Lost-N-Found Youth GED Academy

MSW Students: Anna D’Andrea, Brittany Garner, Jaime Hunn, Meredith Kelly, Austin Tadlock

We partnered with Lost-N-Found Youth (LNFY) to create a sustainable, in house GED program. We researched how GED programs typically run, the capacity of homeless LGBTQ youth GED programs, and best practices associated with homeless youth, LGBTQ at-risk youth and GED programs. From our research, we developed a program and volunteer manual that detail the best ways to work with LNF youth how the GED program is to be run. We held three separate fundraising events and garnished donations from other LNFY fundraisers. Our initial goal was to raise $2,000 for the program, but we exceeded the goal and raised a total of $3,172. We have successfully developed comprehensive manuals, have recruited a number of volunteers who want to be involved in the implementation of the GED program, and we have several youth who are interested in being in the first GED class at LNFY. Through this project, we have provided a comprehensive framework for the agency to effectively guide youth in a safe and inclusive environment to success.

Fight for the Right to a Living Wage

MSW students: Larance Carter, Isaac Davis, Misty Novitch

Our group worked with ATL Raise Up, a local chapter of the larger Fight for $15 movement nationwide, to help raise the minimum wage to $15.00 per hour. We assisted ATL Raise Up by gathering over 500 petition signatures with accompanying contact information of interested and supportive students and others. These contacts were later called and asked to participate in events and actions to support the Fight for $15. We gave several presentations to various student organizations and clubs about this issue. We also organized and held an event at Georgia State University (GSU) featuring a panel of low-wage workers who spoke about their experience, which was well-attended. Lastly, we generated an oped in the GSU paper, the Signal, about the Fight for $15, and generally increased awareness and support for a $15.00 minimum wage at GSU campus. We learned that the raising the minimum wage to $15.00 is a long overdue idea that low-income families and our larger economy need, but that there are also a lot of myths out there about raising the wage that many people have accepted as fact so this is an important piece to consider in trying to build support to raise the wage.

The Lowery Institute Community Project

MSW Students: Courtney Campbell, Trey Cason, Lindsay Greenwald, Sarah Lacy, Haley Landreth

Our group partnered with the Lowery Institute to establish a framework for the evaluation of their Change Agent Violence Initiative Program. The program utilizes intergenerational knowledge transfer and servant leadership to instill the principles of non-violence in vulnerable youth. After familiarizing ourselves with the program curriculum, change agents, and partner
schools, we met consistently with the program directors and explored literature concerning the communication barriers, emotional intelligence divides, and limited community engagement between younger and older generations. With the insight gained through the research, we developed a Logic Model as a platform for measuring the program’s effectiveness on the elementary school children, while also developing sequential pre-, mid-, and post-program surveys to measure the impact of the program on the college students who serve as the change agents. The outcome of this project has taught us the significance of quality evaluation to determine the integrity of a program and the significance of a comprehensive mission statement to guide program implementation.

**Marta Day 2016**

MSW Students: Anita Mbiye, Danielle Currie, Jacquelyn Gilliard, Jamishia Turner, and Keneshia Woodson

Our group assisted the Multi-Agency Alliance for Children (MAAC) to recreate the third Marta Day event for 2016. We partnered with MAAC staff members and youth who were members of MAAC’s empowerment program. The purpose of Marta Day was to teach youth aging out of foster care how to properly utilize/maximize public transportation. The purpose was also to raise awareness for the importance of the youth to learn how to utilize public transportation. We accomplished the tasks of creating flyers, a press release, distributed invite emails, created Marta routes, managed RSVP’s, requested donations, fundraised, and managed social media (Facebook and Twitter). The Marta Day event was held April 2, 2016 where 33 youth were present. The youth enjoyed the Marta day event and shared that they would have liked more time, enjoyed riding the train, enjoyed the different stops, and more people should be told about the event. The Marta Day event taught us the importance of preparation, consistent communication, identifying roles, compromising, and flexibility.

**Georgia Farmers’ Market Association:**

**The Food Dignity Campaign**

MSW Students: Kaitlin Chapman, Jackie Cox, Anquenetta Kenon, Lora Knudsen, and Johnathon Skinner

Our group partnered with the Georgia Farmers’ Market Association to create a campaign centered on helping SNAP recipients to feel dignified in their use of SNAP, and inform the general population that dignity can be maintained in the use of SNAP. Through the course of the semester, our team created and maintained a social media campaign, collected quotes from SNAP recipients for a poster series to be created later in the year, and ultimately created and released a video, with the help of a professional videographer, that emphasized the concept of “food dignity” and the necessity of SNAP in America. Although we faced some challenges along the way, our final product was recognized by the agency as a huge success, and the Georgia Farmers’ Market Association hopes to do a full release of the video and poster campaign later this year.
Childspring’s Social Media Campaign  
MSW students: Vielka Givens, Anntonette Gunter, Agatha Rodriguez, Sarah Spinks

Our group worked with Childspring International to further enhance the funding and marketing within this non-profit organization. We worked along with another MSW student from Georgia State University to research and apply for grants that best fit the work Childspring International is conducting. We participated in the annual Gala, which is Childspring International’s biggest fundraiser event. We also created a separate online fundraiser through Generosity, in which the funds will support a surgery of a child sponsored by Childspring International. From the marketing aspect we controlled all social media accounts where we were able to draw in the attention of more followers and promote the work and events of Childspring International. We were able to learn a great deal about the complexities of funding a nonprofit and dedication to a successful social media campaign.

