2019 Small Grants Awards – Funded Partnerships

Graduate Student – Community Grants

• Research Grants
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  o The Movement Teams’ Future Leaders Program Evaluation

• Program Development Grants
  o Baltimore Community Cookbook Collaboration
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  o Passport to Freedom (P2F): Adaptation and Implementation of a Wellness Program to Educate and Empower Women Living in Transitional Housing due to Intimate Partner Violence

Faculty – Community Grants

• Research Grants
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  o Evaluating the Impact of Baltimore Community Mediation Center's Youth-Police Dialogue Program
  o Partnering With School-Based Leaders: The Development Of Implementation Strategies To Facilitate The Adoption, Implementation, And Sustainment Of The Partners In School Program
  o Photovoice To Explore Trauma, Healing And Sexual Health With Black MSM In Baltimore City

• Program Development Grants
  o Power To Control Diabetes: Implementation Of A Community-Based Diabetes Self-Management Program In East Baltimore
  o Vision for Baltimore: Glasses in Classes
Graduate Student – Community Grants

Research Grants

Exploring Accessibility of Culturally-Relevant Foods in East Baltimore

Graduate Student: Kaitlyn Harper, MA, MSc, Department of International Health, Human Nutrition Division, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Community Partner: Amy Middleton, DMG Foods

We propose to perform formative research and an environmental assessment, collaborating with DMG Foods and under the guidance of Dr. Joel Gittelsohn, to investigate the availability and affordability of culturally relevant foods in northeast Baltimore. DMG Foods is a non-profit grocery store that aims to provide affordable foods for the community, but they currently experience low customer turnout and low purchasing per customer visit. Our ultimate goal is to help DMG Foods develop their strategic plan for increasing customer traffic, stocking, and purchasing of healthy food items, and to contribute to the growing body of research highlighting the importance of working with retailers to provide fruits and vegetables that are consistent with preferences of residents in predominantly minority neighborhoods.

We will use free listing to identify culturally relevant foods for African Americans living in Northeast Baltimore and ascertain information on where individuals buy these items. We will use the tabulated responses to assess saliency and develop an environmental checklist that will help determine the accessibility of these items at DMG Foods and four other nearby stores. We will visit each store four times, once every three weeks, to account for price fluctuations, item availability, and time of SNAP benefits cycle.

The Movement Teams' Future Leaders Program Evaluation

Graduate Student: Asari Offiong, MPH, PhD, Department of Population, Family & Reproductive Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Community Partner: Nicole Francis, Director of Operations & Program Evaluation, The Movement Team Inc.

The Movement Team (TMT) seeks to evaluate its Future Leaders Mentoring Program, a mentoring program for youth in Baltimore City Public Schools, focused on developing social and emotional learning competencies. TMT seeks to evaluate the impact of its Future Leaders program on academic success, self-efficacy, and community engagement. A quasi-experimental design using a mixed methods approach will be implemented to evaluate the relationship between participation in the Future Leaders Mentoring program and the outcomes of the interest. The sample will be from two Movement Team sites: Dorothy I. Height Elementary School (grades 3rd - 5th) and Excel Academy (grades 9th-12th). The total sample size will be 140 youth male participants (intervention N=70; comparison N=70). Statistical
analysis will include frequencies and logistic regressions. In addition to quantitative data collection, focus groups will be conducted with participants, mentors, and parents using an inductive thematic approach. Public health research confirms the value of social supports and connectedness for adolescents’ overall well-being, however very few are specific to the needs of minority youth. While the Movement Team has anecdotal evidence on the Future Leaders Mentoring program influence on its participants, this evaluation has the potential to provide rigorous data to validate these claims.

