

Strategic Consultation Grants for Baltimore City

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B'More Engaged Media Training for Opportunity Youth to Improve Food Security During the COVID-19 Outbreak & Beyond

Nina M. Martin, Assistant Scientist, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
Holly Freishtat, Office of Sustainability, Baltimore City Department of Planning

Baltimore City's Office of Sustainability in the Department of Planning is improving its youth-focused programs and policies by including youth in a bottom-up approach to decision making and resource allocation. This means that policymakers are including youth in the policymaking process and allowing them to provide real input into how programs are designed. The requested need is to develop a media and advocacy training specifically for at-risk youth to be able to (1) give media interviews in print or on television, conduct peer-to-peer advocacy, and give public presentations to stakeholders (to policymakers, legislators, donors, etc.).

This curriculum will be developed via a landscape analysis of trainings for opportunity youth in media and advocacy skills in the United States. The training will be implemented and validated in the context of the B'More Engaged Youth Leadership Program (www.bmore-engaged.org). This is an existing program led in collaboration between Director of Food Policy Holly Freishtat, Food Policy Action Coalition leader Alice Huang, JHSPH Assistant Scientist Nina M. Martin, and community leaders Joni Holifield (HeartSmiles) and Michelle Suazo (The Food Project). The results of this effort will be broadly used by Baltimore City to improve youth-led initiatives.

Development of Analytic Plans to Evaluate the Health Impacts of Baltimore's Guaranteed Income Pilot

Lorraine T. Dean, Associate Professor, Department of Epidemiology, Department of Health Policy & Management, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Alexandra Smith, Assistant Deputy Mayor of Equity, Health & Human Services, Office of Equity, Health & Human Services, Baltimore City Mayor's Office

This proposal seeks to continue a successful partnership with the Baltimore City Mayor's Office examining the health impacts of Baltimore's Guaranteed Income (GI) pilot project. We recently presented our results of a literature review and qualitative interviews on the influence of GI projects and health outcomes. We also developed and shared a framework of potential short-term and long-term health outcomes to be evaluated across individual, family, and community levels. In this next phase, we seek input from City leaders to draft analytic plans to evaluate health outcomes to expand available evidence on the health impacts of GI. We propose to create analytic plans for health evaluations, including variables, study designs, resources needed, and

a funding opportunity plan as a menu of options for the Mayor's Office select for implementation. This project will contribute scale-up of GI initiatives, both in Baltimore and across the US, by building the health case, in addition to the economic case, for GI-type cash assistance policies.

Development of A Framework for Centering Health Equity in Baltimore's Guaranteed Income Pilot

Lorraine T. Dean, Associate Professor, Department of Epidemiology, Department of Health Policy & Management, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Tisha Edwards, Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success

Guaranteed income (GI) initiatives have the potential to improve health outcomes and reduce health disparities; however few existing initiatives have assessed health outcomes or social determinants of health, and none have assessed impacts on health disparities. The recent announcement of Baltimore's guaranteed income pilot represents a timely opportunity to consider how GI initiatives can address health. In this application, faculty in public health (Dean) and nursing (Moen) who are also members of the Baltimore Mayor's GI Steering Committee led by the Mayor's Office of Children & Family Success, propose to develop a framework for what health, social determinants, of health, and health disparity indicators might be addressed in a GI pilot and what sources of data might be available for those assessments. Investigators will solicit expert input during key stakeholder interviews and conduct a literature search on GI and other types of cash transfer programs to determine what measurable health outcomes are likely to be influenced by a GI pilot. The final deliverable is a presentation of the framework to the Mayor's Office of Children & Family Success and to the GI Steering Committee as they make decisions about which indicators to include in Baltimore's GI pilot.

Dirt Beneath Our Feet: Assessing Soil Health on Urban Vacant Lots

Katalin Szlavecz, Research Professor, Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, Johns Hopkins Krieger School of Arts & Sciences

Michael Braverman, Commissioner, Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development

The goal of the proposed study is to characterize risks and identify potential beneficial uses of vacant lots by conducting a large scale environmental assessment focusing on of urban soil

health. To achieve this, soil health will be assessed in 200 vacant lots by a combination of in situ soil screening as well as laboratory analyses. Site selection will be prioritized in consultation with the Department of Housing and Community Development that manages vacant lots. Soil contamination levels will be evaluated according to EPA guidelines and background concentration levels in Maryland, and the soil quality results will be reported back to DHCD. Results of this study provides the City a clearer picture to identify areas that can be strategically considered for green space, as well as evaluating conditions in already existing green spaces.

