

Baltimore Action Projects 2025-2026

Bloomberg American Health Initiative and SOURCE

Program Information and Student Application Details

[SOURCE](#) is pleased to announce a call for student applications for an exciting opportunity offered in collaboration with the [Bloomberg American Health Initiative](#), an initiative sparked by a major donation to the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health to help reshape the national public health agenda. The Initiative specifically focuses on five areas affecting public health:

- 1) Addiction and Overdose
- 2) Food Systems for Health
- 3) Violence
- 4) Adolescent Health
- 5) Environmental Challenges

In partnership with the Initiative, SOURCE and partnering community-based organizations (CBOs), **Baltimore Action Projects** are community-identified projects which directly connect to the Initiative's focus areas. Through the Initiative's funding, Johns Hopkins graduate students from the Johns Hopkins **Bloomberg School of Public Health** and the Johns Hopkins **School of Nursing** will be hired to work a minimum of *100 hours* to complete Baltimore Action Projects in partnership with CBOs.

SOURCE is now accepting *Student Applications* for Baltimore Action Projects!

Student Applications are due by **Wed, July 30, 2025 by 11:59 pm ET**
(submission info found at the end of the application).

How to Apply:

The 2025-2026 Baltimore Action Projects (BAP) have already been identified by SOURCE partnering community-based organizations (CBOs) and the Initiative. Applicants should review Baltimore Action Project descriptions. Applications will be reviewed, and top candidates for each project will be invited to interview with the CBOs. To access the online application form, [click here](#).

Baltimore Action Project Student Commitments:

- *Service Hour Requirement:* Commitment to completing and reporting a **minimum of 100 hours** for the Baltimore Action Project. Students will report their hours regularly through SOURCE's BAP group page on the online Hopkins Engage platform.
- *Regular Meetings with CBO Contacts:* Students will be required to meet with and regularly communicate with their CBO contacts, both virtually and in-person (all projects are *fully in-person* or *hybrid* in 2025-2026, requiring a combination of on-site time with the designated Baltimore-based CBO and some remote time)
- *On-Going Communication:* Students will also be required to communicate with SOURCE and the Initiative designated focus areas.
- *Online Modules:* Successful completion of SOURCE Online Modules to prepare for community activities.

- *Employment Paperwork:* Students must commit to completing all required employment paperwork in a timely manner to be paid their stipend (paid in two halves at the mid-point and completion of their BAP).
- *Student Reflections:* Students are required to complete 3 reflection assignments (synchronous sessions with makeup assignment, as needed) to discuss student learning and progress.
- *Final Report and Deliverables:* Students are required to complete a final report and submit final deliverable(s).
- *Program Impact:* Students are required to participate in a final “Program Impact” activity. Past activities have included poster sessions and recorded impact statements. Program impact activity is to be determined (TBD) for 2025-2026.

Baltimore Action Project Benefits:

- \$2,000 stipend
- Additional \$500 in funds paid directly to CBOs to use for completing Baltimore Action Projects
- Community-based experience with a CBO
- Opportunities to connect with the Initiative’s focus areas
- For MPH students at BSPH, fully meets the MPH practicum requirement (registration for 3 academic credits of 551.895 is required if using BAP for the MPH practicum)

Baltimore Action Project Application Process:

- Open to all students from the Johns Hopkins University Schools of Public Health and Nursing who will be enrolled full-time for the duration of the 2025-2026 academic year, and who will be able to perform some of their work hours on site at the Baltimore CBO.
- Applications must be completed by **Wed, July 30, 2025, by 11:59 pm ET**. **Applicants will complete an online application form and attach their resume or CV** to the form. To access the application form, [click here](#).
- An internal selection team will review applications and select the top candidates to move on to the interview round for each BAP.
- Selected applicants will interview with CBO preceptors for the available positions.
- Students and CBOs that interview for BAPs will submit their decisions and rankings following interviews.
- CBO preceptors will work with SOURCE to select their BAP student.

Baltimore Action Projects

2025-2026 Project Descriptions

Organization	Project Title	Focus Area
Art with a Heart	HeARTworks Program Model	Adolescent Health
Charm City Care Connection	Developing Geographic Data Systems for Harm Reduction Street Outreach	Addiction and Overdose
Elev8 Baltimore	Wellness Wednesdays: Food for Thought	Adolescent Health
Health Care for the Homeless	Connecting to Youth Experiencing Homelessness	Adolescent Health
House of Ruth Maryland	House of Ruth Maryland Safety Committee Initiative	Violence
Parks and People	Data-Driven Parks: Measuring Green Space Development	Environmental Challenges
Roberta's House, Inc.	Grief in Action: Educating Communities, Preventing Overdose	Addiction and Overdose
Shepherd's Clinic	Youth Wellness Collaborative: Empowering Teens Through Health Education	Adolescent Health
The 6th Branch	Engaging Community for Farm-Fresh Food Access in East Baltimore	Food Systems for Health
The Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition (HEBCAC)	Roots & Renewal: Beautifying and protecting neighborhood green spaces in East Baltimore	Environmental Challenges

Organization: Art with a Heart

Art with a Heart's mission is to enhance the lives of people in need through visual art. The organization believes in the power of art to enrich lives, bridge divides, and forge the leaders of tomorrow. That belief is rooted in the work we do with each and every student and volunteer, through all branches of the organization. In times of isolation or turmoil, art calms and steadies the spirit. In times of reckoning, art amplifies voices. In times of immeasurable challenge, art strengthens our creative muscle and pushes us to think outside of the box and develop innovative solutions. For over twenty five years, Art with a Heart has worked to harness the joys and benefits of visual art to enhance the lives of children, youth and adults through educational classes in the community, a workforce development program, social enterprise store, a community art and service initiative and a leadership program for high school students.

Organization Information:

3000 Falls Rd. Mill #1 Baltimore, MD 21211

www.artwithaheart.net

Focus Area: Adolescent Health

Project Proposal

Project Title: HeARTworks Program Model

Project Description: Art with a Heart's workforce development program, HeARTworks, uses art as a vehicle to teach job skills to youth ages 14-24. In the last year, Art with a Heart opened a second location which houses its social enterprise store, HeARTwares, and the HeARTworks program. To better prepare for expanding these initiatives, Art with a Heart will work with a student intern to research career readiness frameworks and use those findings to create a logic model for the HeARTworks program. Additionally, the intern will help to determine program metrics and goals and create an evaluative tool to measure those outcomes.

Project Goals: The goal of this project is to research career readiness frameworks and create a logic model for Art with a Heart's workforce development program, HeARTworks.

How is this project related to the Initiative's Focus Area?

To continue to support the adolescent/young adults who work in Art with a Heart's summer and school year programs, the organization needs to collect data on program successes, as well as opportunities for improvement. We specifically would use this information to review the acceptability and sustainability of our work with our population and community partners.

How will this project benefit the organization?

A student intern would allow Art with a Heart to refine its goals and understand our programmatic impact on the youth that participate in our workforce development programs, ideally leading to the

more young people receiving the emotional and professional tools they need to be successful in their future careers.

Primary Student Roles and Responsibilities

Research career readiness frameworks that align with Art with a Heart's program goals.

- Interview stakeholders, including staff members, students, parents, and graduates of the HeARTworks program to determine program successes and areas for improvement.
- Research and draft logic model for the program outcomes determined through stakeholder interviews.
- Identify program metrics and determine an evaluation form to measure them.

Required Skills:

- Excellent communication, research, and analytical skills
- Ability to work independently and take initiative to identify and solve problems
- Experience with quantitative and qualitative evaluation methodologies.
- Strong interest in program design and evaluation.

