

Housing and Community Development Fellowship

INTERIM REPORT



2014-2015

THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS[®]

The School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy

HCD Fellowship Interim Report

2014-2015



January 20, 2015

Moving Forward & Making It Happen

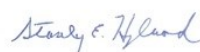
Each year the Housing and Community Development Fellows (HCD) Program has grown in its connectedness to the City of Memphis' strategic plan. In addition to the engaged community building work with various community development corporations, intermediaries and community support agencies, the HCD Fellows meet each Monday for a brown bag lunch to discuss how their work can be better networked. Largely through the efforts of Marie Dennan, the HCD Fellows have discussed their work with leading community development leaders such as June

West of Memphis Heritage, Kyle Wagenschutz who is the Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator for the City of Memphis, Kenny Latta at the Center for Transforming Communities, Tim Bolding of United Housing Inc., Carole Colter of Grow Memphis, and David Cox from the University of Memphis. This conversation and networking will continue this semester with Maura Sullivan from the Mayor's Office, Joyce Cox from the City Office of Neighborhoods, John Paul Schaffer from Livable Memphis, Eric Robertson from LIFT and Tommy Pacello from the Mayor's Innovation Delivery team. In addition, we will begin the semester in Binghampton at Caritas Village to kick off the spring semester and discuss the community building work in that neighborhood.

It is equally exciting to listen to the HCD Fellows exchange perspectives from their different disciplines and experiences. These disciplines include City and Regional Planning, Public and Nonprofit Administration, Social Work, and Anthropology. Within each discipline is a separate set of interests that vary from landscape planning to transportation planning, from support systems for the homeless to legal assistance to the physically challenged, from community gardens and sustainability efforts to community organizing and capacity building efforts with faith-based organizations, and the creation of personnel handbooks for nonprofits. HCD Fellows are actively working on concrete community-based projects that connect dots to come up with innovative approaches that break down conventional siloes. Their Fall Semester work is presented in this interim report.

If you have any questions or interests in participating in the HCD Program please contact me.

Best,



Stan Hyland

Head of the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, 201c McCord

Email: shyland@memphis.edu, Phone: 901-678-1445

Professor of Anthropology

Upcoming Events

This semester the HCD Fellows will participate in:

The Memphis Neighborhood Redevelopment Conference

April 14-17

Memphis Cook Convention Center

We will conclude the semester with our:

Annual HCD Fellowship Program Poster Session

April 27

11:00—12:30

207 McCord

University of Memphis

All faculty, fellow students and community leaders are invited.

PROGRAM INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The Housing and Community Development (HCD) Research Fellowship was initiated several years ago by the senior administrators in the City of Memphis' Department of Housing and Community Development, and faculty in the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy (SUAPP). The purpose of the program is to encourage professional students to engage in community based research, public policy, program development, project management, and program evaluation efforts in the field of economic and community development. Funded by the Department of Housing and Community Development, the program was initially established to enhance the outcomes of professional education in public administration, city planning, social work, criminal justice studies and applied anthropology to increase the number of graduates choosing to join community organizations within the Memphis region upon graduation.

What is Community Development?

Our working definition of community development is any systematic effort to enhance the organization, planning, development, and management capacity of community-based organizations and public agencies seeking to improve the overall quality of life in poor and working-class neighborhoods within the City of Memphis.

Program Goals

- Introduce students to the critical environmental, economic, and social problems confronting the region's most economically challenged neighborhoods.
- Expose students to innovative policies, programs, and practices that address the structural causes of uneven patterns of development, and persistent and concentrated poverty.
- Facilitate service-learning, volunteerism, and applied research projects to promote innovative policy solutions to critical issues.
- Use reflective strategies to improve professional practice and connect to emerging organizational challenges and policy issues.
- Integrate theoretical, classroom-based learning and engaged, experiential learning through a weekly seminar.

List of Current & Former Partner Agencies

Advance Memphis
 Behavioral Health Initiatives, Inc.
 Binghampton Development Corporation
 BRIDGES
 Center for Transforming Communities
 City of Memphis Department of HCD
 City of Memphis Chief Administrative Office
 Community Development Corporation
 Community Development Council
 Community LIFT
 Cooper-Young CDC
 Council of Greater Memphis
 Frayser CDC
 Gestalt Community Schools
 Goodwill Community Services
 GrowMemphis
 Habitat for Humanity
 Keep Tennessee Beautiful
 Lead Hazard Control Program
 Livable Memphis
 Memphis Area Legal Services
 Memphis Center for Independent Living
 Memphis City Schools
 Memphis Landmarks Commission
 Mayor's Innovation Delivery Team
 Office of Planning and Development
 Pigeon Roost Development Corporation
 Promise Development Corporation
 Saint Patrick's Learning Center
 Saint Peter's Manor
 Theatre Memphis
 The Works, Inc.
 University Neighborhood Development Corporation
 United Housing, Inc.

STUDENT PLACEMENT

Students are placed at nonprofit organizations, community development corporations, and public agencies (city, county, state, and federal) that are working on initiatives that fit into our working description of community development and, link to the priority areas/neighborhoods of the Memphis Division of Housing and Community Development.

