City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Resilience

Marcus Brown, Alicia Dawkins, Alexandria Garland, Samantha Lee, Gloria Woodard

Our group worked with the City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Resilience and their action item, 2.2.3 Workforce agency, Gangstas to Growers. This agency was started by Abiodun Henderson, who wanted a way to help reduce the rate of recidivism among youth, who range from ages 18 to 24 and have been formerly incarcerated. Gangstas to Growers is a program that provides a living wage, while the youth learn agricultural skills, financial planning, and the importance of civic engagement. Our group developed a logic model, intake form, resource guide, researched grants, and helped to fundraise $2760 for the program.

Boys and Girls Clubs Community Project

Jennifer Coates, Hannah Jones, Olivia Kemp, Abby McCormick, and Jessica McGinnis

Our group worked with the Boys and Girls Clubs Georgia Alliance (BGCXA) to raise awareness about the need for after-school interventions in Georgia and the impact of Boys and Girls Clubs on children and communities throughout the state. We conducted interviews and focus groups with students from local clubs, created a promotional video, analyzed the alliance's social media platforms, created a social media communications plan, and created a reproducible fact sheet. All of our deliverables and project outcomes were aimed to educate supporters and the general public about the wide scope of impact that Boys and Girls Clubs have on children and that most of their after-school programs are outside metro Atlanta. Our time with the BGCXA taught us about the importance of incorporating research into everyday work and the importance of educating others.

Healthy Kids Day 2018

Zalia Dunbar, Megan Jennings, Crystal Crane, Te’Era Durant-Southerland, Kimberly Chambers

We partnered with East Lake Healthy Connections to help plan and implement a health fair for the surrounding community of East Lake on April 21, 2018. We marketed the event on social media via Facebook and Twitter. We were able to confirm 8 vendors and stuff 175 flyers for distribution to the residential units at East Lake Village. The impact of the health fair for the East Lake Community could be large, and families can learn some new ways to be healthy together as a family unit. We learned that being flexible is important when planning a large event as things can change and new directions can be taken.
Georgia Advocacy Office: Gaps in Services for Children with Special Healthcare Needs (CSHN)

MSW Students: Amal Alharbi, Bianca Arnold, Melanie Christian, Jennifer Dyson, and Elizabeth Snarey

Our group worked alongside the Georgia Advocacy Office (GAO) work to identify the gaps in home and community based services (HCBS) available to youth with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD). Specifically, Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) services. We developed a survey that was sent out to families by way of the Children’s Freedom Initiative (CFI) partners, interviewed CFI partners, and interviewed families with children experiencing disabilities. Our survey was completed by 111 participants. Additionally, our group obtained the personal accounts and experiences of five families. The results of the survey were then coded for major themes, and demographic information was collected as well. The purpose of this data collection was the desire to turn this information into a legislative brief.

POLST Agents of Change

MSW Students: Sarah Collett, Jeff Duckworth, Virginia Hurst, Meredith Karel and Georgia Pennington

Students of Georgia State University partnered with Georgia POLST Collaborative (GPC) as a community project to promote advance care planning (ACP) in the long-term care setting. The anticipated outcome included the creation of a pilot program that will assist GPC in grant opportunities and future program development. The pilot program was implemented at Jewish Home Life Communities (JHLC) in Atlanta, Georgia. Throughout this project, qualitative and quantitative data was gathered evaluating the demographics of individuals who were willing to complete a Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) or Advance Directive (AD) document. Also, data served in assessing barriers to the delivery, education, and completion of ACP conversations for residents at JHLC skilled nursing and independent living facilities. Students completed pre- and post-test surveys, as well as, facilitated ACP conversations with families and residents to transfer ADs to POLST documents. At the completion of this Community Project, students provided GPC qualitative and quantitative findings to use in their grant applications while also providing JHLC recommendations for policy implementation to promote and sustain the use of POLST. The impact this project will have on the future of JHLC is to have established a procedure to assist staff in ensuring their residents receive more of the care they want and less of the care they do not, by having a plan at the end-of-life (EOL). Students learned that future education efforts are needed to establish sustainability and deliver knowledgeable practice to residents, their families, and in honoring their EOL goals and wishes.
**Resources for the Homeless**