Preferred Skills (if any):

- Experience using Google Suite
- Experience working directly with youth ages 14-24
- Experience working with diverse populations

Work Arrangements (preference for how the selected student will complete the project):

Project can be completed through a hybrid model, some time in-person and some time remote.

Is personal transportation required of a selected student?

No, public transportation is readily available for in-person tasks.

Organization: Charm City Care Connection

The mission of Charm City Care Connection (CCCC) is to promote health, self-determination, and self-advocacy for individuals and communities affected by drug use, stigma, poverty, and inequities, with a primary focus on serving individuals who use drugs. Our services include: safe use supplies; syringe litter cleanup; overdose prevention supplies and training; hot and portable food; laundry services; showers; a clothing closet; street outreach; basic wound care; and case management services including identification documents or other public benefits, transportation to medical or other appointments, and warm handoffs to detox, treatment, and healthcare for chronic and acute conditions. In partnership with the Baltimore City Health Department Spot mobile team, we offer on-site access to HIV/HCV/STI testing and treatment, vaccines, wound care, and low-barrier buprenorphine.

CCCC has been providing health resources in East Baltimore since 2009 and has focused on people who use drugs since 2018, and becoming one of the largest harm reduction service providers in the state of Maryland. CCCC's harm reduction program, built and managed by staff that have been directly impacted by drug use, has supported thousands of people who use drugs over the years. In 2024, CCCC served more than 6,200 unique clients across more than 15,500 total encounters. We have a program in which current and former clients can work providing direct services as part of our team, while also receiving intensive training and mentorship. Our work is rooted in dignity, justice, and respect and centers members of affected communities in the planning and programming of our organization.

Organization Information:

1214 N Wolfe St

<https://www.charmcitycareconnection.org/>

Focus Area: Addiction and Overdose

Project Proposal

Project Title: Developing Geographic Data Systems for Harm Reduction Street Outreach

Project Description: The student intern will first become familiar with CCCC by completing an orientation to understand the scope of our services and our values, participating in outreach services in order to understand data collection constraints in the field, and learning about current data collection techniques through conversations with the Outreach Manager and the Director of Analytics and Evaluation (preceptor). They will then review existing location data, which are currently recorded via non-standardized cross streets, and develop and implement a plan to clean and geocode these data. The Director of Analytics and Evaluation will be available to assist in developing and troubleshooting geocoding methods. Next, the student will combine their on-the-ground experience with the outreach team with their back-end data cleaning experience to propose a solution that will be both feasible in the field and facilitate easier ongoing data analysis.

This project will allow CCCC to complete retrospective analyses of our outreach work such as demonstrating growth and impact in different areas of the city, as well as ensure we can routinely

analyze geographic data in real time and adapt services to meet shifting needs. This is particularly critical in Baltimore, where people who use drugs and access CCCC services are highly mobile in response to a myriad of factors like police presence, encampment sweeps, and supply side changes.

If time and interest allows, the student intern may expand their project to include analysis to answer geographic questions of mutual interest to CCCC and the student and/or to pilot the proposed new data collection system. However, these are secondary goals; the primary goals of the project are to develop systems to ensure usability of past and future outreach data.

Project Goals: The overarching goal of this project is to enable Charm City Care Connection to conduct ongoing geographic analysis to support evaluation of its street outreach services. To advance this goal, the primary objectives for the student intern are to:

1. Clean and geocode existing 2024 and 2025 location data
2. Propose a new system for collecting location data to streamline geocoding going forward
3. Secondary goals, if time and student interest allows, include
 - 1) Developing maps, charts, or analyses of 2024 and 2025 location data
 - 2) Working with staff to pilot the proposed new data collection system

How is this project related to the Initiative's Focus Area?

CCCC provides extensive harm reduction services to people who use drugs in Baltimore via a fixed site and street outreach locations. Our outreach services continue to grow in scope of geography (we recently added a site in West Baltimore), numbers of encounters (the majority of supplies distribution encounters now take place during street outreach rather than in the drop-in center), and variety of services offered. In addition to distributing harm reduction supplies like naloxone, syringes and other sterile drug use supplies, drug testing strips, and wound care and hygiene kits, CCCC provides peer support, wound care, treatment referrals and transportation, and telehealth connections for buprenorphine during outreach shifts. This project will allow CCCC to conduct geographically-specific evaluations of its outreach work providing overdose prevention and addiction care on the streets of Baltimore.

How will this project benefit the organization?

CCCC routinely collects and analyzes data to review and improve services and for grant reporting. However, as outreach locations have diversified, our legacy system of recording outreach locations no longer meets this need. We currently record the cross streets where services are provided, and spelling errors are common. We manually group data each time we need to summarize outreach locations or answer location-specific questions. This is time consuming, precludes dynamic mapping, and likely leads to errors in results. With geocoded data, we could answer location-specific questions that could help improve our services, visually represent the geographic impact of our work in Baltimore through mapping, and more easily fulfill grant reporting requirements. For example, we could assess and monitor where we connect with the most women at different geographic levels (specific cross streets, Baltimore City neighborhood, zip code, census tract). This would support our ongoing initiative to improve support to women-identified clients and people doing sex work. This is just one example of the kinds of

geographic-specific questions CCCC is interested in and could answer if location data were readily available.

The student's project will allow CCCC to complete retrospective analyses of our outreach work such as demonstrating growth and impact in different areas of the city, as well as ensure we can routinely analyze geographic data in real time and adapt services to meet shifting needs. This is particularly critical in Baltimore, where people who use drugs and access CCCC services are highly mobile in response to a myriad of factors like police presence, encampment sweeps, and supply side changes.

Primary Student Roles and Responsibilities

- 1) Attend CCCC orientation to learn about the scope of services and organizational values
- 2) Meet with the Director of Analytics and Evaluation regularly to discuss project plan, methods, and progress
- 3) Clean and geocode legacy outreach locations data (currently not standardized and recorded as cross streets) using R (preferred) or Python
- 4) Participate in outreach services, including noting data collection barriers in the field and interacting in a caring and non-judgemental way with staff and clients
- 5) Propose a new data collection system for recording outreach location data; work with outreach staff to ensure feasibility of the proposal
- 6) If time allows, project may be extended to pilot the proposed data collection system and/or analyze legacy location data

Required Skills:

- 1) Basic/intermediate proficiency in R (preferred) or Python, or advanced proficiency in another programming language and motivation and ability to quickly learn R on own with limited support from preceptor through this project
- 2) Openness to the Principles of Harm Reduction <https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/>

Preferred Skills (if any):

- 1) Tableau or similar platform
- 2) QGis
- 3) Familiarity with the Principles of Harm Reduction <https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/>

Work Arrangements (preference for how the selected student will complete the project): Project can be completed through a hybrid model, some time in-person and some time remote.

Is personal transportation required of a selected student?

No, public transportation is readily available for in-person tasks.

Organization: Elev8 Baltimore

As part of a full-service community schools strategy, Elev8 Baltimore provides out-of-school time opportunities and coordinates school-based health services, resources, support and outreach for families in Baltimore.

By partnering with schools and the surrounding community, our goal is to make sure that every student is ready to succeed in high school and beyond. In addition, many young people need social services and other community resources.

Full Service Community Schools Approach

Elev8 Baltimore believes that it is important to reinforce the learning that goes on in classrooms with opportunities to learn during after- and summer-school programs. In addition, many young people need social services and other community resources.

We integrate all those services into one dynamic strategy inside school buildings, which have historically served as thriving centers serving students, families and the broader community. By coordinating the delivery of learning, health and family engagement services students and families receive, we are more likely to foster lasting change in the lives of young people, and the systems that support them, than if we provided any one service in isolation.