FELLOWSHIP LENGTH

Students accepted into the fellowship program will participate in the program throughout the length of their professional degree program (typically two years) provided they receive positive evaluations from their internship and related coursework performance. While a student may stay at a participating placement agency for more than one semester, the program encourages them to be engaged in a different mix of professional activities each semester to maximize the professional development outcomes of the program.

STUDENT COMPENSATION

All students will receive a tuition and fee waiver from the University of Memphis Graduate School. In addition, they will receive a stipend for the 20 hours of work each week. Students will also receive academic credit for the weekly seminar course.

FUNDING

The Housing and Community Development Research Fellowship is jointly funded by the City of Memphis Department of Housing and Community Development and the Graduate School at the University of Memphis.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

In collaboration with Stan Hyland, Head of the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, the Chairs/Directors (or their representatives) of the graduate programs in the Division of Public Administration and Nonprofit Management, the Division of City and Regional Planning, the Department of Social Work, the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, and the Department of Anthropology serve as the point of overall decision making on student recruitment and acceptance into the program, making placement with agencies, serving as liaisons with the Graduate School, and raising funds to expand the program. Individual faculty members are assigned direct mentoring and supervision of each student.

ADVISORY BOARD

Advisory Board Members meet twice a year to review and comment on the program's overall structure, course syllabi, and to assist with unique placement requests, and include:

- Emily Trenholm, Greater Memphis Community Development Council
- Eric Robertson, Community LIFT
- Mairi Albertson, City of Memphis Department of Housing and Community Development
- Thomas Pacello, Mayor's Innovation Delivery Team

2014-2015 PROGRAM SPECIFICS

Fall 2014 Semester Overview

Description and Objectives

The weekly seminars are intended to focus on student integration of theoretical, classroom-based learning and applied, practice-based learning. Focused topic areas and speakers are supplemented by weekly round table discussions, and individual presentations given by the fellows to share their experiences in an engaged and supportive learning environment. The Urban Spotlight Blog was expanded this semester and offered Fellows an outlet to share their experiences with the University community and stakeholders in the community engaged in community development. This forum has also increased the ability to compile and share information about community events and volunteer opportunities in Memphis and Shelby County related to community development.

Coursework Objectives

- Introduce students to the critical environmental, economic, and social problems confronting the region's most economically challenged neighborhoods.
- Expose students to innovative policies, programs, and practices that address the structural causes of uneven patterns of development, and persistent and concentrated poverty.
- Facilitate service learning, volunteerism, and applied research projects to promote innovative policy solutions to critical issues confronting the region's most distressed communities.
- Use reflective strategies to improve professional practice and connect to emerging organizational challenges and policy issues.

Required Assignments

Program Orientation: Students are introduced to the fundamental theories, methods, practices, and issues related to experiential education, the use of a learning contract as a lifelong learning tool, and the structure of the University of Memphis HCD Fellowship Program.

Professional Fellowship: Each student will devote twenty hours each week (16 weeks per semester) to professional activities at participating agencies working under the supervision of accomplished urban affairs professionals.

Weekly Reflective Seminar: Participating students are required to enroll in a one credit Planning Internship Seminar (PLAN 7890) to learn what other students are doing in their work, compare creative problem solving ideas, discuss collaborative efforts that can be made in their work, and assist in integrating the learning outcomes.

2014-2015

Neighborhood

Priority Areas

SOUTH MEMPHIS

FRAYSER

BINGHAMPTON

**UNIVERSITY
DISTRICT**

Fellows

Meg Brown

Katie Buchl-Morales

Josh Conley

Brent Duke

Carly Haithcock

Kody C. Kirby

Courtney McNeal

Rosa M. Mena

Evan Morrison

Steven Payne

Ian Preston

Bennett Smithhart

2014-2015**Partner Agencies****Behavioral Health Initiatives****Community LIFT****City of Memphis CAO Office****(Strengthening Communities Initiative)****University Neighborhood Development Corporation****United Housing, Inc.****Memphis Community Development Council****Memphis Area Legal Services****BRIDGES****Center for Transforming Communities****Frayser CDC****(TIGUrS Green Fee)**

Learning Contract: Students, agency supervisors, and faculty mentors will identify learning objectives, core knowledge and competencies, as well as placement activities and evaluation criteria for the agency placement experience. The contract will be negotiated each semester. The student, agency supervisor, and faculty mentor must approve the contract. The Learning Contract will be used to monitor and evaluate student progress throughout the fellowship.

Field Journal/Blog: Students will submit the field journal to faculty mentors and agency supervisors prior to each site visit and as appropriate. Notations, reflective thoughts, questions, and feelings about the placement learning experience should be made several times a week with your observations. The field journal should capture:

- What the Fellow is doing
- What the Fellow is learning
- How it connects to coursework
- Questions and concerns

Community Asset Map: Fellows identify the communities in which they are engaged with during the internship. This information is being used to create an asset map in GIS of the impact of the Fellows work in the HCD program.

