

## THE CONNECTION COMMUNITY CONSULTANT GROUP PROJECTS

### ACADEMIC YEAR: 2012-2013

#### **STAR: Sisters Together and Reaching (Project: Grant Writing)**

**Description** STAR (<http://www.sisterstogetherandreaching.org>) is a Christian-based non-profit organization dedicated to providing spiritual support, direct services, and preventive education to women infected with HIV/AIDS through a holistic women's community center and mobile van unit. The program has a focus on women, but does serve the entire population (including men and the GLBTQ community).

**Project:** To meet the needs of the large number of consumers who will become newly eligible for health insurance beginning in 2014, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act is charging the Maryland Health Care Exchange (Exchange) with establishing a network of Navigators to assist consumers to (1) learn about and enroll in qualified plans, (2) obtain federal tax credits and cost-sharing subsidies, and (3) enroll in affordability programs such as Medicaid. Navigator partners will be responsible for reaching out to and enrolling uninsured individuals and to provide seamless entry into all insurance plans and programs on the Individual Exchange, Medicaid and the Maryland Children's Health Plan (MCHP). Consultants were responsible for writing a grant application in order for STAR to become a Navigator agency.

**Connection team:** 3 JHSPH students

#### **United Ministries, Inc./Earl's Place (Project: Curriculum Development)**

**Description:** United Ministries (<http://www.unitedministries-earlsplace.org>) is a housing and social justice organization dedicated to assisting men who are homeless who want to change their lives, and to changing community attitudes toward the homeless. Earl's Place, the first project of United Ministries, opened in 1997 and is named for Earl Johnson, who, before his death was involved both as a client and a volunteer at The Supper Club. United Ministries, through Earl's Place, provides housing and supportive services to men who are homeless.

**Project:** United Ministries was interested in developing a curriculum for an experiential opportunity/educational workshop that could be marketed to groups such as: colleges seeking an alternative spring break or urban service-learning program, church youth groups, and groups of clergy or seminary students interested in urban ministry. The objectives of this project were to provide insight into the issue of homelessness and encourage participants to identify opportunities to provide help to those in need and to provide information that can be used to advocate for change.

**Connection team:** 2 JHSPH students, 1 JHSPH alumna

**Maryland Citizen's Health Initiative/Health Care for All! Coalition  
(Project: Survey Development)**

**Description:** The Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative Education Fund ("MCHI" <http://healthcareforall.com>) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit advocacy organization that was created in 1999 with a mission to educate all Marylanders about sound ways to achieve quality, affordable health care for all.

**Project:** As a result of the federal health care reform Maryland Health Care for All! Coalition wanted to collect additional information about uninsured residents who may benefit from the option to purchase, with the support of tax credits, health care coverage through the new Maryland Health Connection. Consultants worked collaboratively to develop a survey that assessed whether the people who the new reform was targeting, actually had the disposable income necessary to purchase additional care through the exchange. Consultants created a survey targeting MD residents who earned 150-400% FPL. Results of the survey informed advocacy efforts in Annapolis and outreach strategies in order to maximize health insurance coverage among the working poor for when health reform goes fully into effect in 2014.

**Connection team:** 3 JHSPH students

**TurnAround, Inc. (Project: Development of an Evaluation Prototype)**

**Description:** TurnAround, Inc. (<http://www.turnaroundinc.org>) opened its doors in 1978 as the Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Center (SADVC) with the mission of providing counseling and support services to victims of sexual assault and domestic violence in Baltimore County. Our Baltimore City office opened in January 1995 to fill a gap in services for sexual assault victims and expanded to serve victims of domestic violence as well. The agency's name was changed to Second Step, Inc. in 1998 as we celebrated 20 years of service to the community. In celebration of the new millennium, we became TurnAround, Inc., *the first place to turn*. Our mission has always been the same: to provide counseling and support services to victims of rape, incest and domestic violence and to increase community awareness and understanding of these problems.

**Project:** Consultants researched SARTs across country to see what evaluation tools were available and which might be applicable to TurnAround, Inc.'s center. Consultants assisted in the design and development of an evaluation prototype that looked specifically at program outcomes. An extensive literature review was also completed.

