

Community Social Psychology Practicum Sites 2014-5

Placement: Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust (LP&CT)

Website: www.lowelllandtrust.org

Student: April Hunt april_hunt@student.uml.edu

Supervisor: Jane Calvin jcalvin@lowelllandtrust.org

Description of organization: LP&CT's mission - *to improve the quality of life for the people of Lowell through the creation, conservation, and preservation of parks, open spaces, and special places.* LP&CT provides conservation leadership and programs, which focus on four major areas: land protection, stewardship, environmental education, and special places. Annually, we offer over 40 programs to people of all ages, including after-school programming for urban youth, natural history programs to historic preservation initiatives, park stewardship, developing walking trails, and tree planting projects.

Description of placement: The office staff of LP&CT is very small so I have been involved in almost every aspect of what they do at LP&CT. This has included daily operations of the office such as fundraising mailings, organizing the Board of Directors' meeting minutes, membership data analysis, grant research, blog writing for website, data entry of volunteer info, and organizing and tracking student grade progression through the after school environmental education program. Other projects have included preparing an Etsy shop for our board of director's president Mark Romanowsky's artwork (of which the proceeds will directly benefit LP&CT), planning and helping in tree plantings, grant writing, attending *bird watch* walks on some of LP&CT's walking trails, and planning and giving a presentation of our "Save East Pond" project at the "Promising Practices" forum in Boylston. I have also helped co-teach the after school environmental education program at two schools in Lowell as well as the "Kids Week" wildlife program which is open to all children during February vacation. I am also hoping to take part in LP&CT's upcoming White Water Rafting program.

Placement: Community Teamwork Inc.

Website: www.commteam.org

Student: Teresa Shroll teresa_shroll@student.uml.edu

Supervisors: Ed Cameron and Michael Collins

ECameron@commteam.org and MCollins@commteam.org

Description of organization: CTI is a nonprofit community action agency in Lowell. They "mobilize resources for low-income people, providing opportunities for them to achieve stability, self-sufficiency, and have an active voice and participation in the decisions that affect their lives" (<http://commteam.org/home/our-organization/about-us/>). They provide direct services and also partner with several nonprofit organizations to service individuals and families within their community. The range of services CTI offers is immense and includes providing professional attire for women seeking employment, childcare services, financial education, sustainable farming, and housing and utility assistance.

Description of placement: The goal over the spring semester is to develop a "supportive shelter" model that best utilizes the space and services offered by CTI. Currently CTI has Congregate, Clustered, and Scattered shelters. Individuals and families are placed in these shelters by the state and location is dependent on what is available at the time of need. CTI would like to develop a strategy where all families go through the same intake process and are placed according to the level of support they need; Congregate shelters being the most supportive. The goal is to provide families with as much support as they need from the beginning. As they become more self-sufficient they will move to the next level of shelter with reduced support and supervision. The goal is take advantage of the time families spend in shelters so they are better prepared to maintain their home once out of the shelter continuum of care. Services that promote family stability, wellbeing (mental and physical), education, financial

management, and career management will be available throughout the various shelters. However, as skills are learned, participants will gain more opportunities to practice them as they move to a state of greater independence. The implementation of this model will prevent families from falling back into the shelter system and reduce the number of serious incidents that currently occur in the less supportive Scattered shelters.

Placement: Team Medford

Website: <http://www.teammedford.org>

Student: Malik Shahjehan Khan malik_khan@student.uml.edu

Supervisor: Penelope B. Funaiole pbruce@medford.org

Description of organization: Team Medford is an initiative of the Health Department and works in collaboration with other community coalitions, school departments, school groups and police to prevent and reduce alcohol, tobacco and other drug use amongst youth and promote healthy eating, physical activity in the City of Medford. They are specifically funded by the Massachusetts Opioid Abuse Prevention Collaborative (MOAPC) Grant Program, to implement local policy, practice, systems and environmental change to prevent the use/abuse of opioids, prevent/reduce fatal and non-fatal opioid overdoses, and increase both the number and capacity of municipalities across the Commonwealth addressing these issues. Strategies and interventions must be consistent with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) model, consistent with any available evidence-based practices or local best practices such as those developed during the previous SPF State Incentive Grant (SIG) - MassCALL2 Opioid Overdose Prevention initiative, and approved by the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services (BSAS).