Collaboration Report: Students find a peer-reviewed case study or journal article that focuses on collaboration between agencies, or communities and agencies. The findings are compiled into an annotated bibliography for students to use as an academic and professional resource.

Site Visits: The faculty advisor will visit each student twice during the semester, at the 3rd and 12th weeks of placement. During the visits, the faculty advisor will meet with the student and the agency supervisor to discuss any issues that are affecting the quality of the fellowship experience.

Public Issues Forums, Public Board Meetings, and/or Professional Workshops: Each student must attend at least two of the above and write a reflective journal entry that includes details about the event, issue, participants, and potential for future engagement.

Reflective Essay: Students will write a 2-3 page reflective essay describing and evaluating the progress they have made towards achieving goals and objectives. In this essay, students also have the chance to evaluate the overall program and placement experience.

Student Evaluation: Each student will be evaluated by their agency supervisor and faculty mentor based on the fieldwork, journals, assignments, and reflective essays to determine the progress made during the fellowship based upon the learning contract.

Student Responsibilities

- Contact placement agency supervisor to arrange the work schedule
 - Research placement agency before the first day
 - Participate in weekly seminar PLAN 7890
 - Set weekly meeting time with agency supervisor
 - Submit monthly timesheets
 - Keep field journal
 - Develop logic model
- Facilitate site visits during 3rd and 12th weeks
 - Meet with faculty mentor as needed
- Present project during spring semester

<u>FALL 2014</u>	<u>COURSE SCHEDULE</u>	<u>SPRING 2015</u>
Aug 25 HCD Orientation Lunch		Jan 19 <i>No Session: MLK Day</i>
Sept 1 <i>No Session: Labor Day</i>		Jan 26 Lunch at Carita's Village
Sept 8 The Engaged Student		Feb 2 Maura Sullivan
Sept 15 The Engaged Metropolitan University		City of Memphis CAO Office
Dr. David Cox		Feb 9 Joyce Cox, HCD
Division of Public and Nonprofit Administration		Manager Neighborhood Redevelopment
Sept 22 Memphis and the Mid-South Region		Feb 16 Mairi Albertson, HCD
Sept 29 Bike Lanes and Pedestrian Initiatives		Feb 23 Sutton Mora Hayes, VP
Kyle Wagenschutz		Community Foundation
Bike/Ped Coordinator, City of Memphis		Mar 2 Tommy Pacello
Oct 6 Historic Preservation and Heritage		Mayor's Innovation Delivery Team
June West		Mar 9 <i>No Session: Spring Break</i>
Executive Director, Memphis Heritage		Mar 16 Eric Robertson, ED
Oct 20 Collaboration Reports		Community LIFT
Oct 27 Community Gardening Initiatives		Mar 23 John Paul Shaffer, Program Director
Carole Colter		Livable Memphis
Executive Director, GrowMemphis		Mar 30 Planning for Conference
Nov 3 Faith-Based Community Development Initiatives		Apr 6 Planning for Conference
Kenny Latta, Community Mobilizer		Apr 13 <i>No Session: Study Day</i>
Center for Transforming Communities		Apr 20 Conference Re-Cap
Nov 10 Community Assets Map		Apr 27 HCD Poster Session
Nov 17 Presentations		May 4 <i>No Session: Study Day</i>
Nov 24 Presentations		
Dec 1 <i>No Session: Study Day</i>		



School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy

HCD Fellows Reports

2014—2015

In the following section, reports from each of the current 2014-2015 HCD Research Fellows, and the Green Fees intern, are presented for review.





Steven Payne

GRADUATE PROGRAM:

Applied Anthropology

GRADUATION:

December 2015

EDUCATION:

**B.A., Anthropology, Creative Writing
Florida State University**

HCD PLACEMENT:

Center for Transforming Communities

SUPERVISOR:

Amy Moritz

FACULTY MENTOR:

Kathryn Hicks

INTERESTS: labor unions, community organizing, political education

One of the main projects I have been working on is collecting data on indicators of neighborhood health in neighbors in which CTC works. CTC organizes in small geographic areas we call Shalom Zones. Neighborhood residents in Shalom Zones, after mapping out assets in their neighborhood, decide on a project that builds upon already existing assets to improve their neighborhoods

I have been collecting information that are indicators on neighborhood health for CTC to use as baseline data to look in the future at what kind of progress residents have made in improving their neighborhood. Some information came from the 2010 Census:

3		SMSZ	Percent	CT 49	CT 50
4	Total Population	4423	--	--	--
5	Total Black Population	4370	98.80%	--	--
6	Total White Population	12	0.27%	--	--
7	Total Hispanic Population	124	2.80%	--	--
8	Renters	1204	27.22%	--	--
9	Home owner	362	8.18%	--	--
10	Vacant Housing Units	417	--	--	--
11	Total Housing Units	1982	--	--	--
12	% Housing Units Vacant	21.04%	--	--	--
13	Median gross rent	--	--	\$ 420.00	\$ 327.80
14	% of Median HH income	--	--	30.89%	38.64%
15	Median monthly mortgage payment	--	--	\$ 489.00	\$ 710.70
16	% of Median HH income	--	--	35.97%	83.78%
17	Median HH income	--	--	\$ 16,315.00	\$ 10,420.00
18	Per Capita Income	\$ 7,685.98	--	\$ 10,179.00	\$ 4,721.00
19	Pop. below 150% of poverty level	3726	84.24%	--	--
20	Families in poverty	562	59.85%	--	--