Focus on Neighborhoods

By focusing on a set of schools, Elev8 Baltimore is able to increase the impact we have on families and the community.

Elev8 Baltimore builds on and coordinates existing community assets to meet the needs of students and their caregivers in greater East Baltimore, Cherry Hill, Sandtown-Winchester, Walbrook, Pigtown/Washington Village.

Organization Information:

210 West 28th Street Baltimore, MD 21211

www.elev8baltimore.org

Focus Area: Adolescent Health

Project Proposal

Project Title: Wellness Wednesdays: Food for Thought

Project Description: Wellness Wednesdays: Food for Thought is a virtual (weekly or bi-weekly) community-based learning and dialogue series designed to strengthen adolescent wellness through cross-generational, culturally responsive, and developmentally informed education. This initiative brings together parents and caregivers, educators, school staff, and community leaders to explore key aspects of adolescent health including mental health, nutrition, identity, relationships, and self-regulation through the lens of social and emotional learning (SEL).

Project Goals

1. Increase Adult Understanding of Adolescent Development
 - Deepen adult capacity to support adolescents' physical, emotional, and cognitive changes.
 - Provide clear, actionable tools for navigating age-specific behaviors and needs.
2. Build a Common SEL Language Across Community Roles
 - Introduce CASEL-aligned SEL concepts in accessible, practical terms for adults.
 - Foster a shared commitment to emotional intelligence, empathy, and youth voice.
3. Strengthen Relationships Between Youth and Caring Adults
 - Offer opportunities for intergenerational learning and reflection.
 - Promote strategies for meaningful connection, listening, and co-regulation.
4. Address Root Causes of Youth Stress and Isolation
 - Surface conversations on structural inequities, digital overload, mental health stigma, and community disconnection.
 - Center healing practices rooted in culture, community wisdom, and joy.
5. Cultivate a Healing-Centered, Informed Adult Community
 - Provide educators, caregivers, and leaders with tools to respond to trauma, support resilience, and model emotional wellness.
 - Build sustainable networks for support, collaboration, and reflection.

How is this project related to the Initiative's Focus Area?

Anticipated Dimensions of Impact: Adolescent Health & SEL

1. Emotion Literacy in Adults and Youth

- Impact: Increased ability among adults to name, model, and validate adolescent emotions.
- SEL Connection: Enhances self-awareness and social awareness.
- Community Value: Reduces adult-youth misunderstandings rooted in unspoken emotions or misinterpretation of behaviors.

2. Cultural and Developmental Responsiveness

- Impact: Stronger awareness of how culture, identity, and context shape adolescent behavior and wellness.
- SEL Connection: Supports social awareness and relationship skills through empathy and anti-bias learning.
- Community Value: Fosters a sense of belonging and safety for diverse youth and families.

3. Healthy Boundary-Setting and Co-Regulation

- Impact: Adults learn and model boundary-setting and co-regulation, which adolescents internalize over time.

- SEL Connection: Strengthens self-management and relationship skills.
- Community Value: Promotes emotional safety across school, home, and community spaces.

4. Trauma-Informed Communication Practices

- Impact: Caregivers and staff gain tools to recognize stress responses and respond with compassion rather than control.
- SEL Connection: Increases responsible decision-making and relationship repair skills.
- Community Value: Creates a restorative rather than punitive culture around adolescent behavior.

5. Shared Language for Navigating Change

- Impact: Establishes common SEL language across families, staff, and leaders to address topics like identity, puberty, peer conflict, and screen time.
- SEL Connection: Aligns self-awareness and decision-making across all stakeholders.
- Community Value: Normalizes open, age-appropriate conversations about growing up.

6. Youth Voice and Agency Recognition

- Impact: Adults learn how to create space for youth decision-making, expression, and leadership.
- SEL Connection: Supports responsible decision-making and self-awareness in youth and adults.
- Community Value: Shifts power dynamics to be more equitable and youth-centered.

7. Collective Well-Being and Interdependence

- Impact: Reinforces the idea that adolescent health is a community responsibility is not just individual or family.
- SEL Connection: Expands the relationship skills domain into collective care and mutual support.
- Community Value: Builds sustainable ecosystems of wellness, decreasing isolation for both youth and adults.

8. Resilience-Building Through Community Rituals

- Impact: Practices such as shared meals, storytelling, and reflection become wellness rituals that build belonging.
- SEL Connection: Strengthens self-management and emotional resilience through consistency and joy.
- Community Value: Reinforces cultural pride, identity, and intergenerational healing.

How will this project benefit the organization?

- Virtual platform provides easy access to an optimum number of people interested in individual topics and catalogue of curriculum
- Elev8 shares its experience and knowledge with topical issues while ensuring other community experts have an opportunity to share their expertise with a widening audience
- Increased adult confidence in supporting youth mental health and development
- More consistent, aligned language and strategies across school and home environments
- Stronger relationships among families, schools, and community partners
- Greater visibility of adolescent needs and voices in community conversations
- A sustained, culture-rooted model for adult learning and youth well-being

Key Program Elements

Weekly/Bi-weekly Thematic Workshops (60-75 minutes)

- Co-facilitated by youth development professionals, mental health experts, and community partners.
- Topics include adolescent brain development, managing emotions, nutrition and wellness, screen time and relationships, building trust, and trauma-informed care.
- Interactive Dialogues and Role Play
 - i. Opportunities for adult participants to practice SEL-aligned communication with each other and role-play with youth-informed scenarios.
- Resource Sharing and Toolkits
 - i. Weekly take-home handouts with tips, reflective prompts, and conversation starters to use with youth.
- Shared Meals and Community Bonding
 - o Light meals or snacks to promote relationship building and food as healing practice (where feasible).

Primary Student Roles and Responsibilities

1. Program Design & Delivery

- a. Co-develop content for virtual sessions on topics like mental health, puberty, relationships, nutrition, identity, etc.
- b. Ensure all content integrates developmental appropriateness, cultural responsiveness, and SEL competencies.
- c. Facilitate or co-facilitate community learning sessions (with supervisors or partner facilitators).
- d. Design interactive elements (polls, breakout groups, reflection prompts) for engagement.

2. Community Engagement & Relationship Building

- a. Support outreach and relationship-building with parents/caregivers, school staff, and community organizations.

- b. Attend check-ins with school-based teams to align with local needs.
- c. Co-create a welcoming, affirming virtual space for dialogue and shared learning.

3. Data Collection & Reflection

- a. Assist in collecting attendance, feedback, and reflective data from participants.
- b. Summarize key themes, outcomes, and growth areas from each session.
- c. Maintain accurate records for program documentation and evaluation.

4. Equity & Accessibility Planning

- a. Ensure language, visuals, and facilitation style align with diverse cultural and literacy needs.
- b. Support adaptation of materials for multilingual, neurodiverse, or historically excluded participants

Required Skills:

Required Skills & Competencies

- Knowledge of Adolescent Development: Understanding of social-emotional, cognitive, and physical changes in youth.
- Familiarity with SEL Frameworks: Especially CASEL 5 competencies and culturally sustaining SEL practices.
- Community Engagement Experience: Experience working with families or community members in education, health, or youth settings.
- Facilitation & Communication: Ability to lead accessible and engaging virtual discussions across diverse groups.
- Equity & Cultural Humility: Commitment to anti-racism, inclusion, and respecting community knowledge.
- Public Health Foundations: Understanding of social determinants of health, adolescent health trends, and community health promotion.

