

**THE CAPSTONE  
PROGRAM  
2010-2011**

**Project Summaries**

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY  
ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE SCHOOL  
OF PUBLIC SERVICE

**NYUWagner**

## **A University Resource**

The Capstone Program was originally funded with a generous grant from the Ford Foundation. Since 1995, more than 3,900 students have participated in over 800 projects for more than 600 organizations. Their work has enabled clients to analyze complex issues, make tough decisions, identify new opportunities, and advance their missions. Through careful oversight and guidance, the program has become a valuable service that NYU Wagner proudly offers to the city, the region, and the world.

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# Capstone is Learning in Action

**Capstone**, in architecture, is the crowning piece of an arch, the center stone that holds the arch together, giving it shape and strength. Wagner’s Capstone program plays a similar role, by providing students with a centerpiece of their graduate experience whereby they are able to experience first-hand turning the theory of their studies into practice under the guidance of an experienced faculty member. Projects require students to get up-to-speed quickly on a specific content or issue area; enhance key process skills including project management and teamwork; and develop competency in gathering, analyzing, and reporting out on data. Capstone requires students to interweave their learning in all these areas, and to do so in real time, in an unpredictable, complex, real-world environment.

As part of the core curriculum of the NYU Wagner Masters program, Capstone teams spend an academic year addressing challenges and identifying opportunities for a client organization or conducting research on a pressing social question. The summaries in this booklet represent the culmination of this year’s 84 projects.

***“We are immensely proud of the work our students have done, grateful to the faculty who have taught and guided them, and appreciative of our clients’ trust in us.”***

–Dean Ellen Schall, *NYU Wagner*



# **PROJECT SUMMARIES**

# Advanced Projects in PNP Finance and Policy

FACULTY: CHARLES BRECHER AND MARIA DOULIS

## **Brennan Center for Justice**

*Determining the Empirical Impact of Corporate Independent Expenditures on Elections and Political Integrity*

The Brennan Center for Justice at the NYU School of Law is a non-partisan think tank that combines public policy and public interest law to advocate for measurable legislative and legal changes that advance fundamental issues of democracy and justice in the legal sector. Following the *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* Supreme Court decision, the Brennan Center for Justice commissioned a Capstone team to examine the impact that corporate independent expenditures have on representative democracy. To understand the effect, the Capstone team compared trends in democratic indicators such as voter turnout, electoral competitiveness, and corruption convictions across states with varying historical restrictions on corporate independent expenditures. The information was compiled and analyzed to support the Brennan Center's campaign finance litigation efforts.

Capstone Team: Richard Lee, Manuel Morales, Alexandra Nigolian, Natalie Pregibon, Emily Ryder

## **Congressional Research Service**

*Improving the Effectiveness of the Supplemental Security Income Program*

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) works for the U.S. Congress to identify and clarify policy problems, explore policy options and potential impacts, monitor and assess program implementation and oversight, and help lawmakers understand legislative procedures and processes. CRS was interested in understanding why the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, which acts as a safety net against poverty for the elderly, blind, and disabled, has not grown in enrollment as rapidly as other income assistance programs. The client requested a Capstone team to study the effects of proposed SSI policies on enrollment, program cost, and the percentage of recipients under the federal poverty line. The Capstone team considered the effects of three SSI policy proposals, including the elimination of Social Security income, to calculate SSI benefits. The team also paid special attention to the incidence of poverty among the elderly recipients, particularly those individuals aged 85 and older.

Capstone Team: Michelle Choi, Stephen Friday, Ginny Glenn, Diana Huynh, Lily Williamson

### **Cricket Island Foundation & Social Justice Philanthropy Collaborative**

*Analyzing the Impact of the 2008 Financial Crisis on the Field of National Social Justice Philanthropy*

Concerned that the full impact of the 2008 financial crisis has not yet been felt in the field of social justice philanthropy, Cricket Island Foundation (CIF), a New York-based foundation supporting youth-led social change, partnered with the Social Justice Philanthropy Collaborative (SJPC), a network of national philanthropic organizations that calls on grantmakers and donors to deepen their commitment to funding social change. Together they requested a Capstone team to assess the current asset value, spending rate, and investment strategies of national social justice funders and to project what those might look like through 2015. The Capstone team designed criteria to determine which foundations to study, created an interview tool, conducted background research and financial modeling on the study population, interviewed a subset of foundations, and highlighted emerging trends. The Capstone team presented its findings to the clients who will use this research to publish a report for national social justice funders and their grantees. The clients will use this data to drive long-term fund-

ing strategies and educate grantees about the financial health of the field.