Description of placement: I have engaged in/will be engaging in a multitude of tasks including: creating a code of conduct for athletes in the Mystic Valley Public Health Coalition school systems; developing an online needs assessment for Malden, meet monthly with the Malden Health Working Group to help them become a self-sustaining entity, and eventually co-facilitate an interactive town meeting for the city of Malden to empower residents to identify health issues in their community and work towards change; improve collective action with the "Save A Neighbor" campaign in Medford; examine evidence-based practices of identifying mental and sexual health indicators within foreign-born populations in so-called "Gateway Cities"; research best techniques for creating a social marketing campaign geared towards addressing stigma of drug users and addiction treatment; and attend/assist in facilitating all Malden Health Working Group and MOAPC Substance Abuse Coordinator meetings.

Placement: Center for Hope and Healing

Website: <http://www.centerforhopehealing.org>

Student: Rachel Kollin rachel_kollin@student.uml.edu

Supervisor: Isa Woldegiorgis, Executive Director isa@centerforhopehealing.org

Description of organization: The Center for Hope and Healing has been working to create communities free from sexual violence for over 35 years. CHH is one of three independent rape crisis centers in Massachusetts. CHH works on a social justice model and sees sexual violence as acts of oppression based on unequal levels of power and control.

Description of placement: My main role at CHH is program evaluator. I work with program managers from each department to develop and refine logic models and evaluation procedures. I facilitate monthly data team meetings where representatives from each program collaborate on evaluation development. I utilize CHH's principles of social justice and the full frame initiative to guide my work.

Placement: Tufts University, Department of Health Education and Promotion

Website: <http://ase.tufts.edu/healthservice/> <http://ase.tufts.edu/healthservice/aboutStaffWong.htm>

Student: Sable Smith Sable_Smith@student.uml.edu

Supervisor: Ian Wong Ian.Wong@tufts.edu

Description of organization: Tufts University Health Service supports the educational mission of Tufts University by providing accessible and high quality health care for a diverse student population. We strive to maintain the physical, psychological, and social health of students through an interdisciplinary team approach of providing primary care and promoting health education and wellness. Our values are confidentiality, respect for diversity, promotion of wellness, and continuous professional growth.

Description of placement: As a practicum student with Tuft's Health Education and Promotion Department I have had the opportunity to work with student organizations in structuring and development on-campus events, collaborate with other health focused departments on interdisciplinary projects, attend student and faculty meetings to discuss promoting student well-being. I have also had the privilege of creating my own mixed method focus group geared toward supporting voices of underrepresented student identities at Tufts. I have learned a lot about campus politics, research, and feel well supported in my interdepartmental endeavors.

Placement: City of Lowell's Department of Planning and Development

Website: <http://www.lowellma.gov/dpd/community/Pages/default.aspx>

Student: Jamila A. Green Jamila.green88@outlook.com

Supervisors: Chris Samaras and Linda King csamaras@lowellma.gov and lking@lowellma.gov

Description of organization: The City of Lowell's Department of Planning and Development (DPD) is responsible for the administration of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Planning and Development programs. These programs utilize funding from Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) program, the Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME), and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program to fund local activities which benefit low-income and moderate-income residents and neighborhoods. Projects supported must conform to program regulations and focus on the City's priority needs, as identified in the City of Lowell's 2010-2015 Consolidated Plan.