MSW Students: Dayna Martin, Jessica Tarver, Karen Wade, Terresha Anthony

We partnered with Integrity Transformation Community Development Incorporation to create a resource guide. The primary tasks accomplished were the creation of the resource binder, a needs assessment survey, and an exit survey for the graduates of the program. The group was able to provide the staff of ITCDC with tools to gather pertinent information to assist clients with locating resources that will stabilize their lives in order to prepare them to reenter the workforce. The group learned how to develop and administer a needs assessment survey, research and create partnerships with other agencies, and how to manage a project from start to finish.

**The Matthew Initiative’s Lip Sync Battle**

Tyler-Leah Jackson, Alayna Sipple, Amelia Sosa-Johns, Amanda Wishon, & Alex Yancey

Our group worked with The Matthew Initiative, a non-profit organization that works to revitalize children’s ministries in struggling churches, on their spring event, Lip Sync Battle. We met biweekly with the organization to discuss ideas for the event, and each member was assigned different responsibilities to contribute to the project. In addition to creating print and digital marketing materials and overseeing the event’s social media promotion, we worked with an outside vendor to create a 3-minute video to be used to share the organization’s story. On April 14, 2018, our group worked with The Matthew Initiative to run Lip Sync Battle by helping with event set-up and break-down, running event check-in, keeping track of all monetary donations and votes, and helping to maintain the flow of the event. In coordinating Lip Sync Battle, our group learned the skills and knowledge required to successfully execute a fundraising event.

**Creating a Narrative around Poverty in North Fulton County**

Benjamin Bell, S. Lauren Broome Burnette, Eden Gebreyohannes-Clay, Quantazia McLaurin, and Craig McLean

Our group worked closely with the North Fulton Poverty Task Force (NFPTF) in order to assist them in creating a narrative around poverty specific to that community. The hope is that, by educating community members around the prevalence and scope of the problem and by humanizing the issue in such a way so as not to politicize it, we can garner significant support for NFPTF’s mission and mobilize the community to combat poverty. We gathered quantitative and qualitative data through: in-depth database exploration including Social Explorer, Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), and the MIT Living Wage Tool; and conducting in person interviews with community members who are living in poverty. We took the information that we collected and conducted a comparison using data from a baseline study from 2000. We analyzed the information and were able to offer recommendations to NFPTF. Our data will help inform and guide the Task Force, along with an independent consultant funded through the United Way, as they work to create an action plan and move forward with their mission. This opportunity has provided us with a better understanding of both the difficulty and importance of fully
understanding the many facets of working with any client system and has offered us insight into the complex barriers that individuals and families suffering from layers of oppression face as they work to become self-sufficient.

**Improving Outcomes for At-Risk Youths to Obtain a General Education Diploma (GED)**

MSW Students: Kimberlee Beasley, Yo Burststein, Gwendolyn Ford, Mercedez Jackson, Betel Mulugeta

Our group worked with Youth Enhancement Services, Inc. (YES) with a primary objective to create a resource guide for the youths and identify funding sources for YES. We researched and identified available resources for housing and employment opportunities, and identified barriers experienced by these at-risk youths to achieve a General Education Diploma (GED). We created a resource guide for the young adults at YES in need of housing and employment. We began the application process for a $5,000 Wal-Mart Community Grant that will fund the YES tutoring program. We secured a partnership between YES and Chris 180 to provide counseling services for the youths at YES. The resource guide, counseling services from Chris 180, a Wal-Mart Community Grant, and additional potential grant funding sources will be invaluable for Youth Enhancement Services, Inc. Through this community project, we have provided the agency with information and funding opportunities that will support the agency’s mission of providing a GED program for at-risk youths. We learned programs that are well structured and addressed the needs and barriers are necessary to make an impact on the lives of these youths.