Capstone Team: Shangshang Chen, Didi Ilunga, Kaity Ng, Kelly Richardson, Amita Swadhin

### **New York City Department of Finance Commercial Fleet Programs**

The New York City Department of Finance (DOF) is the primary revenue collection agency for City government. DOF currently offers four programs designed to facilitate summons closure for owners of commercial fleets. The programs range from simple notification programs to substantial discounts in return for the commercial entity waiving its rights to contest a summons. The DOF engaged the Capstone team to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of its programs and determine whether they are still appropriate solutions to the present-day challenges and needs of commercial ticketing in NYC. The team conducted interviews with different stakeholders, researched best practices in other municipalities, and conducted quantitative data analysis to produce a report for the DOF. The report contains feasible policy and procedural recommendations that will help DOF improve and re-envision these programs with respect to the agency's policy objectives.

Capstone Team: Carmen Montes de Oca, Christina Drake, Minghui Fu, Chi-San Lo, Junjie Tang

## **New York City Department of Transportation**

### *Lifecycle Cost Analysis of Sustainable Streetscape Projects*

In the design and construction of its streets and public spaces, NYCDOT seeks to use designs and materials that are high quality, durable, and cost effective. Currently, the full lifecycle costs and benefits of materials and designs are not considered when assessing NYCDOT capital streetscape projects. To help NYCDOT better understand the full lifecycle costs and benefits of various design and material choices, the Capstone team analyzed data on recent NYCDOT capital projects through two lenses: the current capital budget approach and the lifecycle costing analysis approach. The team conducted research on materials and designs currently used in sustainable streetscape projects in NYC, Chicago, and London. The results of the comparative analysis will be a useful framework for NYCDOT and other city agencies to use to assess future capital projects.

Capstone Team: Carrie David, LaVicke Jones, Edna Marinelarena, Jennifer Proulx, Yvonne Wang

## **The Office of the Bronx Borough President**

### *Redevelopment Models and Analysis of the Kingsbridge Armory*

The Kingsbridge Armory in the Bronx is a 575,000 square ft space that has been predominately vacant since 1994. The City is currently seeking a sustainable redevelopment plan for the Armory that is appropriate for the local community. The Capstone team was engaged to work with the Office of the Bronx Borough President and the Kingsbridge Armory Task Force to develop financial models for the redevelopment of the Kingsbridge Armory. The Capstone team conducted a literature review, interviews, and a retail survey of the Kingsbridge neighborhood. As a final deliverable the team developed three financial models for the redevelopment along with baseline criteria to use to evaluate future Request for Proposals to redevelop the space.

Capstone Team: Tracy Clayton, Ana Farinha, Jacqueline Kennedy, Chelsea Rao, Kate Reynolds

# Advanced Projects in PNP Policy and Management

FACULTY: ANA OLIVEIRA AND DENNIS SMITH

## **Education for Employment Foundation**

*Designing, Implementing, and Evaluating a Public Administration Training Program for Public Sector Employees in Jordan*

The Education for Employment Foundation aims to create job opportunities for unemployed youth in the Middle East and North Africa by providing them with professional and technical training. The organization's affiliate in Jordan, the Jordan Career Education Foundation, and the King Abdullah II Fund for Development, requested a Capstone team to create a public administration training program for entry-level government employees in Jordan. The goal of this pilot program was two-fold: to increase retention in the public sector, and to provide employees with the skills and competencies needed to advance to managerial roles. The Capstone team designed a 30-hour training course and delivered the training to two groups of 25 participants through one-week sessions in October and March in Amman, Jordan. The program included topics such as strategic planning, managing people, project management, performance measurement and management, leadership, and decision-making processes. Additionally, the Capstone team designed and implemented an evaluation tool based on surveys to measure the effectiveness of the trainings.

Capstone Team: Lindsey Foss, Daria Hirsch, Marc Minor, David Colby Reed, Donia Saeidi

## **Legal Information for Families Today**

*Unrepresented Litigants' Bill of Rights for New York City Family Court*

Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT) provides support and services to litigants navigating the Family Court system without an attorney. LIFT recognized that unrepresented litigants often do not understand their basic rights, creating a significant obstacle to their success in court. The Capstone team helped LIFT develop the first Unrepresented Litigants' Bill of Rights and provided recommendations for the implementation and dissemination of the document. Using surveys, interviews, and focus groups with unrepresented litigants and court staff, the Capstone team researched how much litigants know about their rights, and whether the Litigants' Bill of Rights could be used in Family Court. The Bill of Rights and final report will help LIFT improve its services in Family Court and provide recommendations for how to improve the overall court process.

Capstone Team: Diana Benton, Rachael Goldstein, Jessica Harris, Amalea Smirniotopoulos

## **Legal Momentum**

### *Pipeline Project Evaluation*

Legal Momentum works with career and technical education (CTE) high schools in New York City to improve the recruitment and retention of girls. Legal Momentum's Pipeline Project seeks to increase the number of middle school and high school aged girls in non-traditional (male-dominated) CTE programs, which lead to occupations with higher wages, better benefits, and greater opportunities for professional growth. The Pipeline Project currently operates in seven CTE high schools in New York City. The Capstone team developed and implemented a survey-based program evaluation to assess perceptions, attitudes, and decision factors of students, faculty, and administrators. The results were used to evaluate the impact of the program and identify opportunities for future program expansion.