Preferred Skills (if any):

- Bilingual/Multilingual Skills: Especially Spanish, Arabic, or African languages common in Baltimore.
- Content Development: Experience designing slide decks, handouts, or toolkits for adult learners.
- Experience in School-Based Settings: Familiarity with K-12 school systems and family engagement models.
- Evaluation or Assessment: Knowledge of how to collect, interpret, and apply community feedback.
- Tech Fluency: Comfort using Zoom, Google Suite, Canva, and online engagement tools like Jamboard, Mentimeter, or Padlet.

Work Arrangements (preference for how the selected student will complete the project): Project can be completed through a hybrid model, some time in-person and some time remote.

Is personal transportation required of a selected student?

Yes, for any in-person tasks.

Organization: Health Care for the Homeless

We work to end homelessness through racially equitable health care, housing and advocacy in partnership with those of us who have experienced it.

Organization Information:

421 Fallsway Baltimore MD 21202

hchmd.org

Focus Area: Adolescent Health

Project Proposal

Project Title: Connecting to Youth Experiencing Homelessness

Project Description: Health Care for the Homeless operates pediatrics, adult medical, and low-barrier addiction care clinics isbut we serve a smaller than expected number of adolescents and youth. Baltimore has a well-documented high rate of homelessness among adolescents and transition-aged youth, yet these young people are not routinely accessing our services. This gap points to a critical disconnect between available care and those who may need it most.

This project will support the placement of a graduate student from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, through the SOURCE Baltimore Action Project program, to help us better understand and address this gap. The student will conduct two complementary assessments:

- 1) External Needs Assessment: The student will map the landscape of services for youth experiencing homelessness across Baltimore City and County. They will engage community-based organizations, youth-serving agencies, and youth themselves to identify service gaps, partnership opportunities, and strategies for more effective outreach and programming.
- 2) Internal Needs Assessment: The student will review our clinic's environment, operations, language accessibility, and staff practices to evaluate how effectively we are meeting the needs of youth experiencing homelessness. This will include client and staff interviews, walkthroughs, and review of materials and workflows.

Findings from both assessments will be synthesized into a final report with practical, prioritized recommendations to inform our agency's strategy for reaching, welcoming, and effectively serving youth experiencing homelessness iswhen, how, and where they need care.

Project Goals:

- Conduct an external community needs assessment to build an understanding of available youth services for adolescents and youth experiencing homelessness in Baltimore City and Baltimore County. This will help our agency develop a strategic approach to partnerships, outreach programming, and service offerings that address unmet need.

- Conduct an internal needs assessment to evaluate how welcoming, accessible, and appropriate our clinic environment and services are for youth experiencing homelessness of all backgrounds and language needs. Use both assessments to inform concrete, actionable improvements in outreach, space design, programming, and service delivery.

How is this project related to the Initiative's Focus Area?

This project aligns with the adolescent health focus area by seeking to improve health access, equity, and service connection for youth (adolescents and young adults) experiencing homelessness, a group at heightened risk for physical, mental, and social health challenges. It elevates youth voice and promotes collaboration to reduce disconnection from care and strengthen systems that support adolescent health and development.

How will this project benefit the organization?

The project will guide our organization in refining our youth engagement strategies, improving the clinic environment, and forming targeted partnerships with other youth-serving organizations. For the Baltimore community, the project fosters a more connected and responsive service landscape for adolescents experiencing homelessness, ultimately supporting their health, safety, and well-being.

Primary Student Roles and Responsibilities:

Conduct an environmental scan of services for youth experiencing homelessness across Baltimore City and Baltimore County

- Identify and engage relevant stakeholders (e.g., youth-serving organizations, school liaisons, shelter programs, youth advisory boards) to understand service access and gaps
- Design and implement data collection tools (e.g., interviews, surveys, or focus groups) for internal and external assessments
- Review clinic materials, workflows, and physical space for youth accessibility, inclusion, and cultural/linguistic appropriateness
- Synthesize findings into a final report with actionable recommendations to improve outreach, engagement, and service delivery
- Present interim and final findings to clinic leadership and staff, incorporating feedback into final deliverables

Required Skills:

- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, especially in community or stakeholder engagement
- Experience with needs assessments
- Experience with qualitative data collection and synthesis (e.g., interviews, focus groups, observational notes)
- Cultural humility and sensitivity to working with marginalized populations, including youth experiencing homelessness

- Ability to work independently and manage time across hybrid (in-person and remote) work
- Familiarity with youth engagement strategies

Preferred Skills (if any):

- Experience or coursework related to adolescent health, homelessness, or systems of care for vulnerable youth
- Spanish language proficiency
- Familiarity with Baltimore City or County community organizations and service networks
- Basic data visualization and report writing skills for clear communication of findings
- Previous work with participatory research and/or youth advisory boards

Work Arrangements (preference for how the selected student will complete the project): Project can be completed through a hybrid model, some time in-person and some time remote.

Is personal transportation required of a selected student?

Yes, for any in-person tasks.

Organization: House of Ruth Maryland

House of Ruth Maryland 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. Today, House of Ruth Maryland is recognized as one of the nation's most comprehensive domestic violence centers and has a staff of more than ninety. Our voluntary leadership consists of a thirty-member Board of Directors and an Advisory Committee.

Organization Information:

2201 Argonne Drive Baltimore, MD 21218

www.hruth.org

Focus Area: Violence

Project Proposal

Project Title: House of Ruth Maryland Safety Committee Initiative

Project Description: Intimate partner violence agencies often operate in high-stress, high-risk environments where staff, volunteers, and clients may be exposed to secondary trauma, threats of harm, and emotional burnout. While many agencies have informal or fragmented safety policies, there is often a lack of consistent, up-to-date, and equity-informed operating procedures to guide safety responses, particularly when it comes to intersecting issues like workplace emergency response and other interdepartmental safety issues. Without standardized training and documentation, responses may vary widely and inadvertently reinforce systemic inequities.

Project Goals: To support the creation and institutionalization of standardized, trauma-informed, and equity-focused safety procedures and training for House of Ruth Maryland's Safety Committee.

How is this project related to the Initiative's Focus Area?

This initiative falls within the parameters of the BAP critical challenge around violence and will be used to focus on policies and procedures for lessening incidents of workplace emergencies and potential violence, while ensuring organizational safety.

How will this project benefit the organization?

This project will engage interns in developing comprehensive training materials and a Standard Operating Manual (SOP) for the Safety Committee of a nonprofit service provider focused on intimate partner violence. The initiative aims to strengthen internal safety protocols, reduce safety risks within the agency's environment and improve trauma-informed response systems. This project will directly contribute to creating safer spaces for staff, clients and community, with special attention to equity, cultural competence, and implementation feasibility.

Primary Student Roles and Responsibilities:

Participate in meetings and reflection sessions with Safety Committee Co-Chairs to ensure alignment with agency values and trauma-informed practices.

- Research best practices related to safety protocols, crisis response, and training in domestic violence and nonprofit settings.
- Draft and revise standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the Safety Committee, including clear protocols for responding to safety concerns, emergencies, and incidents of interpersonal or self-directed violence. The document will result in a Safety Committee Tool Kit.
- Develop training materials in conjunction with Associate Director of Training & Engagement, including presentation slides, facilitator guides, scenario-based exercises, and evaluation tools.
- Assist with pilot implementation of trainings by observing, collecting feedback, and making revisions.
- Maintain strict confidentiality of any sensitive information encountered during the project.
- Communicate consistently and professionally with staff, clients (as applicable), and other interns.
- Demonstrate cultural humility, empathy, and respect for all individuals regardless of background or identity.
- Be punctual, prepared, and proactive in meetings, supervision, and independent work.
- Be able to work a hybrid schedule with opportunities for both in-person and remote work. Remote work would consist of administrative tasks such as drafting documents, in-person work includes meetings to learn the agency's landscape and collaborate with Safety Committee Co-Chairs. Office locations are in Baltimore City and interns may need to travel to a specific site to gain deeper clarity of needs; therefore personal transportation may be required.