Description of placement: During my time with the Department of Planning and Development's Community Development Department, I was able to be a part of two different projects focused on community/program development, advocacy, community organizing/coalition building, and participant conceptualizing. One of my initial projects was working with the director of community development (Chris Samaras) and other members of the community development team in creating and compiling narratives for the City of Lowell's 5-Year Plan. I was able to complete 4 narratives focused on community facilities and non-homeless community needs based on survey data. The second project I have been involved in is the Youth Homelessness Initiative. Through the project, I was able to assist in organizing the City of Lowell's first Youth Homelessness Conference and organize the second annual Mass Youth Count. The Youth Count is a period in time where surveys are distributed to youth to better gauge the state of youth homelessness in Massachusetts. The Mass Youth Count was composed of several pieces including establishing a Youth Advisory Board to help with understanding the youth voice in relation to homelessness. I was also able to connect with several community stakeholders statewide who are directly tied with Youth. Overall, I came to the DPD at the perfect time. This past year has been filled with different projects and initiatives that impacted the demographic I wish to work with in the future and exposed me to a different route to community work.

Placement: Greater Lowell Community Foundation (GLCF)

Website: <http://www.glcfoundation.org>

Student name: Jennifer Gyamfi Jennifer_Gyamfi@student.uml.edu

Supervisor: George Nugent george@glcfoundation.org

Description of organization: The Greater Lowell Community Foundation (GLCF) is an organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of the people in Lowell and its catchment areas. This organization was started to ensure or encourage different donors to invest in the community in which they live as opposed to other communities. GLCF was able to encourage different businesses to start investing in Lowell. GLCF as an organization provides a variety of services to the people of Lowell and its catchment areas. These services range from about 200 scholarships for high school students in Lowell to grants for non-profit organizations in Lowell. Although GLCF is a non-profit organization, it works with for profit organizations to support the community as well.

Description of placement: My time at GLCF was spent on working on their center for Business Philanthropy project. This project is centered on coalition organization, asset development, community outreach, and professional development. I contact local businesses and research what they do to encourage philanthropy and volunteerism. I help develop a relationship between the businesses and the Greater Lowell Community Foundation. We are hoping for these connections to ultimately lead to greater support for local nonprofit organizations and charities. I am helping enhance the partnership between philanthropists, business leaders and non-profit leaders in the community. In addition, I am also helping coordinate a project to restore a public art installation in Lowell. The project involves convening a donor, the artist, the city, and other civic and arts groups. This collaboration allow me to negotiate complex relationships, bring stakeholders together for a common cause, and see the direct impact philanthropic support that community foundations foster. I am also working with various community members to help raise money for this project.

Placement: Community Teamwork

Website: www.commteam.org

Student: Jenna Engelsen Jennifer_Engelsen@student.uml.edu

Supervisor: Barbara Warren BWarren@commteam.org

Description of organization: Community Teamwork Inc. (CTI) creates opportunities and mobilizes resources for low-income community members. CTI takes a strengths based approach to working with the community to promote positive changes in the lives of community members. They work with other organizations in the community to provide for the various needs of their clients while creating sustainable change.

Description of placement: I will be working in the Residential Programs department under Barbara Warren who is the Asst. Director of Re-Housing and Stabilization. The main focus of this department is to help clients who are in need of emergency housing by providing them a place to stay while working with them with the goal of getting them back on their own. During my practicum I was able to conduct a needs assessment with clients and work with Barbara to analyze the data. I was also able to read Parenting in Public and design and facilitate a workshop for CTI staff about Understanding the Parental Role on Public Assistance. During my practicum I was also in charge of organizing workshops for clients while keeping track of attendance and participation.

Placement: Boys and Girls Club of Greater Lowell

Website: www.lbgc.org

Student: Sadie Prickett sadie_prickett@student.uml.edu

Supervisor: Joey Banh jbanh@lbgc.org

Description of organization: The mission of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell is: "To inspire and enable young people, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens through dedicated staff and innovative programs, provided in a safe environment." With a focus on three core areas of youth development, the Club provides educational, social, recreational and cultural programming for youth ages 7-18.