Capstone Team: Lizzie Gelber, Yael Kalban, Becca Lewis, Tom Ogletree

## **New York City Office of Emergency Management**

### *Are you Ready, New York? Developing and Piloting an Evaluative Tool for Assessing a NYC Emergency Preparedness Program*

The Incident Based Distribution Program (IBD) operated by Ready New York mails emergency preparedness literature to

areas recently affected by emergencies in order to increase public safety and encourage New Yorkers to prepare for emergency situations. IBD had not been evaluated to determine whether the program actually increases public preparedness. The Capstone team developed and implemented a randomized experiment, distributing surveys to both control and treatment groups, to assess whether receipt of the materials had a measurable impact on emergency preparedness. The Capstone team used survey results and qualitative data from focus groups to provide recommendations on how the program can be modified in order to achieve its mission.

Capstone Team: Marjorie Doudnikoff, Joanna Kliger, Brianne Lute, Merideth Weber

## **New York City Office of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services**

### *Improving Housing Options for Youth Transitioning Out of Foster Care*

In New York City approximately 1,200 youth ages 18-21 leave the foster care system each year. Because young adults transitioning out of foster care are at greater risk of becoming homeless, the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services and the Administration for Children's Services engaged the Capstone team to improve housing outcomes for youth leaving foster care. The Capstone team examined exist-

ing support systems through extensive interviews, surveys, and focus groups. In addition, the team examined the policy environment and best practices for programs targeting youth in foster care. The team developed a final report that provides an in-depth look at the support systems and housing options available to youth transitioning out of foster care, analyzes strengths and gaps in service, and presents recommendations to improve housing outcomes through changes in process, data collection, communication, and oversight.

Capstone Team: Aya Keefe, Rebecca Kirchheimer, Norma Peña, Jessie Ulsoy, Claire Vancauwemberge, Brandon West

## **Sauti Yetu Center for African Women and Families**

### *Developing Monitoring and Evaluation Tools*

Sauti Yetu Center for African Women and Families is a small nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of African immigrant women and their families in New York City. To support its ongoing growth, Sauti Yetu engaged a Capstone team to develop a monitoring and evaluation process for its Family Violence Prevention and Education Program. This program provides culturally competent case management, counseling services, and parenting classes to approximately 250 clients each year. The Capstone team

conducted site visits, an administrative data review, qualitative interviews with staff and clients, and researched best practices to develop a program logic model, an end-of-service client survey, and a qualitative interview assessment for Sauti Yetu's parenting classes. These tools will enable Sauti Yetu to more effectively capture the impact of its services, assess client satisfaction, and communicate with external stakeholders, including funders and other community partners.

Capstone Team: Angela Cheng, Andrea Cox, Nick Farrell, Emily Kluver, Liz Orum

## **The White House Project**

### *Building Blocks for Growth*

The White House Project (TWHP) is a national nonprofit organization that uses multi-platform programs to advance women's leadership in all communities and across sectors—up to the U.S. presidency—by filling the leadership pipeline with a diverse, critical mass of women. Now at a pivotal point in its organizational lifecycle, TWHP requested a Capstone team to gather information about the organization's capacity to expand its programmatic reach. To help TWHP understand its growth potential, the Capstone team first compiled and reviewed program survey data to develop an alumnae tracking instrument and analyzed the organization's financial condition. Then, the team compiled a variety of growth strategies

and best practices through an environmental scan and included recommendations for an “incubator model” of expansion. Finally, the team provided a general list of indicators of successful growth and obstacles for TWHP to consider when undertaking expansion. The Capstone team intends for the report to enable TWHP to develop the financial

requirements and operational strategies necessary to facilitate growth as the organization seeks to reach more women across the country and have a greater influence nationally.

Capstone Team: Lauren Caruso, Marcus Escobedo, Edline Jacquet, Carly Marie Knudson, Lauren Sargent

## Advanced Projects in PNP Policy

FACULTY: CHARLES BRECHER

### **East River Development Alliance**

*Assessing Access to Healthy Food in Long Island City*

The East River Development Alliance (ERDA) engaged a Capstone team to research food security in the local community where ERDA works in Long Island City. This area includes the public housing developments of Queensbridge Houses, Astoria Houses, and Ravenswood Houses. The goal of the project was to assess the level of food security in the neighborhood and propose recommendations on how to increase access to healthy food. The Capstone team used elements from the USDA to conduct a quality needs assessment. The team surveyed residents, area vendors, and focus groups to conduct a formal needs assessment. The results highlighted the need for increased access

to fresh and high quality food in the neighborhood. The Capstone team’s report provided recommendations for programs and initiatives to improve access to high quality, healthy food.