Required Skills:

- Strong Written Communication Skills
 - Ability to write clearly and professionally for a range of audiences (e.g., policy documents, training materials).
- Basic Research and Analysis Skills
 - Comfortable reviewing literature, synthesizing information, and drawing evidence-based conclusions.
- Commitment to Equity and Anti-Oppression Principles
 - Demonstrates awareness of power, privilege, and systemic inequality; open to learning about cultural humility and inclusive practices.
- Professionalism and Confidentiality
 - Ability to handle sensitive information with discretion and adhere to ethical standards.
- Organizational and Time Management Skills

- Able to manage multiple tasks, meet deadlines, and work independently or collaboratively.
- Interest in Intimate Partner Violence Prevention and Trauma-Informed Practice
 - Strong motivation to support the mission of violence prevention and survivor-centered care.

Preferred Skills (if any):

- Experience with Policy or SOP Development
 - Exposure to writing or reviewing formal procedures, especially in nonprofit, healthcare, or crisis-response settings.
- Facilitation or Training Development Experience
 - Experience creating or delivering trainings, especially using interactive or adult-learning approaches.
- Knowledge of Violence Prevention or Public Health Frameworks
 - Familiarity with frameworks like the CDC's Social-Ecological Model, trauma-informed care, or restorative justice.
- Qualitative Data Collection or Analysis
 - Experience conducting interviews, focus groups, or analyzing open-ended responses.
- Multilingual or Cross-Cultural Communication Skills
 - Ability to support training or policy development with consideration of language access or cultural responsiveness.
- Proficiency in Tools like Canva, Google Suite, or Microsoft Office
 - Especially for producing professional-looking training materials and documents.

Work Arrangements (preference for how the selected student will complete the project): Project can be completed through a hybrid model, some time in-person and some time remote.

Is personal transportation required of a selected student?

Yes, for any in-person tasks

Organization: Parks and People

Parks & People has worked since 1984 to build public-private partnerships that sustain and improve Baltimore's parks and green spaces, with a legacy of investing in projects that revitalize green programs that allow children, youth and adults to learn, grow, and explore their natural environment.

Organization Information:

Parks and People, Inc. 2100 Liberty Heights Ave

www.parksandpeople.org

Focus Area: Environmental Challenges

Project Proposal

Project Title: Data-Driven Parks: Measuring Green Space Development

Project Description: This project offers a unique opportunity to contribute to the strategic development of Parks & People's initiatives, focusing on how our green space projects address critical environmental challenges while promoting equitable outcomes. The intern will play a pivotal role in enhancing our ability to measure impact, refine our strategies, and foster stronger internal communication.

Project Goals: (KPIs) that measure how effective park projects are in mitigating environmental challenges like stormwater management, promoting biodiversity, and reducing the urban heat island effect.

- Goal 2 Enhance Program Evaluation: To develop an evaluation plan that systematically gathers evidence on project outcomes, enabling continuous learning and strategic adaptation.
- Goal 3 Streamlining Communication: To streamline and develop a comprehensive system for internal communication of park project information among staff and for external communication to supporters and partners, ensuring consistent, timely, and effective dissemination of project updates and impact

How is this project related to the Initiative's Focus Area?

The intern will develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that specifically measure how park projects contribute to mitigating environmental challenges, including stormwater management, biodiversity, and the urban heat island effect.

Streamlined external communication allows Parks & People to educate the Baltimore community and partners about specific environmental challenges and how park projects are designed to address them. This fosters greater public understanding, support, and engagement in environmental stewardship.

Sustainable practices like native plant landscaping, energy-efficient lighting, and using construction materials with durability and minimal environmental impact will also be assessed.

How will this project benefit the organization?

The developed KPIs and evaluation plan will provide Parks & People with clear, data-driven tools to measure the true impact of our projects, allowing for more informed decision-making and resource allocation.

Our organization will reinforce our reputation as a leader in the promotion of environmental justice and community health. By identifying successful approaches and areas for improvement, the project will directly contribute to the design and implementation of more impactful and equitable green space initiatives across Baltimore.

Ultimately, by ensuring projects are more effective and equitably distributed, this work will lead to healthier, more accessible, and more vibrant green spaces, directly improving the quality of life and environmental resilience for Baltimore residents, especially in underserved communities.

Primary Student Roles and Responsibilities:

- Research: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure the success and impact of park development projects, specifically assessing their contribution to mitigating environmental challenges.
 - Researching and proposing new tools, platforms, or systematic approaches for more effective and consistent internal and external communication of park project information.
- Developing: a framework for future park project evaluations. This includes outlining methodologies for collecting evidence-based data, assessing project effectiveness against established KPIs, and ensuring accountability to both environmental and equity goals.
- Reviewing current methods of internal communication and external communication related to park projects. This involves identifying what information is currently shared, how it's shared, and its frequency.
- Collaborating with staff, supporters, and partners to understand their information needs and identify current communication gaps or inefficiencies. This might involve conducting surveys or informal interviews.

Required Skills:

- Ability to connect and communicate with staff members
- Good time management skills needed to handle multiple tasks
- Ability to establish and maintain cooperative and effective working relationships with others.

Preferred Skills (if any):

N/A

Work Arrangements (preference for how the selected student will complete the project): Project can be completed through a hybrid model, some time in-person and some time remote.

Is personal transportation required of a selected student?

No, public transportation is readily available for in-person tasks.

Organization: Roberta's House, Inc.

Roberta's House is a nonprofit grief support center based in Baltimore City, dedicated to providing compassionate bereavement care, trauma-informed support services, and community education to children, families, and individuals experiencing loss. The organization addresses the emotional, psychological, and public health impact of grief is especially in underserved communities disproportionately affected by trauma, violence, and substance use-related deaths.

Roberta's House offers a wide range of programs, including peer and clinician-led grief support groups, youth empowerment initiatives, homicide survivor advocacy, and crisis response services, with campuses in both Baltimore City and Prince George's County. Through culturally responsive and evidence-based models, Roberta's House works to reduce stigma, promote healing, and foster resilience in the wake of loss.

Organization Information:

928 East North Avenue Baltimore, MD 21205

www.robertashouse.org

Focus Area: Addiction and Overdose

Project Proposal

Project Title: Grief in Action: Educating Communities, Preventing Overdose

Project Description: This project will support Roberta's House in advancing key components of its Opioid Restitution Fund (ORF) work plan by embedding grief-informed approaches into overdose prevention efforts within Baltimore City. The intern will begin by researching the intersection of grief, trauma, and substance use is producing a landscape analysis of current harm reduction programs, grief-focused prevention tools, and educational resources available citywide.

They will use this knowledge to develop:

- A grief-informed volunteer training protocol for use at community tabling and outreach events
- A set of evidence-based, culturally responsive educational materials
- A tracking tool to monitor distribution and community engagement
- A QR code-linked webpage that connects printed materials to digital grief and harm reduction resources

A training guide and follow-up protocol for staff and volunteers administering the BSTAD (Brief Screener for Tobacco, Alcohol, and other Drugs) to youth in Roberta's House programs

The intern will also assist in identifying and reaching out to harm reduction and treatment organizations in Baltimore City to initiate partnership conversations and schedule collaborative meetings. They will support the planning, implementation, and evaluation of at least two large-scale community events, and

help produce public education content for Roberta's House's podcast series and social media platforms to raise awareness about overdose-related grief.