Evidence-Based Solutions for Environmental Equity in Baltimore: Infrastructure, Climate, and Home Flooding

Christopher D. Heaney, Associate Professor, Environmental Health & Engineering, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Linda Batts, Director of Equity and Environmental Justice, Department of Public Works

Baltimore City has requested assistance from technical experts to facilitate data analyses and evaluations to track progress with and guide decision-making to support the recently enacted Equity Ordinance 18-160 to address the present impact of past discrimination in City administered programs and activities. The City's largest agency, the Department of Public Works (DPW), has requested technical assistance from Drs. Heaney, Zaitchik and Harman to improve the quality of its sanitation services as the exclusive provider of safe sanitary drinking water and sewerage services, servicing over 600,000 City residents plus residents from five surrounding counties. In carrying out its work, DPW complies with federal as well as state and local requirements. DPW seeks technical assistance to guide its Equity decision-making about disproportionate environmental and health impacts of basement sewage backups (BSB) and water in cellar (WIC) events across Baltimore City. Specifically, DPW requests that Heaney and his team: (1) perform an analysis of observed risk factors for basement floods associated with sewage backups and other water in cellar (WIC) events; (2) information synthesis from meetings with DPW and neighborhood resident stakeholders to understand challenges and priorities; and (3) identification of potential solutions that reduce flood risk and/or improve response and resilience.

Feasibility and Needs Assessment for Vaccinating Clinic Attendees of the Baltimore City Health Department, Sexual Health Clinic Population, Against HPV

Mary Carol Jennings, MD MPH, Assistant Scientist, Department of International Health;
Academic Director/Core Faculty-General Preventive Medicine Residency Program Academic
Director/Core Faculty, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
Elizabeth Gilliams, Baltimore City Health Department Sexual Health Clinic

This project will support an ongoing Baltimore City Health Department effort to improve and integrate the clinical offerings available at its recently co-located sexual health, vaccination, and family planning clinics in East Baltimore. As the City's sexual health clinic plans to transition to a new economic strategy that bills for services, its leadership is interested in better describing an evidence-based investment case for whether or not to include HPV vaccines in their clinical offerings, to better protect its patient population against cancers and other clinical manifestations of HPV infection. The adult population receiving services at the Eastern sexual health clinic at the Baltimore City Health Department may benefit from the clinic offering HPV vaccination, but the feasibility and case for investment are unclear. The BCHD Eastern Sexual Health Clinic has asked Dr. Jennings to assess stakeholder interest – including for clinicians, administrators, and most importantly patients – and to assess existing data, to develop the case for whether or not it makes sense to invest the time and resources into adding this new service. If our project is selected for funding, it will accomplish the development and presentation of an “investment case” to inform that decision.

Food Access and Diet Quality of Adolescents from SNAP Households in Baltimore City: A Partnership with the Baltimore City Department of Planning

Susan Gross, Associate Scientist, Department of Population, Family and Reproductive Health,
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
Holly Freishtat, Food Policy Director, Baltimore City Department of Planning

In Baltimore City, an estimated one in three young people experience food insecurity, or limited access to safe and nutritious foods. The Baltimore City government is committed to reducing youth food insecurity, and recently submitted an application to implement a pilot of the Summer SNAP Benefits program in 2020, with a particular focus on adolescents ages 14-18. The data collected from this Strategic Consultation Grant (SCG) proposal project will provide the context to inform the results of the evaluation of the Baltimore City Summer SNAP Benefits pilot program. The specific aims of this study are: (1) to examine dietary patterns among food secure and food insecure youth in Baltimore, and (2) to identify environmental and social contextual factors of food-related behaviors among food secure and food insecure youth in Baltimore. We will utilize three main data collection activities—demographics surveys, 24-hour

dietary recalls (24HR), and virtual transect walks—in 30 youth recruited from YouthWorks, Baltimore’s youth employment program. Understanding how adolescents make food choices and access food can lead to community driven solutions that can be translated into policies to help increase food security and improve health equity for the Baltimore City youth.

