safe and healthy homes. The Coalition is dedicated to the primary prevention of childhood lead poisoning and the creation of healthy home environments that eradicate environmental and social injustices and result in healthier children, better school performance, the revitalization of our housing stock and more productive communities.

Project: Community Consultants helped to build out pre-and post-datasets to document and quantify the impact of its housing interventions in a pool of approximately 300 Baltimore homes. These interventions are part of the Coalition's national Green & Healthy Homes Initiative™ ("GHHI") that integrates healthy housing improvements with energy efficiency, weatherization and resident education. Students summarized energy consumption, energy

cost, and medical cost data collected from families who have completed the housing intervention.

Connection team: 3 JHSPH students, 1 JHSPH alumnus

Esperanza Center (outlining the scope to update crisis management protocols)

Description: For more than forty-five years, the Esperanza Center (formerly the Hispanic Apostolate) (<http://www.catholiccharities-md.org/immigrants/>) has provided a wide range of services to new immigrants to the Baltimore Metropolitan Area in Fells Point. Through short-term social services, referrals to appropriate resources, employment counseling, and English as a second language classes, their bilingual staff works with Hispanic and other immigrants to help them acclimate to their new home. The Esperanza Center also provides Immigration Legal Services performed by licensed attorneys and preventive and primary healthcare.

Project: In light of the recent earthquake and hurricane, the Esperanza Center wanted to be better prepared to respond to imminent situations. Connection students helped the Esperanza Center think about updating and developing new procedures for their Crisis Management Protocol. Students examined the current protocols to identify the areas that are missing and are in need of revisions. Students delivered a Project Scope Report to outline the necessary steps to move forward (a second Connection team continued the project in the Spring 2012 round of Connection projects).

Connection team: 3 JHSPH students

Gilchrist Hospice Care (research and recommendations for a fee-for-service billing program for bereavement services)

Description: Gilchrist Hospice Care (<http://gilchristhospice.org/page.aspx?pid=401>) has a well developed program of Bereavement Services for hospice and community clients who have lost a loved one due to death. Gilchrist offers individual counseling, support groups, workshops, and other events for the public. Their vision is to foster hope, healing and respect through an unwavering commitment to what they do, through education of their patients, families and the community, and through their interdisciplinary teamwork.

Project: The Connection Consultants helped Gilchrist investigate the possibilities for a fee-for-service model for individual counseling for their community clients. Consultants researched customary charges for mental health practitioners in their service area (Baltimore City and County, Harford County and Howard County), explored 3rd party reimbursement and made

recommendations for rates to charge for their services. This included phone conversations with other hospice organizations that have implemented a fee-for-service model as well as making inquiries to insurance companies to gather data about billing practices.

Connection team: 1 JHSPH student, 2 SOM students

Jewel House, Incorporated (Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program (PRP) application)

Description: Jewel House, Incorporated (<http://www.jewelhouseincorporated.org/>) is a non-profit organization that offers programs and services that empowers teen parents (male and female) with the tools necessary to build a successful future. Jewel House, Incorporated was founded in 2004 in response to the inadequate number of programs/services/facilities available to meet the needs of pregnant and parenting teens.

Project: Connection Consultants assisted Jewel House's effort to apply to be recognized as a Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program (PRP) by Maryland's Department of Mental Health and Hygiene (http://dhmh.maryland.gov/ohcq/MH/docs/MH_Forms/mh_app.pdf). This PRP recognition will help Jewel House provide mental health services and support to clients so that they can get back into the community to work, live quality lives, and be independent. Students were involved in both research and writing components of the PRP proposal.

Connection team: 3 JHSPH students, 1 JHSPH alumnus

The Light of Truth Center, Inc. (develop plan of action for a new business model)

Description: The Light of Truth Center, Inc. (LTC) (<http://lightoftruth.homestead.com/>) is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing safe and supportive housing in an environment conducive to recovery, transition and restoration for women recovering from addictions. The Light of Truth Center, Inc. facilitates education, empowerment, enlightenment, education and healing for the women it serves. At the Light of Truth Center, women live as a family unit, supporting their own and each other's recovery process.

Project: The Light of Truth Center is in early stages of developing a business center program. The idea of the program is to train their clients about business ethics, prepare the women to be in the work force, and then employ them at the business center. The business center will include an intensive outpatient treatment center, a medical billing center, and a rental office.