Program Development Grants

Baltimore Community Cookbook Collaboration

Graduate Student: Margarita Ramos, MD, MPH, Preventative Medicine Resident, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Community Partner: Sharicca Boldon, Community Coordinator, Strong City Baltimore Margaret Brent Elementary and Middle School Program

The alarming rates of childhood obesity in Baltimore, where one in three high school students is obese, propelled Johns Hopkins Preventive Medicine faculty and residents to develop a Baltimore community-based partnership focusing on obesity prevention through nutrition and culinary education in 2016. The program’s success in Remington has led to expansion into a second weekly program called the Youth Cooking Club. The Youth Cooking Club brings a new neighborhood partnership: Margaret Brent Elementary and Middle School. Both weekly programs are located in the Remington neighborhood community of Baltimore, where unhealthy food choices are in abundance. Twelve elementary and middle school students are enrolled in the club for the academic year 2018-2019. Students in the program receive a formalized nutrition curriculum, including grocery shopping, food storage, kitchen safety, and meal preparation of low-budget, healthy recipes. In addition to the educational objectives of the program, the physician program leaders plan to create a cookbook based on the recipes generated from their culinary collaboration with the program’s students and their families. A 30-recipe cookbook will be distributed to participants of both the youth and family cooking programs and a wider neighborhood community and inform culinary education classes in future academic years.

Hopkins Volunteers at Commodore John Rodgers Elementary and Middle School

Graduate Student: Kori Porosnicu Rodriguez, Doctoral Student, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine

Community Partner: Mike Glenwick, Commodore John Rodgers School

We are a student-run organization seeking to connect Johns Hopkins students with volunteering opportunities at Commodore John Rodgers (CJR), a preK-8 school in Baltimore, MD. Until recently, CJR ranked 872 out of 875 Maryland Schools and suffered from years of declining enrollment. Beginning in
2010, with the aid of federal SIG funding and the diligent care of passionate faculty, this trend has been almost entirely reversed. CJR is now regarded as one of the best schools in the district, and the initiatives that have contributed to the newfound success of CJR have been used as a model to improve the academic performance, enrollment, and safety of other Baltimore schools. We aspire to contribute to the inspirational turnaround of CJR, helping to promote the academic success of underperforming students through recruitment of volunteers from the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, School of Nursing, and School of Medicine for a variety of tutoring programs. Our recruitment efforts thus far have proved very successful, garnering the interest of many from the Hopkins community. We hope to establish the foundations for a program that will work in partnership with CJR to sustainably encourage the progress of youth in traditionally underserved areas of Baltimore.

Passport to Freedom (P2F): Adaptation and Implementation of a Wellness Program to Educate and Empower Women Living in Transitional Housing due to Intimate Partner Violence

Graduate Student: Emma Jagasia, Johns Hopkins School of Nursing
Community Partner: Ifrah Chaudhri, House of Ruth Maryland

Chronic stress from intimate partner violence (IPV) coupled with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) contributes to produce poor health outcomes. Women who experience IPV many times are living in transitional housing, having to rebuild their lives, and try and sustain economic, family, and health stability. House of Ruth Maryland (HRM), is at the forefront of the fight to end violence against women and children. HRM provides women with the services necessary to rebuild their lives, such as access to housing and employment. The health clinic at the HRM is an excellent service, providing women with acute support and creating connections to primary care, but there are no services that address health promotion and the relation between trauma and health. By implementing Passport to Freedom (P2F), designed to be a trauma-informed reentry program, women can be given the health tools and practices for effective coping and health management. We believe the implementation of Passport to Freedom will provide support and education, and help women develop optimal health outcomes.
Faculty – Community Grants

Research Grants

Comprehensive Tobacco Cessation Delivered On-Site In Baltimore City Public Housing

Faculty Partner: Mandeep S. Jassal, MD MPH, Assistant Professor, Division of Pediatric Pulmonology, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine

Community Partner: Tracey Oliver-Keyser, Director of the Office of Resident Services, Housing Authority of Baltimore City