Other data came from voting records:

--		SMSZ	Binghampton	The Corners	MIH	Shelby	TN
21							
22	2008	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	61.85%	65.88%
23	2010	21.11%	33.15%	25.24%	36.39%	38.47%	41.32%
24	2012	51.34%	58.64%	48.32%	64.72%	62.08%	61.86%
25	2014	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	36.64%	#DIV/0!
--							

I have collected other data, but this is representative of what I've done thus far.

**Meg Brown****GRADUATE PROGRAM:****Social Work****EXPECTED GRADUATION:****May 2015****EDUCATION:****B.S.W.****University of Mississippi****HCD PLACEMENT:****Behavioral Health Initiatives****Memphis Strong Families****SUPERVISOR:****Chere' Bradshaw****FACULTY MENTOR:****Shea Langs****INTERESTS:** children and families, support services

Through my fellowship at Behavioral Health Initiatives, I have primarily participated in the program evaluation of the Memphis Strong Families Initiative (MSFI). This program works to decrease family separation by providing an integrated system of care through stable housing and supportive services based on the evidence-based, trauma-informed model. The services provided operate from the founding beliefs of Housing First, which states that the essential need of housing must be met before other problems are addressed. Through this program, families are provided with safe, sustainable and affordable housing and wraparound services.

As the result of my work with the MSFI, I am learning the importance of critical thinking and problem solving as well as collaborating with others. Over the course of this semester, I have been given the opportunity to work on various projects that have pushed me to be more innovative, assertive, and competent in my skills and knowledge regarding providing services to children and families. Some projects include contributing to the MSFI Semi-Annual Evaluation Report, analyzing and organizing baseline data, and creating a data dictionary and glossary. I have also completed research on the trauma component of the client base. Through my research, I am exploring the creative ways the MSFI provides trauma-based services to homeless families who are at risk for domestic violence and child maltreatment. Upon completion, I intend to inform practice through a presentation at a national/regional conference and by sharing with the collaborating agencies of MSFI. Currently, I'm working on a new project that focuses on creating an approach to better engage the youth of the MSFI. I plan to meet with the adolescents/children individually, build rapport, and identify specific needs. Based on the information I gather, I will work to expand the MSFI partnerships regarding resources available to the youth of the program.

Through program evaluation, research, and other projects at my internship, I have grown to truly resonate with the goals of Memphis Strong Families Initiative; I fully believe in all that this Initiative hopes to accomplish in the community through the empowerment of Memphis' most vulnerable families. Within the program, there is an emphasis placed on providing wraparound services in addition to meeting an individual's basic needs, such as housing. These supports create an opportunity for these families to break the cycle of violence and poverty/homelessness and leave a legacy for their children. I believe that this program is more than a "temporary fix" but creates an opportunity for high-need families to start a new life for themselves and pave a redeemed path for future lives. The MSFI does not solely improve welfare in the present but seeks to instill skills that can be sustained for generations to come. I have greatly benefited from working on this Initiative and am looking forward to seeing what next semester holds.

**Rosa M Mena****GRADUATE PROGRAM:****Social Work****EXPECTED GRADUATION:****2016****EDUCATION:****B.A., Psychology****Universidad Incca de Colombia****HCD PLACEMENT:****Memphis Area Legal Services****SUPERVISOR:****Rita Gibson, Sapna Raj****FACULTY MENTOR:****Gregory Washington****INTERESTS:** domestic violence, welfare policy

My Internship at Memphis Fair House Center, a unit of Memphis Area Legal Services, has been a positive experience. I have received the support of my supervisors on a subject with which I was not familiar at all. As a social work student, MALS gives me the opportunity to connect knowledge from my courses, especially welfare and policy, into research about fair housing in the city of Memphis. Researching socioeconomic data and becoming familiar with Fair Housing Laws have been part of the first phase of my internship at MALS. The pace of the process has been slow. What I found very challenging was putting together the puzzle of different government organizations that are part of fair housing and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Another challenge has been to create time for interviews with agencies that receive CDBG funds.

I will continue with the second phase of the project which is about Affirmative Fording Fair Housing in Memphis. This project that was initiated by Stacy Elliott, who was a former HCD Fellow. After becoming familiar with his results I started to work on expanding a questionnaire, learning to use data and maps, and including new agencies to be interviewed during my second phase at MALS. Some Latino agencies will also be included.

With coordination of the Fair Housing Center I will research, compile, and analyze new data from the interviews to agencies that receive CDBG funds. We want to know what the barriers are to furthering affirmative fair housing in the city of Memphis.