Project Goals: Expand Roberta's House's grief-informed harm reduction strategy through research, outreach, and education

Equip volunteers with evidence-informed materials and training to engage Baltimore City communities in overdose prevention

Strengthen partnerships with harm reduction and treatment providers across Baltimore City

Support youth substance use prevention through evidence-based screening and follow-up education

Promote healing and awareness through community events, resource distribution, and public messaging campaigns

How is this project related to the Initiative's Focus Area?

This project directly addresses the overdose crisis through a grief-informed and youth-centered public health lens. It strengthens prevention efforts by linking grief education with harm reduction tools, increasing access to naloxone, and improving community awareness. The intern will help develop a screening and follow-up protocol for youth using the BSTAD tool, reinforcing early intervention with trauma-informed care. Through community outreach, partnership engagement, and education, this project helps address risk, reduce stigma, and build supportive pathways to healing and recovery.

How will this project benefit the organization?

For Roberta's House, this project will enhance its ability to serve Baltimore City residents impacted by substance use and overdose loss. It will improve outreach strategies, strengthen youth screening and follow-up education protocols, and deepen partnerships with local harm reduction providers.

For the community, the project brings critical prevention tools, grief-informed outreach, and youth-centered strategies to underserved neighborhoods. It fosters healing, increases access to support, and creates meaningful connections between public health efforts and the lived experience of loss due to overdose.

Additional Details:

Work Environment: Hybrid (in-person participation required for events, planning meetings, and partnership outreach in Baltimore City)

Transportation Required: Yes (for local site visits and events)

Timeline: September 2025 - May 2026

Preceptor: Matila S. Jones, Executive Director, Lisa Parker, Family Support Manager

Student Responsibilities Include:

- Research and landscape analysis (grief + opioid, harm reduction providers in Baltimore City)

- Training protocol development for volunteer outreach
- Educational content creation (print and digital)
- Development of QR code/webpage linkage
- Training materials and follow-up protocol for BSTAD youth screening
- Partnership outreach and scheduling
- Event planning, support, and evaluation
- Social media and podcast content development

Primary Student Roles and Responsibilities: Conduct a landscape analysis of harm reduction and treatment programs in Baltimore City

- Research and summarize evidence-based resources on the connection between grief and opioid use
- Develop grief-informed educational materials and support creation of a QR code-linked webpage
- Design a training protocol for volunteers conducting outreach at tabling and community events
- Assist with development of a BSTAD (Brief Screener for Tobacco, Alcohol, and other Drugs) training and follow-up protocol for youth-serving staff
- Create and test a distribution tracking system for educational materials and harm reduction kits
- Support the planning, coordination, and implementation of at least two large-scale community events
- Contribute to the creation of podcast content and social media campaigns focused on overdose prevention and grief awareness
- Assist in contacting Baltimore-based harm reduction and treatment providers to schedule partnership conversations

Required Skills:

- Strong written and verbal communication
- Experience conducting literature reviews or basic program research
- Interest in public health, addiction, or grief/mental health
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively with a multidisciplinary team
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) and/or Google Workspace

Preferred Skills (if any):

- Familiarity with trauma-informed or grief-informed care
- Experience creating educational materials or outreach tools
- Basic understanding of harm reduction principles or public health policy
- Familiarity with youth development or screening tools (e.g., BSTAD)
- Experience with social media content creation or podcast production
- Comfort with community engagement, including outreach or tabling

Work Arrangements (preference for how the selected student will complete the project): Project can be completed through a hybrid model, some time in-person and some time remote.

Is personal transportation required of a selected student?

Yes, for any in-person tasks.

Organization: Shepherd's Clinic

At Shepherd's Clinic, our mission is transformative, centered on delivering healthcare to individuals caught in a challenging gap isthose unable to afford commercial insurance yet ineligible for government assistance. Recent patient surveys underscore our critical role in providing accessible healthcare, with 48% revealing they would resort to emergency room care if Shepherd's Clinic were unavailable. Our comprehensive approach encompasses medical, behavioral health, and wellness services, targeted programs, social determinants of health (SDOH), and case management. Together, these elements form a robust continuum of care, ensuring we address our community's diverse and interconnected needs.

Organization Information:

2800 Kirk Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21218

<https://shepherdsclinic.org/>

Focus Area: Adolescent Health**Project Proposal****Project Title:** Youth Wellness Collaborative: Empowering Teens Through Health Education

Project Description: This project will launch a youth wellness education initiative in partnership with Baltimore-area schools or youth organizations. The intern will lead the development of a workshop series focused on topics such as nutrition, physical activity, mental health, stress management, sleep hygiene, and social-emotional resilience. The workshops will be designed to be interactive, culturally responsive, and engaging for adolescents, with a strong emphasis on youth voice and equity. The intern will also work with school staff or youth leaders to develop the logistical implementation plan for the workshops. The intern will engage with local community organizations and schools with the goal of cultivating sustainable relationships that can support future programs and collaborative initiatives.

Project Goals: To co-develop and implement a series of wellness workshops focused on adolescent physical and emotional health.

To build sustainable partnerships with local schools and youth-serving organizations.

To empower youth with knowledge and tools to manage stress, build resilience, and make healthier lifestyle choices.

How is this project related to the Initiative's Focus Area?

This project is directly tied to adolescent health by promoting physical and emotional well-being in youth populations. The workshops will not only educate, but will actively support healthy adolescent development, empower youth with lifelong skills, and contribute to the broader goal of creating healthier, more resilient young people in our communities. By partnering with schools and youth organizations, the project will also support protective factors like school engagement, participation in community programs, positive peer relationships, and opportunities for meaningful youth experiences.

How will this project benefit the organization?

The project supports Shepherd's Clinic's mission to advance community wellness by expanding outreach and preventive education to youth is a group currently underserved in free clinic environments. It builds relationships with community partners and plants the seeds for longer-term adolescent health programming. For the Baltimore community, it creates an immediate benefit by providing free, accessible, youth-friendly wellness education that can improve teens' health literacy, mental well-being, and school and community connectedness.

Workshops may be held at partner sites (schools, rec centers, etc.) or the Joy Wellness Center.

Content will be created in consultation with Shepherd's staff and community health professionals.

Topics may include: nutrition and hydration, physical activity, mindfulness, stress management, healthy relationships, and emotional health.

Primary Student Roles and Responsibilities: Conduct an environmental scan of existing youth wellness efforts in the area

- Meet with school/youth org leaders to plan workshop logistics
- Develop workshop content (slides, handouts, activities)
- Coordinate and facilitate at least one pilot workshop
- Evaluate the impact of workshops through participant feedback and staff reflections

Required Skills:

- Strong interpersonal communication
- Public health knowledge related to adolescent development
- Experience in lesson or workshop planning
- Basic data collection and evaluation methods

Preferred Skills (if any):

- Experience working directly with youth or in school settings
- Familiarity with trauma-informed or culturally responsive practices
- Spanish or other language proficiency a plus
- Graphic design or Canva experience (for materials)

Work Arrangements (preference for how the selected student will complete the project): Project can be completed through a hybrid model, some time in-person and some time remote.

Is personal transportation required of a selected student?

No, public transportation is readily available for in-person tasks.