The Department of Housing and Urban Development recently implemented a nationwide ban on smoking within public housing facilities. The ban is worthy of public health acclaim for its potential impact on reducing secondhand smoke exposures. But one major item lacking from the federal decree was an equitable and practical strategy to address the needs of active smokers residing within the complexes. These lower-income individuals have been noted to smoke not only for addiction but also as a means to address the stresses/anxiety associated with multiple psychosocial factors. Multiple past efforts to reach this population of smokers have been unsuccessful. We are proposing a comprehensive, community-based strategy in one public housing site which equally confronts nicotine addiction and personal psychosocial stressors. Led by our community partner in the Housing Authority of Baltimore City, we are working with representatives in Maryland Legal Aid and Our Daily Bread Employment Center, to address ongoing life stressors. Moreover, we are delivering on-site cessation therapy (pharmacotherapy and behavioral counseling) to tackle the often-observed difficulties in accessing such services in lower-income environments. Our project will leverage the findings of this pilot project for a planned large grant submission using the same research partnerships.

Evaluating the Impact of Baltimore Community Mediation Center's Youth-Police Dialogue Program

Faculty Partner: Cassandra K. Crifasi, PhD, MPH, Assistant Professor, Deputy Director, Center for Gun Policy and Research Department of Health Policy & Management Johns Hopkins School of Public Health

Community Partner: Daniel H. Levine, PhD, Director of Research and Development, Baltimore Community Mediation Center

Baltimore is a city plagued by disproportionate rates of violence and a problematic history of unconstitutional policing of minority youth. Efforts to better understand and develop interventions effective at improving police-youth relationships are needed. This project seeks to evaluate the impact of the Baltimore Community Mediation Center’s (BCMC) Youth-Police Dialogue Circle (YPDC) Program
and provide recommendations for future research and program development. The program brings together groups of ten youth and ten officers at a school for trust-building activities and frank discussion of their perceptions and concerns about each other. The goal is to improve attitudes of trust and respect, as well as to inspire concrete behavioral change in future interactions. The program collects pre- and post-YPDC surveys that assess perceptions, attitudes, and concerns of both police and youth. We will conduct analyses of the linked survey to evaluate whether participating in the YPDC impacts both youth and police. Additionally, we will assess whether there are differences between schools and within schools hosting more than one YPDC. These findings will provide recommendations on improved data collection and guide program improvement. Additionally, the analysis seeks to support BCMC in their efforts to develop and sustain the YPDC program.

Partnering With School-Based Leaders: The Development Of Implementation Strategies To Facilitate The Adoption, Implementation, And Sustainment Of The Partners In School Program

Faculty Partner: Gazi Azad, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Mental Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Kennedy Krieger Institute's Center for Autism and Related Disorders

Community Partner: Jessica Henkin, MS, Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator, Baltimore City Public Schools Early Learning Programs

Partners in School is a consultation model where parents and teachers of children with autism spectrum disorder work collaboratively with a consultant to identify a mutual concern and implement evidence-based practices across home and school to address that concern. Although Partners in School has shown preliminary effectiveness, it is unlikely to be sustained without an understanding of the organizational characteristics of schools that may facilitate or hinder its implementation. The purpose of this study is to develop a set of empirically supported implementation strategies for supporting schools with Partners in School. For research question 1, N=30 school-based leaders will be surveyed to understand the organizational factors that may impact the implementation and sustainment of Partners in School. For research question 2, a subsample of school-based leaders (N=20) will be interviewed about empirically supported implementation strategies that are relevant for schools. Based on these results, we will develop specific implementation strategies for schools to utilize Partners in School in their daily educational practice. Three levels of dissemination are proposed. The results from the proposed study have implications for fostering partnerships, attracting sustainable funding, improving children’s behavioral health and well-being, developing capacity and skills in school-based leaders, and impacting public health.
Photovoice To Explore Trauma, Healing And Sexual Health With Black MSM In Baltimore City