Consultants helped LTC prepare for the next steps in the development of the business center model. Students researched similar social enterprise business models, identified the skills needed to run the business center, a statement of need report, a suggested time-line for next

steps, and an initial budget spreadsheet. Students worked collaboratively with the founder of The Light of Truth to cultivate a plan of action.

Connection team: 4 JHSPH students

YO! Baltimore (curriculum planning, health education)

Description: YO! Baltimore (<http://www.yobaltimore.org/>) serves out-of-school youth and young adults citywide at two youth-friendly centers. Caring adults provide wide-ranging, support services and opportunities for participants to reach their academic and career goals. YO! Baltimore members build important life skills and participate in activities that support creative self-expression and a fit and healthy life style.

YO! Baltimore sponsors several dynamic programs for in-school, as well as out-of-school youth. With a proven track record of helping young people increase their wage earnings and educational attainment while reducing recidivism, YO! Baltimore has received national recognition as a model, youth-development program that works.

Project: YO! Baltimore provides three-hour sessions of GED classes Monday through Thursday. For the third hour of each session, life skills are taught to provide different topics for their youth to have better awareness and exposure to their environment. Connection students created a curriculum to teach the students a particular life-skill. Topics included bullying, childhood obesity, aging, positive decision-making, and volunteerism/service-learning.

Connection team: 3 JHSPH students

House of Ruth Maryland (literature review)

Description: The House Of Ruth Maryland (<http://www.hruth.org/default.asp>) leads the fight to end violence against women and their children by confronting the attitudes, behaviors and systems that perpetuate it, and by providing victims with the services necessary to rebuild their lives safely and free of fear. The House of Ruth's vision is that one day, every woman in Maryland will be safe in her own home.

Project: Consultants helped the House of Ruth to conduct a mixed methods literature review to address "What do we need to know to improve services for battered women and their children in the metro-Baltimore region?" More specifically, the Consultant group looked at this question from the victim's point of view. The questions that were researched were "What services are desired by victims? What resources do victims want? What are the barriers [for

victims] to desired services? What resources do victims want, but can't find? How do women define battering – what is acceptable or tolerated within their relationship?"

Connection team: 2 JHSPH students, 1 SOM student, 1 JHSPH alumnus

Esperanza Center (recommendations to update emergency preparedness protocols)

Description: For more than 45 years, the Esperanza Center (formerly the Hispanic Apostolate) (<http://www.catholiccharities-md.org/immigrants/>) has provided a wide range of services to new immigrants to the Baltimore Metropolitan Area in Fells Point. Through short-term social services, referrals to appropriate resources, employment counseling, and English as a second language classes their bilingual staff works with Hispanic and other immigrants to help them acclimate to their new home. The Esperanza Center also provides Immigration Legal Services performed by licensed attorneys and preventive and primary healthcare.

Project: The Esperanza Center has commenced the process of updating its crisis management protocols in the wake of some recent emergency events that adversely impacted the operations of the Center. Connection consultants continued the project from Fall 2011 to help the Esperanza Center take the next steps to update their emergency preparedness protocols. In the process of investigating the protocols that Esperanza already had in house, it was discovered that Esperanza had more materials than they thought. The Connection team organized the materials that Esperanza already had into a database (with descriptions of documents). Consultants also researched similar emergency preparedness systems and gave recommendations on how to proceed in creating protocols that are specific to the Esperanza Center and its employees and clients.

Connection team: 1 JHSPH student, 1 SOM student

Project PLASE (career guidance workshop)

Description: Project PLASE, Inc. (<http://www.projectplase.org>) addresses homelessness in Baltimore by providing transitional housing, permanent housing and supportive services to homeless adults (aged 18 or older). PLASE serves the most vulnerable and underserved, including persons with mental illness, HIV/AIDS, addiction, developmental disabilities, and ex-offenders, etc. PLASE treats, restores and rehabilitates the whole person. PLASE empowers each individual to function at the highest level possible.

Project: Consultants developed a career guidance educational workshop to help clients with resume-writing and how to apply for jobs. Part of the session was providing feedback through

one-on-one sessions with clients who already started their resume. The other part of the session was geared towards answering any questions about resume writing and completing job applications. Consultants provided template job application and resumes.

Connection team: 2 JHSPH students