Capstone Team: Angela Aloia, Gabrielle Blavatsky, Elizabeth Ridge Cole, Katie Plat, Adina Wolf

### **Hudson Guild**

*Measuring the Impact of PowerUp*

The Capstone team worked to improve Hudson Guild’s ability to track and report on outcomes achieved through its programs for at-risk individuals and families. Specifically, the team focused on Hudson Guild’s PowerUp program that provides work experience and academic and emotional support to help underserved youth in Chelsea

achieve full-time employment. The Capstone team worked closely with the Hudson Guild staff to design a set of recommendations for tracking and reporting program outcomes in order to facilitate improved organizational responsiveness and self-evaluation.

Capstone Team: Jocelyn Alter, Ben Carney, Brian Marson, Tomasz Tuleja, Sam Wright

### **Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ**

#### *Economic Development and Job Creation*

Local 32BJ membership is comprised of service employees, including maintenance, janitorial and construction workers, security guards, and doormen. The union wants to ensure that economic development funding is spent creating meaningful jobs for its members. New York State has

an expansive set of economic development programs to promote commercial activity, job creation, and economic opportunity. However, economic development programs are often criticized for failing to create jobs or adhere to reporting requirements to inform the public about job creation outcomes. The Capstone team evaluated four New York State economic development programs that affect members of SEIU Local 32BJ: the Excelsior Jobs Program, Power for Jobs, the Metropolitan Economic Revitalization Fund, and Industrial Development Agencies. The Capstone team's final report includes recommendations for creating job standards to improve these programs.

Capstone Team: Ariel Dvorkin, Sara Friedman, Blake Kohn, Johnathon Pierce, Kiran Savage-Sangwan

## **Advanced Projects in PNP Management**

FACULTY: RONA AFFOUMADO

### **Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health**

#### *Improving Access: Identifying Barriers to Services for Formerly Incarcerated Individuals*

The Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health (AAIUH) designs, incubates, and replicates community-based behavioral interventions that empower individuals to address

health disparities in urban communities. AAIUH implements several barbershop-based health interventions that train barbers to serve as lay health advocates. The organization is currently developing the ACCESS project, a barbershop-based program that seeks to increase the number of formerly incarcerated minorities utilizing social services that promote successful re-

entry. AAIUH requested a Capstone team to assist in clarifying the barriers facing the target population when attempting to access services and identify strategies that may increase access. The Capstone team researched current literature regarding barriers to successful re-entry and developed and administered a questionnaire for service providers to document barriers at the local level. The final report outlines findings and provides recommendations to practitioners, policy makers, and prison officials.

Capstone Team: Nicole Allen, Brigit Beyea, Elizabeth Olsson, Alvin Phillips, Naomi Rabeeya

**Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A**  
*Developing Logic Models and Evaluation Tools to Increase Understanding of the Impact of a New York City Legal Services Nonprofit Organization*

Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A (Brooklyn A) contracted with the Capstone team to research and design logic models and an impact evaluation tool for two practice areas that provide legal counsel and representation to community-based organizations and low-income tenants in North and East Brooklyn: Community and Economic Development Unit (CEDU) and Group Representation Unit (GRU). Through interviews with a variety of stakeholders, the team explored the role and impact of Brooklyn A as an intermediary within the

larger context of health and housing initiatives in low-income communities. The Capstone team produced several deliverables for Brooklyn A: four logic models (two each for CEDU and GRU) that explicate the program theory and primary and secondary outcomes of Brooklyn A's work; a report compiling research and recommendations regarding logic model design and use; and a survey tool enabling Brooklyn A to improve performance measurement and tracking, assess program outcomes, and communicate the contribution of legal services to outcomes of partner organizations and the community at large.

Capstone Team: Agust Olafur Agustsson, Carly Einstein, Julia Root, Barbara Taylor, Kate Vacanti

**The Partnership for the Homeless**  
*Supporting and Preventing Homelessness among the Elderly in the South Bronx*

The Partnership for the Homeless develops programs and initiatives to eliminate the root causes of homelessness and provide support for homeless individuals. To address the prevention of homelessness among the elderly in the South Bronx, the Partnership engaged a Capstone team to research demographic needs, possible service models, and model feasibility. The team developed a three-phased project that included census tract analysis identifying existing service providers in the des-

igned census tracts, a literature review of existing national program models, and the development of a business plan prototype. The team's final recommendations included suggested partnerships with specified service providers, incorporation

of best practices from existing models, and operational procedures for program success.