Faculty Partner: Jacky M Jennings, PhD, MPH, Associate Professor, Departments of Pediatrics & Epidemiology; Associate Director, General Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine; Director, Center for Child & Community Health Research (CCHR) & BEAD Core Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Community Partner: Mimi Demissew, Executive Director, Gay and Lesbian Community Center of Baltimore (GLCCB)

Trauma is defined as a psychological emotional response to an event or an experience that is deeply distressing or disturbing. The effect of trauma on sexual risk behaviors, such as earlier sexual debut, has been shown to be more severe among men who have sex with men (MSM) than heterosexuals. In Baltimore City, 65% of reported early syphilis cases were among MSM, 88% of whom were Black MSM (BMSM). These statistics and findings from the literature highlight racial and sexual minority disparities that warrant improved public health prevention approaches and the need to assess experiences of trauma that are likely contributing to these rates. To explore trauma and highlight the importance of healing we propose to use photovoice, an innovative qualitative research method that encourages positive action through photographs and discussion sessions. Using photovoice will enable BMSM to reflect both on their experiences of trauma and how they can positively heal. The overall goals of our team are to strengthen the relationship between the academic research community and the local Black MSM community, expand the professional and leadership capacities of a local CAB, and inform research on the impact of trauma on sexual health among Black MSM in Baltimore City.

Program Development Grants

Power To Control Diabetes: Implementation Of A Community-Based Diabetes Self-Management Program In East Baltimore

Faculty Partner: Raquel Greer, MD, MHS, Education Director, Johns Hopkins Brancati Center for the Advancement of Community Care, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Division of General Internal Medicine, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Community Partner: Ondra Walker, Zion Baptist Church

Ethnic/race minority and low-income adults are disproportionately affected by diabetes, experiencing greater rates of diabetes, diabetes-related complications, and mortality. Diabetes self-care is an integral component to achieving good glycemic control and improving diabetes outcomes. However, ethnic/race minority and low-income adults with diabetes often experience multiple barriers for optimal diabetes self-care including: competing life priorities; poor access to care; limited knowledge and skills to
facilitate behavior change, and financial and environmental constraints. While diabetes self-management training and support is currently recommended for all patients with type 2 diabetes to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for effective diabetes self-care, most patients with type 2 diabetes do not receive it due to lack of insurance coverage and lack of easily accessible services. Greater dissemination of community-based diabetes and self-management training programs may increase utilization and be more effective in achieving optimal glycemic control among vulnerable populations. We propose to implement Decision-Making Education for Choices In Diabetes Everyday (DECIDE), an evidence-based diabetes self-management training program, in a church-based program in East Baltimore and evaluate its impact in improving diabetes outcomes. The findings from this work will help foster the capacity to expand and sustain the implementation of community-based diabetes self-management training in Baltimore City.

Vision for Baltimore: Glasses in Classes

Faculty Partner: Nancy Madden, Professor, Johns Hopkins School of Education

Community Partner: Louise L. Fink, PhD, Director of Home and Hospital/Health Services, Baltimore City Public Schools

Vision for Baltimore is a project seeking to provide school-based vision care to students in Baltimore City Public Schools. Over three years beginning in fall 2016, all public school students in preschool through eighth grade are being screened and, if they fail screening, will be given the opportunity to receive vision exams at school and glasses if needed. Yet even once students are provided with appropriate vision care, they need to wear their glasses regularly to benefit from them. The proposed project would focus on the next step of school-based vision programs to develop strategies to ensure regular use of glasses by integrating glasses wear into the culture of schools and enlisting the support of teachers and students. This would be accomplished through the use of a continuous improvement framework and group contingencies for both teachers and students to improve school monitoring, as well as glasses, use in 10 Baltimore City Public Schools serving students in both elementary and middle schools. The resulting model, which is unique in addressing both access and ongoing maintenance of glasses, could be used throughout all Vision for Baltimore schools and ultimately in schools beyond the Baltimore area, ensuring that students who need glasses have them AND wear them.