**Ian Preston**

GRADUATE PROGRAM:
EXPECTED GRADUATION:
EDUCATION:

City and Regional Planning
May 2015
B.A., Environmental Studies
Rhodes College

HCD PLACEMENT:
SUPERVISOR:

Frayser CDC
Steve Lockwood

FACULTY MENTOR:

Charlie Santo

INTERESTS: livability — walkability, transportation

Accomplishing tasks and achieving set goals are essential to the HCD Fellowship program and the student's educational experience. I feel that my contributions to Frayser Community Development Corporation have been significant and welcomed over the past semester. However, I also believe that integrating knowledge of the surrounding neighborhood and community is key to every Fellow's professional, academic, and personal development. Through my work at Frayser CDC, including the Frayser Property Conditions Report and the Grandview North Neighborhood Evaluation Survey, I have grown familiar with the area's geography, residents, housing and commercial stock. My projects required that I be out in the community, observing its many strengths and weaknesses.

For the Frayser Property Conditions Report, which will carry into the next semester, I traveled through Frayser and collected data on the physical conditions of every parcel in the area. With the help of new software and in collaboration with the Binghampton CDC, we now have a parcel database that allows the user to photograph and record notes about each parcel using a mobile phone and update the data automatically onto the server. This data is extremely valuable to us for use in other capacities, such as calculating tax arrears and for making recommendations to the city.

The Frayser staff and I are also working with City Councilman Strickland to determine which condemned properties in Frayser would be worth saving, and would thus be a better investment for preserving surrounding property values and improving neighborhood character. There are houses that are better off receiving a quick, inexpensive fix rather than being torn down. Which properties are these and in what neighborhoods are they located? I look forward to answering these questions next semester.



Evan Morrison

GRADUATE PROGRAM:

City and Regional Planning

EXPECTED GRADUATION:

May 2015

EDUCATION:

B.A., Political Science, International Studies, Economics; B.S., Mathematics

University of Memphis

HCD PLACEMENT:

BRIDGES

SUPERVISOR:

Dana Wilson

FACULTY MENTOR:

Antonio Raciti

INTERESTS: community action, community participation, youth voice, collaborative planning, communicative planning, PAR (participatory action research)

This semester I have been blessed to work at one of the most empowering and impactful nonprofits in Memphis, BRIDGES. BRIDGES “unites and inspires diverse young people to become confident and courageous leaders committed to community transformation.” I am actually one of the thousands of youth BRIDGES has impacted. I first got involved with BRIDGES when I was twelve through the Future Builder program, and later on in high school through their Bridge Builder program. It has been a wonderful experience working in the organization that has shaped so many positive values into my life.

At BRIDGES, my role as a HCD Fellow is twofold: first, I serve as one of the CHANGE facilitators; second, I aid the creation, execution and evaluation of community action days. CHANGE is a group of 22 highly dedicated and motivated high school students seeking to foster social justice through community organizing. The youth chose their own issues to tackle for the year, and utilize the BRIDGES resources to mobilize youth and create a change around those issues. This year the youth have chosen to address youth voice in schools, youth voice within the city, youth participation in school food decisions, and juvenile justice. My job as a fellow has been to impart in them organizing skills, effective and powerful communication techniques, and any other resources that help them reap positive change in our city. One of the biggest goals of CHANGE right now, and one that ties into my planning background, is the event they are hosting January 17th called Youth Ignite Memphis. For this event, CHANGE has gathered over 20 applications that seek to promote a solution to issues in Memphis that affect youth in general. Of these 20 applications, 8-10 have been selected to present at the event in January to over 300 youth and adults. These selected ideas will be voted on by youth, and the top three will receive \$200 and the support of the CHANGERS to help make their solutions work. Out of this process, CHANGE seeks to show Memphis that the youth are capable of making a difference, and they are not trouble makers that cause destruction and violence, but rather change makers that build a better society.

In my second role, I have assisted in creating, running, and evaluating community action days. Community action days are a required component for the larger Bridge Builder Collaborate, the main program of BRIDGES serving over 1,200 youth across the city. Each one to the 1,200 youth has to attend one community action day per semester. These days are designed to connect youth with community organizations that are making a difference in Memphis, and to inspire the youth to address the issues they see around them by mobilizing others. These events have been hugely successful and have included: Mentor Up, an event designed to foster intergenerational relationships by tearing down stereotypes between seniors and youth through facilitated exchanges of youth mentoring seniors on technology, and seniors mentoring youth with wise advice; McKellar Lake Clean Up, an event crafted through a partnership with the University of Memphis, Memphis City Beautiful and others that seeks to promote environmental justice by showcasing how trash from one neighborhood affects another and eventually the entire city. These events, and many more, have begun a process that will shape our youth into becoming empowered change agents for our city.

**Carly Haithcock****GRADUATE PROGRAM:****EXPECTED GRADUATION:****EDUCATION:****HCD PLACEMENT:****SUPERVISOR:****FACULTY MENTOR:****INTERESTS:** revitalization, planning with respect to public health, ped/bike infrastructure**City and Regional Planning****May 2016****B.S., Civil Engineering****Auburn University****University Neighborhood Development Corporation****David Cox****Charlie Santo**

I began the semester working on a cemetery rehabilitation project in the Normal Station neighborhood of the University District. Three other departments from the University have partnered to design a park to improve the lot. I also worked on the Walker Avenue Streetscape Improvements to ensure that approvals were being made and forwarded so construction can begin. Finally, I summarized all of the UNDC's comment letters to the City regarding developments in the District in an effort to show that the UNDC is not anti-development but works to improve the aesthetic of the District.