Organization: The 6th Branch

Since our founding in 2010, The 6th Branch (T6B) is dedicated to addressing environmental challenges, particularly those related to green space access, to empower and connect Baltimore communities. T6B tackles these environmental challenges head-on by transforming vacant areas into vibrant urban farms that grow and distribute free produce to neighbors while also implementing food access initiatives that make nutritious food accessible to all Baltimore residents. This project specifically targets historically marginalized, food-insecure communities in East Baltimore, advancing equity by reducing systemic barriers to access to healthy food.

Through deep, lasting relationships with local leaders, what started as a veteran service club evolves into a nonprofit organization that grows and distributes over three tons of free, farm-fresh produce to communities each year and establishes the SHARE network, a discounted food box program spanning 11 food-insecure Baltimore neighborhoods. T6B attends community events and meetings in the neighborhoods we serve. It has created a network of partners, including 31 community organizations and religious institutions, 11 neighborhood associations, nine local government entities, and three schools. In 2024, we host 75 events at three community farms, including produce giveaways (with 500 attendees), community festivals (with 300 attendees), and educational workshops (with 240 attendees), to ensure these farms serve as hubs for community connection. Our goal is to empower neighbors to come together, receive support, volunteer for their community, and feel empowered to improve their neighborhood's green spaces and access to food.

Organization Information:

1400 Greenmount Ave F04, Baltimore, MD 21202

<https://www.the6thbranch.org/>

Focus Area: Food Systems for Health

Project Proposal

Project Title: Engaging Community for Farm-Fresh Food Access in East Baltimore

Project Description: East Baltimore, like other parts of the city, is part of the "Black Butterfly" is a term coined by Lawrence T. Brown, Ph.D., to describe Baltimore's historically underserved and segregated Black communities in its eastern and western halves. The neighborhoods targeted by this project, within Greenmount East and zip codes 21202 and 21213, continue to face systemic disinvestment and economic challenges.

Greenmount East vs Baltimore City

- Percentage of households earning less than \$25,000 = 45.7% vs 25.6%
- Percentage of children living below the poverty line = 42.2% vs 27.9%

- Unemployment rate = 13.5% vs 7.5%
- Deaths per 10,000 = 37 vs 28
- SNAP participation = 38.1% vs 19.8%

Greenmount East has 3,450 SNAP participants and a high density of Healthy Food Priority Areas, indicating that residents have limited to no access to affordable, nutritious food. These communities have an abundance of liquor stores and corner stores selling processed, unhealthy options but no full-service grocery stores. Residents must travel long distances to go to a grocery store or rely on high-cost, low-nutrition food options, contributing to diet-related health disparities.

Community leaders in Greenmount East continue working tirelessly to address this need. In collaboration with these leaders, The 6th Branch (T6B) distributes the produce grown on community farms to residents each week for free. Additionally, it will offer discounted meat and produce on a monthly basis across Baltimore through the SHARE program. However, there is a considerable need for local, accessible, and empowering fresh food options for residents of East Baltimore.

This farm-fresh food initiative seeks to directly address this gap by providing a consistent and reliable source of nutritious, all-natural food while also supporting local farmers and food businesses. This project has been built at the grassroots level over the past three years by The People's Association of Oliver Community's (TPA) Food Access Committee in collaboration with T6B and Health Care for the Homeless. However, while we have the connection to communities, we do not have the capacity to conduct the community engagement work and site research needed to ensure that farm fresh food can be sourced and distributed in alignment with community needs (food preferences, accessibility, and more). We seek a graduate student to support our community engagement research, which aims to directly inform strategies for combating food apartheid. This project serves as a vital step in ensuring that East Baltimore residents have equitable access to the food they deserve. We welcome your support.

Project Goals:

The primary goal of this project is to expand equitable access to fresh, nutritious, and culturally relevant food in East Baltimore by building a sustainable, community-informed distribution model. Through targeted engagement and research, the project aims to support the Bloomberg Initiative's cross-cutting public health themes by focusing on EQUITY (in addressing food apartheid), EVIDENCE (through community-based participatory research), and POLICY (laying the groundwork for potential advocacy and food system policy shifts).

1. Identify Community Food Needs and Preferences: Understand what types of food residents want and need, how they prefer to access it, and what barriers they face through direct community engagement and participatory research.
2. Map Viable Food Distribution Sites: Conduct site research to identify locations where farm-fresh food can be reliably sourced and distributed within Greenmount East and its surrounding neighborhoods.

3. Support Local Food Systems: Strengthen connections between East Baltimore residents, local farmers, and food businesses to promote economic sustainability and community ownership.
4. Inform Long-Term Food Justice Strategies: Provide actionable data and recommendations that can guide the development of policies, partnerships, and infrastructure to combat food apartheid in historically disinvested communities.

How is this project related to the Initiative's Focus Area?

This project is rooted in the urgent need to address food apartheid and the long-term health impacts it creates for residents of East Baltimore. In the neighborhoods of Greenmount East, decades of disinvestment have left behind more liquor stores than grocery stores, forcing families to rely on fast food, corner stores, or distant grocery stores for their daily meals. These limited options contribute to high rates of chronic illness, including diabetes, hypertension, and obesity, that disproportionately affect low-income Black communities. This student-supported project ensures that solutions are developed with the community, not for them, increasing sustainability and impact.

Through this project, we continue to work on changing that by listening directly to residents about what kinds of fresh food they want, as well as where and how they can access it, to make eating healthy foods a more realistic and sustainable option in their lives. This research guides us in building a food distribution model that isn't imposed from the outside but designed with and for the people it serves. By learning what matters most to the community, from cultural preferences to mobility barriers, we help make fresh, healthy food more accessible, more affordable, and ultimately more effective in improving community health across East Baltimore communities.

How will this project benefit the organization?

This project enables The 6th Branch (T6B) and, more broadly, The People's Association of Oliver's Food Access Committee to take a step we've long known was needed but haven't had the capacity to undertake fully. While we have strong relationships with community leaders, a vast network of partners, and deep experience with community engagement, we simply haven't had the time or staffing to carry out the level of research and intentional listening this work deserves. A dedicated researcher enables us to slow down, ask the right questions, and gather the necessary information to ensure that our future food distribution reflects what East Baltimore residents want and need. Findings from this work also support local food policy and zoning reform efforts by providing evidence from the community on barriers to food access.

For the committee, the findings is also useful for the project's sustainability. With a clearer understanding of local preferences, barriers, and distribution opportunities, we'll be better equipped to implement solutions that will last in the long term. This research also strengthens future grant proposals that will support the implementation of this project.

For the community, this project ensures that the specific needs of Greenmount East residents shape every aspect of future food distribution in their neighborhood. This project centers on the experiences of Greenmount East residents, many of whom have been navigating food apartheid for generations, and provides them with an opportunity to define what access, affordability, and dignity should look like. In the long term, this project also contributes to improving community health, enhancing local economic opportunities, and increasing access to nutritious food.

Primary Student Roles and Responsibilities: Given the 100-hour limit, the intern will focus on survey design, data collection, and analysis. The 6th Branch team will lead logistics and follow-up outreach. The student will receive weekly check-ins and on-site mentorship from Curtis Ritz and Saj Dillard, including participation in staff meetings and strategy sessions.

The project aims to collect responses from at least 250 community members and assess a minimum of 6 viable food distribution sites, culminating in a set of community-informed recommendations.

Expected Timeline:

- Sept - finalize engagement tools;
- Oct-Nov - distribute and collect surveys;
- Dec-Jan - analyze results;
- Feb-Mar - develop recommendations and site strategy;
- Apr-May - present findings to partners and community.

