



## **2016 Small Grants Awards – Funded Partnerships**

### **STUDENT- COMMUNITY PROJECTS**

#### **The Hero Lab Community Partnership**

Graduate Student: Adil Qureshi, Johns Hopkins Carey Business School  
Community Partner: Siddhi Sundar, The Hero Lab (fiscally sponsored by Fusion Partnership)

The Hero Lab works with at-risk youth between the ages of ten and 21 in low-resource schools in Baltimore with high rates of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), traumatic events including violence, trauma, emotional abuse, and parental incarceration that lead to poor mental health outcomes. Our innovative curriculum uses positive psychology to help youth build agency, self-actualize, and use their strengths to take deep control over their environments. This process has been empirically shown to promote positive mental health. Our model empowers youth to build grit, resilience, hope, optimism, mindfulness, empathy, meaning and purpose while solving self-identified problems in their own lives, their schools, and their communities.

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#### **Embracing Mobile Devices Educate and Engage Individuals to Prevent Diabetes**

Graduate Student: Owais Iqbal, Johns Hopkins Carey Business School  
Community Partner: Glenda Lindsey, Director, Social Justice and Nutrition Inspiration Factory LLC

Educating and engaging individuals is essential to improve health and wellness. Incorporating digital based applications and programs to empower individuals to develop self-management skills has tremendous potential. Unfortunately, increasingly popular evidence-based technologies are out of reach for many Baltimore residents. These scalable platforms can harness the power of technology and mobile devices to increase participation to help individuals develop lifelong skills. Self-management is of paramount importance in preventing diabetes. It is important to educate and empower individuals at risk of developing diabetes because self-care management in the form of a modified diet and physical exercise are first-line interventions. Accordingly, establishing a mobile device enhanced platform to deliver the CDC's Diabetes Prevention Program will be a valuable asset to Baltimore residents.

**Using a Community Based System Dynamics Approach for Neighborhood Disorder and Food Insecurity in Baltimore, MD**

Graduate Student: Yeeli Mui, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health  
Community Partner: Eli Lopatin, Reservoir Hill Improvement Council/Whitelock Community Farm

About 25% of Baltimore residents have limited access to nutritionally adequate and safe foods for an active and healthy life. Regrettably, many also face unfavorable neighborhood conditions such as crime, abandoned buildings, vandalism, and other incivilities. While it has been shown that food security is an important determinant of healthy living, little is known about how neighborhood factors impact access to healthy food options. The proposed study seeks to explore how neighborhood disorder may create a context that influences food outlet owners' decision making. Is a food outlet more likely to operate in one place over another due to unfavorable neighborhood characteristics, subsequently affecting food insecurity for Baltimore residents? Through an interactive, iterative process called group model building, and in partnership with the Reservoir Hill Improvement Council and Whitelock Community Farm, we will work with local stakeholders (food outlet owners, community organizations, city agencies, local shoppers) to collaboratively model the neighborhood system as it relates to disorder and food insecurity in the Reservoir Hill and Penn North communities, as well as draw from perspectives in neighboring communities. We aim to identify and together prioritize key points in the system on which to intervene to improve neighborhood conditions and food security.

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**Opportunities and Challenges on the Road to Recovery: A Qualitative Study Exploring Attitudes and Experiences of Clients in a Community-Based Opioid Treatment Program in Baltimore City**

Graduate Student: Masoumeh Dejman, Post-Doctoral Research Fellow  
Community Partner: Deborah Agus, Behavioral Health Leadership Institute, Inc.

Opioid use disorder is a significant public health problem in the U.S., and a persistent concern in the city of Baltimore. Buprenorphine maintenance therapy is considered safe and effective for the treatment of opioid use disorder, but it is often not accessible to marginalized substance users that are largely disconnected from formal health services. In response to this gap, the Behavioral Health Leadership Institute, a local nonprofit organization, has teamed with Dee's Place, a community peer-recovery center in East Baltimore to implement a harm reduction and community-based buprenorphine treatment model. Despite the innovative nature of this program and positive experiences of many clients, attrition is high and most clients do not complete the program. Reasons for treatment attrition are multifaceted and complex, and few studies have examined in depth the challenges that clients experience in such programs. Through a qualitative research design, this study seeks to explore such challenges and factors relating to access, retention and continuity of care. Such insights will be used to: A. propose strategies to increase retention and improve outcomes in the buprenorphine treatment program at Dee's Place and B. divulge recommendations to other treatment programs and communities in need of more effective care.

## **Restorative Justice Training through Hopkins Community Conferencing**

Graduate Student: Eric Xie, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine  
Community Partner: Lauren Abramson Founder, Community Conferencing Center

Hopkins Community Conferencing (HCC) is a student organization at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine dedicated to sharing information about restorative justice models while building skills around conflict management. HCC is a partner of the Community Conferencing Center (CCC), a community justice organization providing ways for people to prevent and resolve conflicts and crime, with a focus on Baltimore City youth. The CCC has been recognized for its use of restorative justice and conflict management strategies. Through conferencing, participants are connected to a support network and everyone has the opportunity to learn and heal from the incident. Hopkins Community Conferencing seeks to empower medical students to serve the Baltimore community through annual trainings with the CCC to become conference facilitators. These trained facilitators will then conduct conferences across the city providing an alternative to the criminal justice system for Baltimore City youth.