Description of placement: My placement has focused on the areas of needs assessment, program evaluation, and developing a guide utilizing community psychology principles that provides ideas to help address areas of concern. Additionally, I have focused on how the organization can better serve young females, recruits and retain teen members, and provide more opportunities for youth to take leadership and have shared power.

Placement: The Nonprofit Alliance of Greater Lowell

Website: www.npalowell.org

Student: Mary Tauras mary_tauras@student.uml.edu

Supervisor: Suzanne Frechette, Deputy Director suzanne.frechette@cbacre.org

Description of organization: The Greater Lowell Non-Profit Alliance (NPA) helps strengthens collaboration among and competencies within the region's active nonprofit groups. Current focuses of the alliance are networking, marketing, professional development, and advocacy. Resources and trainings on board governance, staff development, fundraising, administrative and operational support, as well as meetings focused on relevant legislation, help the organizations to maintain high productivity in serving their clients and constituents. Meanwhile, it affords the agencies the capacity to network and cooperate as collaborative grant opportunities become available.

Description of placement: My placement with the NPA focused on program evaluation and advocacy/public policy. I learned a great deal about the budget process, state laws relating to the nonprofit sector, the process of nonprofit advocacy, along with needs and opportunities in the Greater Lowell region. I was fortunate to meet and interview many of the senior and executive staff of nonprofits in the sector, work with them on the Legislative Breakfast planning committee, and present my report of evaluation findings to the nonprofit representatives at one of their monthly meetings.

Placement: Coalition for A Better Acre

Website: www.coalitionforabetteracre.org

Description of organization: The Coalition for the Better Acre (CBA) is a neighborhood-based community development corporation focused on resident empowerment and sustainable community revitalization. The membership-based organization supports residential real estate development and economic self-sufficiency among members, while promoting vibrant and healthy neighborhoods in the Acre.

Description of placement: I was housed at the CBA in part because the NPA does not have a singular office or location, as its members are staff of other agencies. I shared an office with CBA's program coordinator for the Merrimack Valley Time Exchange (MVTE) and was a part of the advisory committee for this program. I also served on occasion as a liaison between CBA and the University of Massachusetts Lowell in order to build collaborative partnerships. I supported the efforts of the organizing staff and carried out a community mapping project to update CBA records of land use in the Acre for resident versus public or private developments.

Placement: Lowell Community Charter Public School

Website: <http://www.lccps.org>

Student: Talita Pacheco-Valente talita_pacheco@student.uml.edu

Supervisor: Sonya Patton spatton@lccps.com

Description of organization: Founded in 2000, Lowell Community Charter Public School (LCCPS) is a public charter school for grades K1-8. It is a tuition-free school. Although preference is given to Lowell residents and siblings of current students, LCCPS welcomes students from all over Massachusetts. It has a very diverse community within the school; students and staff are from all over the world. From a young age, students learn to respect and value differences amongst each other. The school focuses on

providing students with a creative, confident and independent environment. LCCPS encourages students to give back to their community and be respectable citizens and leaders. LCCPS students are expected to thrive. Student's ratio is 12 to every 1 teacher in every classroom to ensure that every student is getting the support and the educational quality they need. In 2013, LCCPS students scored higher than ever in the history of the school.

Description of placement: Sonya and I have been working on developing a transitional program for 7th and 8th grade. I have been working very closely with Sonya in developing all the material, sustainability of the program, and other components. I was introduced to some of the key players in this program, such as the head of the school-Kathy. It has been really exciting to see the program develop the way it has since I have started to participate in this project.

Placement: Lowell Transitional Living Center

Website: <http://www.ltlc.org>

Student: Chris Kerivan Christopher_kerivan@student.uml.edu

Supervisor: Jen Sagalyn, Development Director jsagalyn@ltlc.org

Description of Organization: Lowell Transitional Living Center (LTLC) is a non-profit organization that provides meals, individual assessment, referrals, medical care, case management, stability, and dignity to the most vulnerable adults in the community. The Lowell Transitional Living Center (LTLC) is a client-centered shelter for homeless adults dedicated to offering short-term housing solutions, food, support and compassion to those who are on their journey from homelessness to permanent housing. LTLC has been providing shelter and care in downtown Lowell for close to 30 years

Description of Placement: LTLC has given me the opportunity to take on a number of roles, such as Volunteer Coordinator and Development Assistant. I have had the opportunity to identifying and pursuing fundraising, grants, and sponsorships opportunities.