Capstone Team: Ali Abidin, Catherine Bascon, Frank Giancamilli, Tara Guastella, Naomi Korb

## Advanced Projects in PNP Management

FACULTY: SARA GRANT AND MERLE McGEE

### Applied Research Center

*Impact Evaluation of the Drop the "I" Word Campaign*

The Applied Research Center (ARC) is a racial justice think tank dedicated to advancing social justice through research, advocacy, and journalism. The Capstone team was asked to design an impact evaluation system to measure the success of Drop The I-Word (DTIW), a new advocacy campaign which asks media outlets, organizations, and individuals to pledge to eliminate usage of the word "illegal" when referring to undocumented immigrants, in favor of other less racially-charged terms. The evaluation system assessed the campaign's progress on reaching its identified short and long-term goals, and is flexible enough to be adapted for future campaigns and initiatives. The team designed and tested the system against the objectives of the first six-month phase of DTIW

(Oct '10- March '11). The team also provided training on the system to ARC staff to ensure that evaluation becomes an integrated part of the campaign and the organization.

Capstone Team: Laura McLelland, Januel Nalupta, Ariana Proehl, Kathryn Reidy, Keri Tsou

### Hebrew Free Loan Society

*Re-Engineering the Immigrant Student Aid Program*

Hebrew Free Loan Society (HFLS) promotes economic self-sufficiency in New York by providing interest-free loans. One of its largest programs, Immigrant Student Aid, helps immigrant parents from the former Soviet Union finance higher education for their children. While the cost of higher education has skyrocketed since the terms for this program were originally set, the loan program (including maximum loan

amount and amortization schedule) has never been adjusted. The Capstone team conducted a literature review, statistical analysis of existing borrowers, phone surveys with former and potential borrowers, and in-person interviews with potential borrowers in Bensonhurst and Sheepshead Bay. The team developed several alternative loan products and analyzed how they would impact HFLS financially. The team then compiled this research and analysis to produce a report of findings and recommendations to assist HFLS in re-engineering its Immigrant Student Aid loans to best meet the needs of its target market. The report's recommendations provide a point of reference for HFLS as it embarks on its third strategic planning process.

Capstone Team: Ilana Neshet, Naomi Rosenblatt, Tamar Snyder, Mordecai Walfish

### **National Council for Research on Women**

*A Strategic Approach to Improve Collaborative Opportunities and Marketing Initiatives*

The National Council for Research on Women is a network of 120 leading research, policy, and advocacy centers committed to improving the lives of women and girls. The Council provides the latest news, information, and strategies to ensure fully informed debates, effective policies, and inclusive practices. The Council is now in a position to think about

strategic growth and requested the Capstone team develop strategies for the Council to become a more integral resource to the women's and progressive communities. The Capstone team performed an environmental scan to provide a deeper understanding of the field and surveyed partner and non-partner organizations to determine what organizations seek from collaboration. The report's recommendations provide a road map for the Council to develop new marketing strategies and collaborative opportunities to strengthen its reputation in the field of women's research and policy.

Capstone Team: Sadia Choudhury, Christina DeCesare, Sapan Goel, Rebecca Kahn, Yael Reisman

### **New York State Office of Children and Family Services**

*The State of New York State: Parent Education Programs for At-Risk Families*

The Office of Children and Family Services serves New York by promoting the safety and well-being of children, families, and communities within the State. The purpose of this Capstone project was to look comprehensively at parent education programs across New York. The team conducted a literature review, developed a summary of parent education programs, and assessed best practices in parent education through a survey distributed to all New York State agencies. The team also created a database of parent education

programs and foster care agencies. The Capstone team made informed recommendations about the most effective programs for at-risk parents to help the Office of Children and Family Services reduce the re-entry rate of children into foster care.

Capstone Team: Kara Grieco, Adam Kaloides, Lu Li, Juanita Lleras

### **Palladia, Inc.**

#### *Employment Outcomes Analysis*

Palladia empowers individuals to become active, productive members of the community through programs aimed at easing the struggle with addiction, homelessness, domestic violence, and trauma. Palladia wanted a more concrete understanding of the systemic obstacles its clients face in the job market in order to develop new strategies to improve outcomes. The Capstone team was enlisted to help Palladia better understand these barriers and to provide recommendations on how the organization can improve employment outcomes in the future. The Capstone team developed a set of recommendations after conducting a series of staff interviews, client focus groups, meetings with potential employers, and competitor interviews and analysis.

Capstone Team: Sara Askey, Daphne Emerson, Kathleen Gray, Fiona Laurie, Tara McTeague

### **YWCA of the City of New York**

#### *Needs Assessment of East New York and Brownsville*

The YWCA of the City of New York is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for citizens throughout New York City's five boroughs. The YWCA is working with the City of New York to apply for a federal Promise Neighborhood Planning Grant to serve the communities of East New York and Brownsville, Brooklyn. The YWCA requested that the Capstone team conduct a needs assessment of these communities that could be used as part of the application. The Capstone team conducted research about the demographic breakdown of the region, the political and programmatic history of Promise Neighborhoods, and best practices around needs assessment and community interviews. The team then interviewed community leaders and surveyed community members. The quantitative and qualitative data gathered will inform both the types of programs established by the YWCA and the funding applications to support these programs. The final report provided the YWCA with a phased strategy for executing the Promise Neighborhood planning process and identifying potential partners for its implementation.