Expressions: In the Works of Art  
MSW Students: Luxury Bryant, Kendra Sims, O’Neisha Smith, Rykita Taylor, Yvonne Thompson

Our group partnered with Crosswalk Ministries to make a promotional video for their ARTreach 180 program. The primary objective of this partnership was to assist the agency in making a multipurpose video that grasps how the program utilizes art therapy as a mode of preventative intervention for at-risk youth. We assisted the agency in educating community residents and stakeholders about the benefits ARTreach180 has brought to the Henry County area. To do so, we interviewed the past and current youth in the program, parents, teachers, and probation officers. Furthermore, we collected quantitative data from youth participating in the program to summarize the satisfaction and suggested improvements. The outcome of our project brought awareness to the success of ARTreach 180 and how it has impacted many adolescents and the Henry County School district. While working on this project, we have learned the importance of afterschool programs and allowing youth to positively express themselves through art therapy.

City of Clarkston: Town Hall Meeting  
MSW Students: Montinique Paschal, Lauren Manning, Courtney Martin, Sarah Serluco, Tramayne Willingham

Our group partnered with United Way of Greater Atlanta (UWGA) to evaluate one of the communities that have a high ratio of residents who are facing everyday challenges. The city of Clarkston was chosen because of their unique refugee population, which faces many barriers and difficulties. The evaluation was conducted through strengths and needs assessment via open forum and surveys, thus giving all residents a place to voice their concerns. To prepare for the event, we researched UWGA and the city of Clarkston through the Internet, participate in windshield tours, and met with community members and key stakeholders. An event location was secured, flyers were distributed, and needs assessments completed. Through open dialogue, the residents participated in the meeting by completing surveys, which focused on demographic
features and life limitations. Overall outcomes included a better understanding of the language barriers, education, transportation issues and lack of safety within the community.

**Alzheimer’s Advocacy**

MSW Students: Megan Jerram, Melanie Doctor, Victoria Helmly, Charlotte Nash and Leigh Webb

Our group worked with the Alzheimer’s Association (AA) Rope Line Advocates program; our primary concern was to evaluate the program. We worked with AA to create and distribute a survey for the Advocacy training that focused on both the training itself and the advocates experiences at Awareness Day and working the Rope Line. We compiled the data received from that survey and formulated suggestions for AA to help shape the program. We designed a rack card for the advocacy program to aid in marketing the advocacy institute. We attended Awareness Day on February 18 and several days throughout March to help with the rope line.

**Evaluating the Gwinnett Coalition for Health & Human Services’ Great Days of Service**

MSW students: Tashnique Artrey, Joylan Jones--Solomon, Natashia Lee, Kierra Spivey

Our group partnered with the Gwinnett Coalition for Health & Human Services to conduct a program evaluation to assess the recruitment, promotion, and execution of the Gwinnett Great Days of Service (GDOS). GDOS is a two-day service event consisting of over 400 projects designed to increase community awareness for the agencies and organizations represented and supported by Gwinnett Coalition. We distributed more than 200 surveys to corporate partners and volunteers who participated in the service days, in addition to evaluating Gwinnett Coalition’s social media platforms, participant incentives and administrative structure. We provided Gwinnett Coalition with a concise written report detailing the findings from the program evaluation and providing ten recommendations to improve the event’s implementation. A significant lesson learned from this partnership is the importance of adequate survey distribution, as surveys truly represent the most important voices.

**Community Conscious Action Oriented Students in the Community (CCAO)**

MSW Students: Jirmiah Leverette, Leanna Patterson, Kimberly Powell

The organization that we chose for our community project is Youth Enhancement Services (YES). YES is a non-profit organization based in Atlanta, GA that serves inner city teens and young adults. The goal of YES is to help these students obtain their GED while empowering them and building job readiness skills for the workforce. We chose this particular organization due to our desire and passion to serve students of this particular background. Our primary objective with this partnership was to create a long lasting relationship between GSU and YES. Tasks that we accomplished included tutoring students; and we created an impactful and memorable Career Fair that encouraged students to further pursue their education, and provided exploration of potential careers that are available. The outcome of the project was a major
success, and students were inspired to continue their education. Through this experience, we learned the importance building a maintaining strong relationships with community stakeholders.