**Connection team:** 3 JHSPH students, 1 SOM student

### **901 Arts (Project: Grant Proposal)**

**Description:** 901 Arts (<http://www.901arts.org>) is a community arts center founded by parents and adults of the Better Waverly neighborhood to offer free art and music programming to our youth, as a means of investing in and developing the next generation of community leaders. They provide a variety of **programs and services including:** individual vocal and music lesson, group art instruction, summer camp, teen summer job programs, cultural excursions field trips, host community events, individual homework help/SAT prep, public art in the community, instrument lending library, and weekly teen discussion nights.

**Project:** Connection Consultants assisted in completing an ABAG common grant application form that created a convincing, data-supported case to share with prospective foundations. Deliverables included a cover letter, the letter of intent, and the proposal narrative itself.

**Connection team:** 3 JHSPH students

### **NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore (Project: Advocacy Work)**

**Description:** For nearly 30 years, **NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore** (<http://www.nami.org/baltimore>) has established itself as one of the most active NAMI affiliates. Many of the national NAMI signature programs were piloted at NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore. We continue to develop innovative resources and community education tools that transform the lives of families and consumers living with the debilitating effects of mental illness.

NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore's Advocacy Committee is in desperate need of revitalization. After a change of leadership, the committee is seeking new, more effective ways to involve constituents in advocacy and public policy in the Baltimore community. The committee seeks to make an action plan to draw in more active members and mobilize constituents to become effective advocates for mental health.

**Project:** Community Consultants were responsible for assisting with the Smarts for Advocacy Training on the 12th of January. They attended NAMI's advocacy committee meetings in preparation for the training, assisted with outreach and participated in role-plays during the training. They also had the opportunity to compile advocacy materials for participants. In addition, NAMI participated in an Advocacy Day on January 29<sup>th</sup> in Annapolis, MD which included meeting with legislators to talk about mental health reform. Consultants helped with the recruitment of individuals to go to Annapolis with NAMI. They set up meetings with legislators, and coordinated some of the more detail-orientated aspects of this event. Consultants worked with NAMI Maryland (the state affiliate) to discuss and identify relevant policy issues.

**Connection team:** 3 JHSPH Students

**Baltimore City Health Department, Westside Public Outreach Assistance  
(Project: Stakeholder Identification/Marketing)**

**Description:** The Baltimore City Health Department (<http://baltimorehealth.org>) aims to advocate, lead, and provide services of the highest quality in order to promote and protect the health of the residents of Baltimore City.

**Project:** The Baltimore City Health Department, Office of Policy and Planning recently completed a **Health Impact Assessment (HIA)** of redevelopment planned for the Downtown-Westside area of Baltimore.

Community Consultants were responsible for identifying key stakeholders within the city with which to share the results of the HIA. In addition, Consultants developed a one-page marketing document (infographic) that summarized the key findings of the larger HIA document that was distributed to key stakeholders.

**Connection team:** 4 JHSPH students

**Planned Parenthood of Maryland (Project: Evaluation Tool Development)**

**Description:** Planned Parenthood of Maryland's (<http://www.plannedparenthood.org/maryland>) mission is to enable all Marylanders to have access to a wide range of high quality, affordable reproductive health care services. By providing medical services, education, training and advocacy, PPM seeks to help individuals make informed decisions about their reproductive health, family planning options, and sexuality.

**Project:** Community Consultants were responsible for developing an evaluation tool aimed at measuring the effectiveness of PPM's *Prescriptions for Health* component within their Nutrition Program. PPM's Nutrition Program consists of sending health-related text messages, providing free nutrition consults, referrals to a Weight Watchers Enhanced Program, Rx for health and providing health incentives, etc.

Prescriptions for Health are general health suggestions that each client receives at their first visit as well as every one to six months thereafter. The client is given recommendations for healthier living along with incentives to encourage healthy behaviors.

**Connection team:** 3 JHSPH students, 1 JHMI student