Capstone Team: Beeta Jahedi, Denis Koljenovic, Tamara Lewin-Tankel, Trish McNicholas, Samantha Nathan

# Advanced Projects in PNP Management

FACULTY: SEAN HARVEY

## **Main Street Legal Services**

*Case Management and Systems Administration for a Complex Legal Services Program*

Main Street Legal Services (MSLS) is the clinical training program at CUNY Law School. MSLS has seven clinics, each of which operates as an independent silo of activity, with its own administrative protocols for case intake, case tracking, record keeping, communications, and conflict checking. The organization approached the Capstone team for advice on how to manage seven divergent practice areas in a coordinated fashion and implement and enforce uniform administrative protocols across the clinics. Of specific concern was the failure of many clinics to maintain comprehensive case records in the shared electronic case management system. The Capstone team conducted a review of the organization's administrative practices, surveyed key stakeholder groups (faculty, staff, students), and contacted other law firms and clinical programs to identify best practices in the field. The final report consisted of internal research findings, best practices of peer institutions, and recommendations that will streamline administrative processes to strengthen the provision of quality client services and legal instruction.

Capstone Team: Alexandra Brown, Elizabeth Burger, Shujie Jiang, Patrick Mangan

## **National Human Services Assembly**

*Identifying Practices that Increase Ethnic and Racial Diversity of Senior Management*

The National Human Services Assembly is an association of national nonprofits working in the fields of health, human and community development, and human services. One of the Assembly's current priorities is to identify practices that increase ethnic and racial diversity within the senior management of member organizations. Although much has been written about workplace diversity in general, little research has focused specifically on diversity outcomes within senior management. The Capstone team examined this issue through primary and secondary research. The team distributed surveys to Assembly member CEOs and human resources leaders, conducted focus groups, and interviewed several industry experts. The team shared its findings in a best practices guide that can be used by the Assembly, its members, and other nonprofits to extend the benefits of diversity to all levels of staff and management.

Capstone Team: Adam Drucker, MaryBeth Gonzales, Selena Juneau-Vogel, Monisha Makhijani, Michael Turi

## **Women's World Banking**

### *Increasing Volunteer Management Effectiveness*

Women's World Banking (WWB) is a global network of 40 microfinance providers and banks working in 28 countries to bring financial services and information to low-income entrepreneurs. As the organization expands its strategic agenda, the need for broader human resources—specifically a more expansive volunteer network—is increasingly critical. The Capstone team developed a model for formalizing WWB's volunteer management to increase its ability to more effectively utilize this human capital. To accomplish

this, the Capstone team interviewed WWB leadership, staff, and volunteers to develop a framework of current volunteer usage and future needs, conducted interviews with benchmark organizations, and researched best practices and volunteer management theory. For the final project, the Capstone team presented a set of strategic recommendations and a program management model to help WWB to advance its goal of enabling women to build a secure financial future for themselves and their families

Capstone Team: Melanie Jacobi, Stacy Johnson, Ignacio Montero

## **Advanced Projects in PNP Management and Finance**

FACULTY: CHRISTINE CHISHOLM

### **Arete Education**

#### *Operational and Cost Analysis for a New Educational Model*

The administration of Middle School 223 seeks to transform the school into a combination middle and high school. The newly-formed nonprofit organization Arete Education will offer after-school programming to all MS/HS 223's students, extending the school-day until 6pm for those who elect to participate. Additionally, Arete Education will select a portion of male high-school students to board free-of-charge at a nearby facility and engage

in supplemental learning that will further their development. Arete Education engaged the Capstone team to develop a best practices summary of “winning” solutions from innovative schools around the country, a suggested programming structure for the after-school programs, a sample structure for the boarding program in compliance with legal and empirical guidelines, and a draft financial analysis from the organization's development stage to fully operational stage. The Capstone team created materials that Arete Education can use to design its programming and secure the funding necessary to attain its vision

of developing an innovative after-school and boarding program for low-income youth in the South Bronx.

Capstone Team: Rebecca Hamburger, Huili Hu, Claudia Perez-Pellicer, Matt Rose, Elizabeth Shields

## **Palisades Emergency Residence Corporation**

### *Financial Planning and Analysis*

Palisades Emergency Residence Corporation (PERC) is an emergency shelter and soup kitchen that aims to defeat the cycle of poverty by providing shelter, food, social service referrals, and education programs. The Capstone team was engaged by PERC's Executive Director to develop and help implement financial tools to create accurate reporting systems. The Capstone team analyzed current programs and grants, previous budgets, cash flow, and internal controls. The team also researched best practices from other organizations. Using this research and analysis, the Capstone team created a comprehensive budget for fiscal year 2011 along with detailed program budgets. In addition, the team created a new chart of accounts that would be more responsive to the organization's budget and more closely aligned with GAAP and nonprofit standards set by the IRS Form 990. Finally, the Capstone team advised PERC on best practices for grant and gift tracking as well as internal controls.