**ZAMI NOBLA**

Samantha Cushard, Jessica Hicks, Georgia Marshall, Consolata Mwangi, and Zipporah Smith

The title of this Spring 2018 community project is the Beautification Project of the NOBLA-Bigger’s Residential Home for Black lesbian elders. Georgia State Master of Social Work graduate students who worked on this project were Samantha Cushard, Jessica Hicks, Georgia Marshall Consolata Mwangi, and Zipporah Smith. The student group partnered with ZAMI NOBLA (ZN, a National Organization of Black Lesbians on Aging). ZN’s proposal to Georgia State’s School of Social Work was a Beautification Project for the ZN-Bigger’s Residential Home for Black lesbian elders. The student group’s primary objectives were to fundraise as well as recruit volunteers in order to plant and landscape the front and back yards of the home prior to the home’s renovation. Two Black lesbian elders ages 55 and up will be residents of the home upon completion of the renovations. During the project, the project hosted one nutrition workshop for ZN members and guests so that everyone knows how to utilize the plants in the garden. We also fundraised throughout the project and recruited volunteers for a catered April 14, 2018 volunteer planting day where we planted a garden for the community of Black lesbian elders. The lessons the student group learned were leadership and management, public speaking, marketing, fundraising, partnership building, and community and organizational capacity development.

**Saving Our Homes**

MSW Students: Kendra Bethely, Karimah Dillard, Arisa Hara, Ricardo Hernandez
We partnered with the ACORN Home Savers Campaign to help canvas neighborhoods that are heavily impacted by predatory lending in the Atlanta area with the ultimate goal of organizing impacted residents to share their experiences and to network with others. We researched a total of 25 predatory investor companies, which exceeded our original goal of 20 companies. We also door-knocked 87 homes, completed 12 surveys, identified three residents with rent-to-own contracts, and connected those residents to our project supervisor for further assistance to convert to a conventional mortgage. With Atlanta’s current housing market situation where intown development has encouraged gentrification and appreciated housing values, we noted a decrease in contract for deed and other predatory land agreements, resulting in vacant homes and other homes being offloaded to realty companies selling them at or above market rates. Through this experience, we learned of the declining prevalence of contract for deed, the importance of communication, and the challenges of grassroots organizing.

**Giving Kitchen Evaluation**  
Carolyn Abbott, Kirk Gibson, Claire Keifer, Leigh Ann Warfield

Our group worked with the Giving Kitchen to assess its grantee population, their needs, and the impact of the grants on their lives through qualitative and quantitative data collection. We conducted one-on-one interviews with 19 previous grant recipients, asking them a series of 11 questions in meetings that ranged from 15 minutes to two hours. Questions ranged from gaining information on grantee background, crisis situations, impressions of Giving Kitchen, and potential improvements on both the agency and the industry itself. We analyzed demographic data on Giving Kitchen’s grant recipient pool and compared it to the total population of metro-Atlanta restaurant workers. In addition, we constructed a follow up survey informed by the 19 grantee interviews and drawing questions from several peer-reviewed psychometric surveys. The survey will be administered by Giving Kitchen to better assess the needs and demographics of future recipients. As a result of our work, Giving Kitchen will be able to assess the efficacy of its programs and utilize post-test data to apply for grants to fund their projects. They will be able to use qualitative data from interviews to promote their successes via social media and in marketing materials to expand their work to a greater geographic area.

**Evaluation of Orange Duffle Bag Initiatives’ Coaching For College Completion Program**  
MSW Students: Miesha Daniel, Vanessa Griffin, Shannon Tedder, Kutara Wilford

Our group worked alongside Orange Duffle Bag Initiative to evaluate their Coaching For College Completion Program. In order to evaluate this program we tasked ourselves to conduct pre, mid, post surveys and exit interviews, be an advocate while physically attending all 12 sessions, and updating the social media accounts created by ODBI with information and ways in which ODBI is combating this issue and educating the social media world on this issue of lack of education for this population. At the end of the final session we compiled all of the surveys (pre,mid,post, exit interview) and concluded that this program has been effective in the population that they serve with the evidence of an increase in the percentages from the pre evaluation, and themes from exit interview. This community project taught us that given the necessary tools provided through this program, children can complete high school and prepare for postsecondary success regardless of the societal circumstances beyond their control.