I transitioned to working with Dr. David Cox in November. I am researching what indicators and metrics can be analyzed to judge the impact of anchor institutions (like the University) on their surrounding neighborhoods. The Democracy Collaborative and four other urban universities have partnered together to work on this as well. I am researching Business Improvement Districts to discover best practices. BIDs are an assessment paid by commercial property owners that is earmarked for improvements in the area of the BID. There are many BIDs throughout the country, but we are focusing on those with similar scale, scope, and location to model our BID with best practices. I am also looking at the differences and similarities between wealth and income in terms of poverty. Memphis has the highest rate of poverty among large US metros. Mayor Wharton's plan, Blueprint for Prosperity, focuses on what the city can do to improve this. My particular interest in this comes my belief that planning, and lack of, can affect public health and the local economy more than many people realize. I am enjoying the opportunity to research and learn on my own as well as contribute my own ideas.

**Kody Kirby****GRADUATE PROGRAM:****Applied Anthropology****EXPECTED GRADUATION:****May 2016****EDUCATION:****B.A., Applied Cultural Anthropology****Ball State University****HCD PLACEMENT:****United Housing, Inc.****SUPERVISOR:****Tim Bolding, Amy Schaftlein, Anna Gattuso****FACULTY MENTOR:****Micah Trapp****INTERESTS:** sustainable community development, food production and access, environmental anthropology

This semester I have had the chance to work on many projects at United Housing Inc. (UHI). The organization focuses primarily on community building and stabilization through facilitating first-time homeownership and foreclosure prevention, however, their efforts in incorporating environmentally sustainable measures into both their homebuyer education and home building/renovation efforts has offered me many opportunities to gain experience in environmental anthropology, my field of choice.

Building off of work done by past HCD fellows (Anna Gattuso and April Steele), UHI has begun to develop their NeighborScape gardening and landscaping project. The project involves both the development of a curriculum to be incorporated as an optional add-on to UHI's current Homebuyer Education Program as well as a demonstration garden at UHI's office to be used as an outdoor classroom. The curriculum, focused on teaching low-cost, low-maintenance, and environmentally-sound approaches to lawn care and landscaping is the result of the realization of the importance of landscaping in fostering a sense of community. Designs for the demonstration garden have been developed as part of a service learning element of an architecture class led by Professor Jenna Thompson. My part in this process has been to facilitate the formation of a NeighborScape Advisory Committee (NAC), consisting of homebuyer education graduates (new home owners!) to guide the process of developing both the curriculum and demonstration garden. I additionally have served as a point of contact for the NeighborScape project, and have conducted research on sustainable gardening and landscaping best practices as a means of building a relevant knowledge-base with which to move forward.

Additional projects I have worked on during my first semester at UHI have included the development of a senior community at Wolf River Bluffs which conforms to low-impact design principles. This project is also part of a service learning element for Professor Thompson's class. I have taken part in UHI's visioning session with the students, and compiled designs from both students and architecture firms into a low-impact design book which showcases possible development approaches. Beyond this, I have additionally taken a small part in the grant-writing process, proofreading and in some cases taking part in developing our applications.

Overall, my time at UHI has given me excellent opportunities to gain experience in community outreach and engagement, working within interdisciplinary collaborations, the grant-writing process, and professional writing and communication in general.

**Bennett Smithhart**

GRADUATE PROGRAM: City and Regional Planning
EXPECTED GRADUATION: May 2015
EDUCATION: Landscape Architecture
Mississippi State University
HCD PLACEMENT: TIGUrS
(Funded by Green Fees)
SUPERVISOR: Karyl Buddington
FACULTY MENTOR: Charlie Santo
INTERESTS: landscape architecture, urban design, urban planning

My placement is in the TIGUrS Urban Gardens located here on campus at the University of Memphis. The goal of TIGUrS urban gardens is to provide the school and local community with fresh food and education about sustainable food practices. The TIGUrS garden is involved in many on campus and community events. This year we have been involved in the Tiger Blue Goes Green and the Health Fair. Our goal at these events was to education the community and student body about the gardens. The student body was surprisingly unaware the gardens existed. This gave us an opportunity to inform and educate the student body about TIGUrS gardens and sustainable food practices. The sweet potato pull is our own event that we organize each year. The gardens give out sweet potatoes and other vegetables to the community.

We have also looked at how we can physically make the gardens a better community asset. One of the major problems is that people do not know when it is a proper time to pick the vegetables. The solution we came up with is to have information signs posted in each of the gardens. This will allow students and community members to know what plants are ripe and to inform them about what garden events are happening.