Expected Tasks:

- Edit and expand the current community engagement survey that is focused on gathering demographic data as well as needs and priorities related to sources of farm-fresh food
- Creation and distribution of materials for survey promotion (distribution will be assisted by the 6th Branch staff)
- Lead door-knocking campaigns for survey promotion (The 6th Branch staff will support)
- Provide an analysis of survey results and takeaways
- Research and expand the current list of potential sites for food distribution

Required Skills:

- **Community Engagement Experience:** Demonstrated ability to build relationships with community members, conduct interviews or surveys, and engage respectfully with historically disinvested communities.
- **Qualitative Research Skills:** Experience designing and implementing research methods such as focus groups, interviews, or community listening sessions.

- **Strong Written and Verbal Communication:** Ability to synthesize research findings clearly and concisely for community audiences in accessible formats, such as presentations, one-pagers, or visual summaries, for non-academic audiences.
- **Cultural Humility & Equity Lens:** Deep understanding of systemic racism and food apartheid, with a commitment to equity-driven, anti-oppressive practices.
- **Organizational and Time Management Skills:** Comfort managing timelines and working with multiple partners, while coordinating with a small team.
- **Data Collection and Analysis:** Competence in gathering, organizing, and analyzing community-based data using Excel, SPSS, or R, especially related to food justice and retail.
- **Flexibility and Adaptability:** Willingness to adjust methods and timelines based on feedback from community partners and stakeholders.

Preferred Skills (if any):

- **GIS or Mapping Experience:** Ability to use mapping tools to visualize food access disparities or document potential food distribution sites.
- **Familiarity with Baltimore Neighborhoods:** Especially communities in East Baltimore or 21202/21213 zip codes.
- **Multilingual Abilities:** Especially in Spanish or other languages commonly spoken in East Baltimore communities.
- **Experience with Urban Agriculture or Food Systems Work:** Prior work with food justice, farmers markets, food hubs, or community gardens.

Work Arrangements (preference for how the selected student will complete the project): Project should be completed primarily in-person.

Is personal transportation required of a selected student?

Yes, for any in-person tasks.

Organization: The Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition (HEBCAC)

Since 1994, HEBCAC has been dedicated to strengthening and supporting East Baltimore's neighborhoods, fostering diversity, and preserving the area's rich history while building a brighter future. Serving a 220-block area bounded by Edison Highway, Aisquith Street, North Avenue, and Fayette Street, we remain committed to empowering residents and driving positive community change. Our programs and initiatives provide essential resources to help individuals achieve economic self-sufficiency while driving projects that enhance the value and livability of East Baltimore's neighborhoods. From educational programs and emergency shelter to community beautification efforts, our work is guided by the needs and aspirations of the community we serve.

Organization Information:

1212 N Wolfe St. Baltimore, MD 21213

<https://www.hebcac.org/>

Focus Area: Environmental Challenges

Project Proposal

Project Title: Roots & Renewal: Beautifying and protecting neighborhood green spaces in East Baltimore

Project Description: Through neighborhood beautification and stewardship of vacant lots, pocket parks, rain gardens, and tree pits, HEBCAC is leading a resident-centered response to these challenges that promotes environmental justice, neighborhood pride, and healthier, more livable blocks. This project will support the development of cooler, greener public spaces by installing café lighting (with planters holding poles on each block), and maintaining neighborhood greenspaces such as rain gardens, tree pits, and pocket parks that support native species. The BAP Intern will work closely with HEBCAC's community organizer to support these initiatives through environmental planning, outreach, and organizing.

Project Goals: Installation of Café Lights on 5 city blocks in the Milton-Montford Neighborhood.

Successful implementation of greenspace maintenance and beautification through the 2026 Spruce Up Grant, Chesapeake Bay Community Grant, and BGE Community Safety Grant.

How is this project related to the Initiative's Focus Area?

East Baltimore communities face acute environmental challenges, including the impacts of climate change and the urban heat island effect, exacerbated by decades of disinvestment and a lack of green infrastructure. Research shows that around 45% of Baltimore's population lives in areas where urban heat islands increase temperatures by at least 8°F. Recent mapping shows that parts of East Baltimore regularly experience surface temperatures 8-10°F higher than greener areas of the city. Neighborhoods in East Baltimore experience some of the highest heat levels, while greener areas like those near Gwynns Falls Park stay significantly cooler. These elevated temperatures, combined with high asthma rates and poor air quality, highlight the urgency of designing healthier, more climate-resilient communities. This project will support the development of cooler, greener public spaces by installing café lighting (with

planters holding poles on each block), and maintaining neighborhood greenspaces such as rain gardens, tree pits, and pocket parks that support native species.

How will this project benefit the organization?

For each of our greening and beautification efforts, permission from residents and property owners is necessary to move forward. This aspect of organizing is time consuming and difficult as there are many absentee property owners in Baltimore City who don't live in the city and are not always attentive to their properties. This project will add much needed capacity to HEBAC's Community Organizing Efforts in East Baltimore. Resident leadership values the beautification of city blocks and neighborhood green spaces (pocket parks, vacant lots, tree pits, etc.) and HEBAC's funding and implementation invests in historically underinvested neighborhoods. This project will enhance HEBAC's year-round Community Organizing work, which combines safety interventions and neighborhood beautification to improve quality of life. The BAP intern will provide essential support to our block-by-block approach is helping coordinate greening initiatives, promote long-term site stewardship, and deepen resident involvement across public spaces, from vacant lots and bus stops to sidewalks and school-adjacent areas. Their efforts will help strengthen neighborhood leadership, build relationships with property owners, and make long-lasting improvements to both environmental and social health.

Primary Student Roles and Responsibilities: The BAP Intern will work closely with HEBAC's community organizer to support these initiatives through environmental planning, outreach, and organizing.

Tasks will include:

Using tools like CodeMAP and SDAT to identify and engage property owners;

Drafting outreach materials about greening efforts and neighbor letters;

Collecting resident and property owner signatures for permission and site access;

Co-developing a "Block Captain" training to support sustained resident leadership;

Documenting progress through blog writing and storytelling.

As mentioned, the intern will provide essential support to our block-by-block approach is helping coordinate greening initiatives, promote long-term site stewardship, and deepen resident involvement across public spaces, from vacant lots and bus stops to sidewalks and school-adjacent areas. Their efforts will help strengthen neighborhood leadership, build relationships with property owners, and make long-lasting improvements to both environmental and social health. This internship provides a hands-on opportunity to address climate resilience, urban planning, and equitable green space development by centering community voices in the creation of healthier, more connected neighborhoods.

Required Skills:

Strong written and verbal communication skills

- Ability to draft outreach letters, write blogs, and engage effectively with residents and stakeholders.

Partnership experience

- Familiarity with working in partnership with residents or community groups to advance local initiatives.

Basic research and data collection skills

- Ability to use tools like CodeMAP, SDAT, and other public databases to gather and organize property information.

Interest in environmental justice, sustainability, or urban planning

- Commitment to addressing climate and environmental challenges in historically under-resourced neighborhoods.

Ability to work independently and collaboratively

- Comfort balancing field work with administrative tasks, and contributing to a small, community-based team.

Preferred Skills (if any):

Experience with GIS mapping or spatial analysis tools

- Useful for visualizing property data, green space opportunities, or heat island impact areas.

Graphic design or communications skills

- Ability to design simple flyers, outreach materials, or infographics to support resident engagement.

Knowledge of East Baltimore neighborhoods or similar urban communities

- Familiarity with local history, assets, and challenges enhances relational trust and context-based planning.

Work Arrangements (preference for how the selected student will complete the project): Project should be completed primarily in-person.

Is personal transportation required of a selected student?

No, public transportation is readily available for in-person tasks.