Impact of Baltimore City's Dockless Vehicle Program on Mobility and Equity

Johnathon Ehsani, Assistant Professor, Department of Health Policy and Management, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Meg Young, Shared Mobility Coordinator, Baltimore City Department of Transportation

Mobility is a key determinant of health, affecting access to medical care, nutritious food and other essentials. Dockless vehicles (including e-scooters, bikeshare and e-bikes) are transforming our urban mobility systems, with the potential to improve access to mobility for those without access to a personal vehicle or living in areas underserved by transit, and displace many short-distance trips now taking place in private motor vehicles. Baltimore City has one of the nation’s most progressive policies on equitable access to dockless vehicles, requiring vendors to redistribute their vehicles on a daily basis to twenty high priority mobility zones. The proposed research will evaluate the impact of Baltimore City’s dockless vehicle program on mobility and equity. Findings will allow city officials to understand the impact of the equity zone policy and refine the regulation in the upcoming legislative session to further advance their goal of improving mobility in underserved areas.

Implementing Healing City Baltimore

David Bishai, Professor, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Tisha Edwards, Executive Director, Mayor’s Office of Children and Family Success, Baltimore City Office of the Mayor

The Elijah Cummings Healing City Act (ECHCA) went into effect on March 10, 2020. It provides for the creation of a Trauma Informed Care Task Force with members from city agencies and the community, training in trauma-informed care for city employees, and a review of current trauma-related policies and procedures across city agencies. This proposal will assist the Mayor’s Office of Children and Family Success in implementing ECHCA and engaging the community and city agencies in a systems approach to executing the provisions of the legislation. We propose to co-develop a systematic approach to setting up the ECHCA’s new task

force by developing objective criteria for the candidacy of each nominee and mapping the various communities engaged by each nominee. We propose to develop systematic strategies to reach constituencies in the community and in city government with communications about how they can become engaged with the provisions of the ECHCA. We propose to assist the steering committee in setting up a real-time system to assess implementation effectiveness.

Ready for School? Supporting Data-Informed Early Childhood Strategies in Baltimore City

Lieny Jeon, PhD, Assistant Professor, Johns Hopkins School of Education

Elizabeth Tung, Program Director of School Readiness, Family League of Baltimore

Young children's school readiness has critical implications for their later health and well-being. Multiple Baltimore city and quasi-city entities put forth efforts to offer various services to birth to age 5 children and families that address children's needs and ultimately improve children's school readiness and later outcomes. As a city-level effort to collectively accomplish the goal of having all Baltimore City children enter school ready to learn, this project seeks to partner with the Baltimore City Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC), a strategic early childhood partnership group. We first propose to support the ECAC to create a Baltimore City early childhood Data Development Agenda, which would help the city to plan and implement data-informed early childhood policies and practices. The data development agenda would be used by ECAC partners in the next five years to establish a stronger city-level data system. In addition, we will use existing data on seven Baltimore City birth cohorts born between September 2007 and September 2014, provided by multiple city entities, to analyze changes in Baltimore City school readiness over time, accounting for demographics, developmental needs, and birth records of children. This will support ECAC in making data-informed decisions on early childhood strategies.

Support of the Mayor's Office of Child and Family Success, African American Male Engagement (AAME) and My Brother's Keeper - Baltimore

Philip Leaf, PhD, Professor, Department of Mental Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Andrey Bundley, EdD, Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success

The Mayor's Office of African American Male Engagement (AAME) was created in 2017 and it became part of the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success (MOCFS) in July 2019. AAME

and MOCFS have asked Dr. Leaf to aid them in creating more positive opportunities and outcomes for boys and young men of color, especially African American males. Funding from the UHI will allow Dr. Leaf to attend the weekly AAME staff meetings and to provide support to the new Mayor's Children's Cabinet and MOCFS. They have asked Dr. Leaf to work with them to help identify programs in Baltimore already positively supporting the lives and trajectories of boys and young men of color and to aid in the linkage of agencies and community-based programming to better support Baltimore's boys and young men of color, especially African American boys and youth. Where there are gaps in Baltimore, Dr. Leaf will work with staff from AAME and MOCFS to identify programs that could fill these gaps. He also will work to expand activities created by AAME in Park Heights so they can be implemented in other Baltimore communities, building on current efforts of AAME.