Next we looked at building an outdoor classroom. The outdoor classroom is one of the things I am most excited about. The outdoor classroom is an exceptional way to get students from the school to experience nature and natural organic food production at its finest. The classroom should be low impact and low cost. My goal with the design of the classroom is to create a product that everyone can use without putting a strain on the budget.

The HCD experience has been positive and has been a beneficial addition to my studies here at the University of Memphis. Having engaged scholarship not only lets me serve my community but gives me a more thorough education and perspective on the future. The interdisciplinary group of fellows gives an eye opening perspective on community engagement. Throughout my undergraduate and graduate studies my perspective has been based on my major or the class I am taking. The HCD fellow body is based on the student's desire to make a difference through multiple disciplines. As a future city planner, this perspective will be valuable to my career and my ability to make a difference in my community.



Courtney McNeal

GRADUATE PROGRAM: Public and Nonprofit Administration

EXPECTED GRADUATION: May 2015

EDUCATION: B.P.S. Child Development
University of Memphis

HCD PLACEMENT: Community Development Council

SUPERVISOR: Emily Trenholm

FACULTY MENTOR: Leigh Hersey

INTERESTS: community revitalization, public outreach/community engagement, program & plan development (volunteer & strategic)

As a second year fellow, I have been privileged enough to continue my internship experience at the Community Development Council of Greater Memphis (CD Council) with Emily Trenholm. This continuation enabled me to strengthen relationships that were established during my first year as a fellow as well as seeing how various projects that I have worked on affected other organizations. For example, I learned at a seminar class that the personnel policy handbook that I redeveloped has been used at a member organization, Center for Transforming Communities (CTC). Furthermore, my placement at CD Council has also enabled me to work on enhancing specific skills and areas of interests by engaging in assisting with an event that occurs on an annual basis, MEMFix. Although my placement starts towards the end of the planning of this event, I was able to build more on volunteer coordinating practices, which is also a continuation of me developing a volunteer program last year for the organization.

In addition to working with coordinating the volunteer component for MEMFix, I have also engaged in other projects. I recently had an independent project where I developed a business continuity plan for the CD Council. This project has enabled me to understand the importance of having a strategic plan if a disaster occurs. While engaging in putting this document together, I had the opportunity to research best practices for business continuity plans for various organizations, which illustrated that what might be critical to one organization might not be critical to another. In addition, the research enabled me to see how the makeup and size of an organization, affects as well as determines what should be included in an organization business continuity plan. I enjoyed working on this project because I was able to gain knowledge and enhance skills by researching and putting the plan together. Furthermore, next semester I plan to extend my engagement in this area of interest by researching best practices and developing a succession plan, which aligns to a business continuity plan. I am excited that my project will be a valuable asset not only to CD Council, but also its member organizations, which is a prime example of having connectivity and sharing resources amongst the community organizations.

Along with my major projects, there are side projects that I also engaged in. For example, I had the privilege to sit in on the Klondike/ Smokey City CDC PJA meeting. CD Council has recently hired a Capacity Builder who goes out into the community and enhances member organizations capacity. He thought it would be a great idea for me to go out in the field and observe this particular organization's meeting. My duty was to observe and take notes on highlights and oddities. The purpose was to focus on the context of the meeting, and not the content. I thought this was a very interesting way to view a meeting, that I had never done before. Our Capacity Builder wanted to see if my perspective was similar to his, which will also help him in his role as building capacity within this particular CDC. In addition, I think it was great assisting in capacity building being that I lack experience in that particular area. Hopefully, next semester I can continue to assist with capacity building projects.

Overall, this semester as a fellow has been very valuable for various reasons. I was able to build and strengthen work relationships with CD Council staff as well as partners that I have worked with in the past, I was also able to help with another MEMFix event, as well as gain experience in new areas, such as capacity building. Moreover, the experience has been extremely rewarding knowing that my prior work with the organization has served as a useful resource at other organizations. Once again, this semester has been valuable and I cannot wait to see what my last semester has in store for me!

**Josh Conley****GRADUATE PROGRAM:****EXPECTED GRADUATION:****EDUCATION:****HCD PLACEMENT:****SUPERVISOR:****FACULTY MENTOR:****City and Regional Planning****May 2015****B.A., History****Middle Tennessee State University****City of Memphis Chief Administrative Office****Maura Sullivan****Antonio Raciti**

This semester, my work with the City of Memphis' Chief Administrator's Office has been focused on the Edge/Medical District in Memphis and its future plans as an innovation district for the city. Following the City of Memphis' involvement with the Urban Land Institute's Rose Fellowship over the past year in which the city was task of identifying and addressing a major land use concern, the question became "what next?" While the answer to that question remains out of focus at this point, one of the routes that the city is taking to ensure a vibrant future for this specific neighborhood is to make it easier for developers and property owners to do business with the city and rehabilitate their properties.

The Edge is rife with buildings in need of attention (aesthetic, structural, etc.) and one of the issues raised during the city's research is that often people misinterpret to difficulty, reasoning, or meaning of the local building codes and instead go through the perceived headache of that process. This misinterpretation typically leads to property owners or would-be developers instead doing nothing for their building, perpetuating a pattern of blight and neglect in what could potentially be a thriving downtown neighborhood. To combat this, I was charged with developing a small booklet which essentially translates certain difficult parts of the building code into more graspable language. In order to complete this, I have taken to interviewing property owners, individuals who have rehabbed buildings in the area and across Memphis before, and reviewing the building code for cumbersome and un-necessary pieces.