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## **FACULTY- COMMUNITY PROJECTS**

### **BQ LAUNCH PROJECT: Building a Nonprofit Documentary Film Hub in Baltimore**

Faculty Member: Lindsay Thompson, Associate Professor, Johns Hopkins Carey Business School  
Community Partners: Timothy Wolfer, BQ Inc., John Morris, Change4Real Coalition

The purpose of this grant proposal is to fund the launch of an innovative Baltimore-based documentary film production and distribution platform dedicated to empowering the undervalued and “invisible” people of Baltimore and other cities to create, share, and curate the narratives of their own lives and communities. More importantly, the nonprofit business platform will enable the ordinary people behind the news to own and share in the market value of their own stories. Leveraging Baltimore’s “urban unrest” identity along with the expertise of its burgeoning film and media production talent, BQ offers a unique brokerage business model of distribution channels connecting supply and demand sides of high quality documentary film with the potential for building a global media brand anchored in Baltimore. The launch project features a pilot documentary film on underage sex trafficking of children in the Baltimore area. Offered free to organizations and the public, the film is designed as a vehicle for building the business platform and demonstrating the power of film to empower individuals and transform public conscience.

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### **Partnering to Strengthen the Financial Future of Families: Integrating Community-Based Employment Programming into Pediatric Primary Care to Address Child Poverty**

Faculty Member: Barry Solomon, Associate Professor, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine  
Community Partners: Mary Manzoni, Humanim

Childhood poverty is a major cause of health disparity in Baltimore City. At the Johns Hopkins Children’s Harriet Clinic (HLC), we serve a community that is at high risk of financial insecurity, with recent needs

assessment demonstrating one in three families have no household earned income. At the same time, caregivers report difficulty finding jobs and accessing employment services and view their child's primary care clinic as a trusted, convenient resource to receive financial help. Financial Futures for Families (FFF) is an emerging initiative that more completely defines a medical home by seeking to directly alleviate the effect of poverty on child and family health. To this aim, FFF will partner with Humanim, a Baltimore-Based non-profit organization with over 40 years of experience in workforce development. Together, Humanim and FFF will integrate employment resources into the on-site HLC experience to provide caregivers and working-age patients: 1) access to technology and case managers to prepare for and apply for jobs; and 2) employment readiness workshops held in the pediatric medical home. We will evaluate the impact of this collaborative initiative by measuring increase in job applications, gains in securing meaningful employment, and utilization of other community and in-house services aspiring to increase socioeconomic resources to support child health.

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### **Creating Accountability within B'More for Healthy Babies**

Faculty Member: Kelly Bower, Assistant Professor, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health  
Community Partners: Rebecca Dineen, Assistant Commissioner for the Bureau of Maternal and Child Health

The racial inequity in Baltimore's infant mortality rate is unacceptable. Non-Hispanic black infants are nearly two times more likely to die than white infants (2). There are numerous complex factors that contribute to this inequity but institutional racism is at the core. B'more for Healthy Babies (BHB), in partnership with JHUSON faculty, proposes to establish a community advisory board (CAB) with the intent to dismantle structural racism by addressing the uneven power dynamic that many Baltimore women and communities face in maternal and child health programming. We aim to: 1. recruit and train 10 Baltimore City residents to serve on a CAB for BHB; 2. conduct a power analysis with the CAB members to "unpack the systems external to the community that create the internal realities that many people experience" (11) related to the health and wellbeing of pregnant women and babies in Baltimore; 3. Use a community engaged process for the development of a structure under which BHB will be accountable to the CAB in their strategic planning, development of performance indicators, budgeting, and research activities. Ultimately, we hope to design a model that creates greater community accountability and, ultimately, greater health equity for Baltimore City's moms and babies.

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### **Vision for Baltimore Incentive and Awareness Program**

Faculty Member: Megan Collins, Assistant Professor, Johns Hopkins Medicine  
Community Partners: Gabriel Auteri, Baltimore City Health Department-Vision for Baltimore

Vision for Baltimore is a new program to provide school-based vision services to all Baltimore City Public School students in grades preK-8. In an unprecedented partnership between Johns Hopkins, Baltimore City Health Department, Baltimore City Public Schools, Vision To Learn, and Warby Parker, the program

aims to reduce barriers to eye care by providing vision screenings, eye examinations, and prescription eyeglasses at each school, all at no cost to families. While offering this program is a significant step towards reducing inequalities in access to eye care, the only way for the program to succeed in its mission is for children to participate. In the first month of the program, the return rate of consent forms to receive eye exams has been less than 25%. Our goal is to increase consent form return rate to over 90%. The purpose of this proposal is to develop a pilot program to support the Vision for Baltimore program mission of providing eye care and eyeglasses to every student in need. We propose establishing a pilot program to increase awareness of Vision for Baltimore. Our aim is to enhance the Vision for Baltimore program's efficacy by providing participation incentives, creating educational programming to promote eye health awareness, and implementing strategies to encourage eyeglass wear. Ensuring that students have access to vision care will not only enable them to see properly, but also increase their potential to succeed in school.