Capstone Team: Eleanor Leahy, Dalia Mechanic, Andrew Minck, Tammy Yuan

## **Standard & Poor's**

### *Scoping Financial Literacy Partnerships for Corporate Social Responsibility*

Standard & Poor's (S&P), a leading provider of financial market intelligence, seeks to harness the intellectual resources and competencies of its worldwide staff to help educate and inform future generations of financially literate citizens and investors. S&P requested a Capstone team to identify opportunities for strategic partnerships and design a pilot financial literacy program powered by S&P employee volunteers in Chicago, Illinois and Melbourne, Australia. The Capstone team gathered extensive research on financial literacy needs and existing financial literacy programs in order to identify synergies with S&P. The final report provides a selection of partnership opportunities with government and nonprofit institutions that S&P executives can evaluate and pursue based upon available funding and resources. The team's recommendations for identifying, evaluating, and creating partnerships can help S&P scale its employee volunteer program to offices in 23 countries around the world.

Capstone Team: Maria Isabel Ullloa Cruz, Iyana Davis, Katie Martin, Rashida Mason, Jesslyn Moser, Todd Schechter

# Advanced Projects in Health Policy and Management

FACULTY: JOHN DONNELLAN

## **Maimonides Infants & Children's Hospital**

*Improving Patient, Family, Caregiver Communication and Facilitating Care Transitions*

Since its designation as a Children's Hospital by the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions, Maimonides Infants & Children's Hospital (MICH) has continually worked to provide the highest levels of quality care in all pediatrics subspecialties. Serving over 750,000 children of diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds in South Brooklyn, MICH identified the need to improve communication between healthcare professionals, patients, and their families. Through interviews, evidence-based research, and research from other children's hospitals, the Capstone team identified key communication problems and compiled and analyzed this research to produce recommendations that MICH can use as it expands services, develops communication strategies, and creates mechanisms to evaluate and measure the organization's success in fulfilling its mission.

Capstone Team: Jessica Detor, Crilhen Francisco, Jenny Law, Amy Reyes, Gabriela Vaca

## **New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation**

*Butterfly Project*

Given the high rates of teenage pregnancy in the Bronx, HHC developed a comprehensive pre- and post-natal program to address the full range of medical, social, and psychological needs of adolescent mothers and their infants. In July 2010, the Butterfly project was piloted at Jacobi Medical Center – an HHC facility with a particularly high rate of teen births. The program consists of protocol care, a hospital discharge checklist, Care Coordinators, labor and delivery simulation class, and peer support groups. The Capstone team conducted a feasibility study to assess whether the program could be replicated at other HHC facilities and a process evaluation to measure the effectiveness of the program. The team also created a literature review of best practices found in similar programs. As a final deliverable the Capstone team constructed a patient satisfaction survey tool to evaluate participants' birthing experiences at Jacobi Medical Center.

Capstone Team: Lee Christy, Sana Hashmi, Shari Hinds, Laura Rivera, Neena Taskindoust

## **New York University Langone Medical Center Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine**

*Enhancing Growth Strategy for the NYU Amputee Support Program*

The NYU Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine was established in 1948 with an aim of providing care for the entire patient and not just a particular disability. The NYU Amputee Support Program (NASP) was created in August 2008 to further advance the institute's dedication to excellence in meeting the emotional, psychological, and social needs of its patients. The Capstone team was tasked with evaluating the program's strengths and shortcomings before the program expands locally and nationally. The team conducted focus groups to gather information and feedback from current NASP members and non-support group members. The team then compiled and analyzed these findings to develop a set of recommendations to help Rusk define the program's growth strategies and enhance its infrastructure.

Capstone Team: Jessica Amrhein, Tatyana Gelfand, Bridget McClure, Greta Nemets, Anmol Singh

## **Veterans Affairs' New York Harbor Healthcare System**

*Strategies for Improving Inpatient Satisfaction*

The Veterans Health Administration is the branch of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs that delivers healthcare to veterans and their families. The Capstone team worked with VA New York Harbor Healthcare System (NYHHS) to assess how the organization could improve its overall inpatient satisfaction scores on national Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) surveys. The team examined the following areas of interest: involvement in medical decision-making, staff responsiveness to patient needs, and patient perception of care received. The Capstone team conducted site visits and patient interviews, analyzed HCAHPS scores, reviewed best practices, and produced a literature review in order to evaluate veterans' experiences at VA NYHHS facilities and identify key variables impacting patients' perceptions of the care they receive. The team provided NYHHS with a set of evidence-based, feasible, and sustainable recommendations for improving inpatient satisfaction.