Placement: Girls Inc.

Website: www.girlsinclowell.org

Student: Alexa Queenan Alexa_Queenan@student.uml.edu

Supervisor: Jennifer Demers jdemers@girlsinclowell.org

Description of organization: Girls Inc. is an organization that aims to inspire girls to be strong and smart within and outside their community. The program involves girls meeting after school where they are able to do fun activities, while still learning and being creative. Girls Inc. has been responsible for empowering girls since 1917.

Description of placement: My placement has helped me develop many new competencies. For example, I now have enhanced skills in grant writing, public speaking, community advocacy, program planning / implementation, conflict resolution, and program evaluation. Girls Inc. has given me the opportunity to learn several new areas, not just focus on one.

Placement: Mayor's Initiative for a Healthy and Sustainable Food System

Website: <http://portlandmaine.gov/987/Healthy-Sustainable-Food-Systems-Initiat>

Student: Marissa Gianino marissa_gianino@student.uml.edu

Supervisor: Tim Fuller trf@portlandmaine.gov

Description of organization: The Mayor's food initiative seeks to make positive changes to the food system in Portland. Membership is open to any individual or group. There are five subcommittees: food security, school food, urban agriculture, enterprise and infrastructure, and food policy. Our values: justice and fairness, equal food access for disadvantaged people, healthy people, thriving local economies and jobs, vibrant gardens and farms, sustainable ecosystems, and strong neighborhoods and communities.

Description of placement: My placement has allowed me to explore different ways to provide opportunities to engage the public in influencing Portland's food system. I have been learning and helping to plan community forums. I planned and implemented a Photovoice project focused on food security with two small groups of high schools students, whose experiences and perceptions were documented through photographs and then presented to the initiative. Our goal with the Photovoice project was to provide an opportunity for youth to actively influence and learn about the food system. In addition, I have maintained email and social media communications to initiative members.

Placement: Middlesex Community College (MCC)

Website: <https://www.middlesex.mass.edu>

Student: Shawn Donnelly Shawn_Donnelly@student.uml.edu

Supervisor: Darcy Orellana OrellanaD@Middlesex.mass.edu

Description of organization: MCC is one of the largest community colleges in Massachusetts. It is dedicated to its mission - to foster an environment where everyone teaches, and everyone learns.

Description of placement: I work out of the Diversity and Equity Affairs office, which is housed within Human Resources. The main objectives of my placement are to 1) design and conduct an evaluation on the current organizational practices related to LGBTQ students, faculty, and staff, make recommendations for improvements based on empirical literature and successful LGBTQ-inclusion models, and 2) update/revamp an existing LGBTQ ally-ship training curriculum for students, faculty, and staff.

Placement: Lowell Community Health Center- Teen Block

Website: lchealth.org

Student: Ishani Mehta ishani_mehta@student.uml.edu

Supervisor: Linda Su lindaso@lchealth.org

Description of organization: It's an after school program that caters high school children. The mission of Teen Block is to support the healthy development of young people and empower them to become leaders in the community by working to reduce risky behaviors that lead to teen pregnancy, HIV/STIs, substance use and violence in Lowell. Teen Block also conducts activities including Dance 4 Peace, Youth Recognition Ceremony, Get Hooked, and many more.

Description of placement: My job was to help the youth focus on career and college readiness but then that shifted to planning and implementing of various activities within Teen Block. I also had to create surveys and conduct program evaluation on certain activities with Teen Block. Facilitating some of the activities and also conducting research on several areas.