**Brent Duke****GRADUATE PROGRAM:** Public and Nonprofit Administration**EXPECTED GRADUATION:** May 2015**EDUCATION:** M.A., B.A. Political Science
University of Memphis**PLACEMENT:** Strengthening Communities Initiative
(Funded by SUAPP)**SUPERVISOR/MENTOR:** Leigh Hersey

Over the summer of 2014, I began my work as the Graduate Assistant responsible for coordinating the Strengthening Communities Initiative (SCI) at the University of Memphis. The SCI provides funding to support the development and implementation of collaborative and innovative community projects that build the capacity of grassroots and community-based organizations. Capacity Building Grants are awarded to teams, consisting of nonprofits, community-based organizations, and/or grassroots groups and University of Memphis faculty and students, for projects that are framed by engaged scholarship. The SCI Capacity Building Grant awards are offered annually in partnership with the Community Foundation of Greater Memphis, United Way of the Mid-South, and the University of Memphis Engaged Scholarship Faculty Committee. Small Grants are awarded to nonprofit organizations for a one-time community development project, preferably to support initial work that will lead to a future Capacity Building Grant. The SCI Small Grant awards are offered annually with funding from the Learning by Giving Foundation.

This semester, my responsibilities have included coordinating communication and activities of the Executive Committee and the Administrative Team; coordinating all activities related to previous grant recipients, including planning a bi-annual grant recipient meeting; carrying out all activities related to the new grant cycle, planning interest meetings, and accepting applications. Through my involvement in the SCI grant program, I have gained understanding of the role of policy and planning in community development projects, as well as of the role of SCI, nonprofit organizations, and engaged scholarship in driving community revitalization.

Before my predecessor, Carole Ann Walker, left she prepared an updated SCI timeline (with detailed notes), organized all the files and saved all of her emails for use as templates in the future. In order to improve organization and clarity, I am updating the timeline throughout the semester, making changes in order to keep the timeline up to date for the next coordinator. I have also been working on a report that details the history of the SCI, highlighting the grantees and their work in the Memphis community. The report has been a collaboration of the entire SCI Administrative Team (Dr. Stan Hyland, Dr. Leigh Hersey, and Dr. Katherine Lambert-Pennington). The document provides a comprehensive look at the impact that SCI grants have had on engaged scholarship and student involvement at the University of Memphis and in the community. It will inform our community partners that their support has yielded results and furthered the goals set out when the SCI began in 2008.



Katie Buchl-Morales

GRADUATE PROGRAM: City and Regional Planning

EXPECTED GRADUATION: May 2015

EDUCATION: B.A. Spanish, Literature
Pacific Lutheran University

PLACEMENT: Community LIFT
(Funded by Community LIFT)

SUPERVISOR: Eric Robertson

FACULTY MENTOR: Charlie Santo

INTERESTS: economic development

I have greatly enjoyed my first semester as an HCD Fellow at Community LIFT, and it has been a pleasure to attend the weekly HCD class seminars to discuss site work and learn from other HCD Fellows in the room. Each week I look forward to meeting and learning from the invited guest speakers that join us from diverse organizations throughout the Memphis area, to talk about their individual organization's unique approach to community development. When there is not a speaker scheduled, we each report to the larger group regarding our current work. With the facilitation of Marie and Dr. Hyland, we are connecting the dots between our respective organizations, identifying similarities and supporting each other. As a result of the class, I am more connected and informed about community development work in Memphis and more aware of general happenings in the city.

In my first semester as an HCD Fellow at LIFT, my work has primarily been focused on researching neighborhood economies. I completed an economic analysis at the neighborhood level for South Memphis and for the Memphis MSA to identify economic industry clusters. The purpose of this research is to identify industry sectors in South Memphis and the Memphis MSA that have a competitive advantage. The long-term objective, as I have defined it, is to improve access to living wage jobs for a community with barriers to employment opportunity. Understanding competitive advantage is crucial for future economic development. This project has allowed me to directly apply methods and techniques taught in my first year planning courses to my work at my HCD site. I have also had the opportunity to work closely with the LIFT team to surpass our fundraising goal to raise over \$8,000 in an IOBY fundraising match campaign to build a bus shelter in South Memphis. Both projects have afforded me the opportunity to utilize classroom knowledge and also develop my skills and experience in data collection and analysis, mapping, graphic design, fundraising strategies, writing and public speaking.

Moving forward to the spring semester, I will work towards completing my research on neighborhood economies, economic development, industry sectors and the criteria used by site selectors when choosing new facility locations. I will also collect and compile demographic data for the city of Memphis and LIFT's three target neighborhoods: Frayser, Binghampton and Upper South Memphis. These data will be used to create a comprehensive demographic profile to provide context to the work we are doing and will assist in future grant applications.

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