Capstone Team: Brooke Hettler, Barbara Kopcho, Nicole Mahaffey, Bailey Gerstle Orshan, Christian Sanchez

# Advanced Projects in Health Services Management and Finance

FACULTY: AMY GOLDMAN AND ROGER KROFF

## **Beth Israel Medical Center**

*Determining the Financial Impact of Inpatient Integrative Medicine*

The Department of Integrative Medicine at Beth Israel Medical Center provides free inpatient services including acupuncture, yoga, reiki, and mind-body techniques. The Capstone team worked with the department to create a financial database and methodology for use in determining the financial impact of its services. The team conducted a literature review and key stakeholder interviews to identify variables that would likely demonstrate potential cost savings and/or revenue enhancements of these services. The team then developed a methodology indicating how the department could regularly track these metrics. Collection of this data will prepare the department to conduct detailed research to determine the financial value of its services. The healthcare industry is becoming increasingly focused on patient-centered approaches; therefore, capturing the cost outcomes associated with integrative medicine interventions in an inpatient hospital setting is vital to reducing costs while improving quality.

Capstone Team: Loreen Acevedo, David Moser, Camille Paredes, Lindsay Raskind

## **Bon Secours New York Health Systems**

*Feasibility Analysis of Converting Nursing Home Beds into an Assisted Living Program*

Bon Secours Schervier Nursing Care Center is a highly skilled nursing home with 364 beds. Located in Riverdale, Bronx, the facility cares for geriatric residents from the surrounding New York City area. The New York State Department of Health has initiated an Assisted Living Program (ALP) with a goal to add 6,000 ALP beds, while decreasing an equal number or more of nursing home beds. The Capstone team was brought in to determine how Bon Secours can provide ALP services that meet the needs of the local community. The team extensively researched ALP regulations and protocols and performed a market analysis of both current and prospective residents and patients. The Capstone team provided Bon Secours with a preliminary assessment of financial feasibility based on payer mix of Medicaid and private pay.

Capstone Team: Tony Abraham, Viktoria Grigorian, Mark Krugman, Prachi Nagda, Raghuram Posham

## **Greater New York City Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure®**

*Creating a User-Friendly, Central Repository of Resources for New and Current Grants Applicants*

The Greater New York City Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure is working to eradicate breast cancer as a life-threatening disease by advancing research, education, screening, and treatment. The goal of this Capstone project was to determine the resources needed for targeted organizations to prepare a strong grants application, giving special attention to smaller, innovative organizations that work with hard-to-reach populations. The team presented a set of recommendations on improving Komen GNYC applicant resources, a set of new tools for applicants, and recommendations on improving the layout and content on the Komen GNYC website. To inform these recommendations and tools, the Capstone team performed a needs assessment of current, past, and prospective applicants and other Komen affiliates, as well as a thorough review of applicant resources provided by Komen GNYC.

Capstone Team: Karen Hammerle, Sabine Khoury, Juliet Montague, William Vasquez

## **Harlem United**

*Enhancing Outreach for the Community*

Harlem United works to improve the lives of people living with or threatened by

HIV/AIDS through comprehensive prevention, housing, and healthcare services. The organization is currently expanding its operations in order to have a greater impact on the community and its clients. The Capstone team assessed the current outreach models for two current grants: Health Care for the Homeless and Treatment for the Homeless. The team conducted interviews with staff, reviewed workers' logs and client tracking information, and researched outreach worker training programs to identify problems with existing outreach methods that affect program efficiency and effectiveness. The Capstone team provided an enhanced outreach model and strategy that included recommendations for improved marketing, outreach training curriculum, and strategic organizational alliances for client referrals, as well as clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the outreach team.

Capstone Team: Brian Chappell, Lance Lucas, Jessie Pierre, Felicia Saltzbart

## **Health Plus**

*Primary Care Provider Reimbursement Project*

Health Plus is a Medicaid Managed Care plan serving over 300,000 patient members throughout the New York Metropolitan area. Health Plus aims to improve provider satisfaction and better incentivize quality of care. To accomplish this goal, the Capstone team researched Primary Care Provider (PCP) reimbursement models and

assessed potential changes to the current payment strategy. In addition, Health Plus requested that the team research the Patient Protection and Affordable Health Care Act and outline how the new law will impact its business in a competitive market. To this end, the team conducted extensive research on federal healthcare reform legislation and emerging trends in primary care reimbursement, surveyed and interviewed a representative sample of Health Plus' PCPs, and developed a marketing tool for Health Plus to explain its reimbursements to its provider network.

Capstone Team: Phong Bui, Nicole Krop Casey, Adam DeVito, Melanie Pessin, Gina Scibelli

## **Nonprofit Finance Fund**

*Impact of Healthcare Reform on New Jersey Federally Qualified Health Centers*

The Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF) is committed to creating a strong, well-capital-

ized, and durable nonprofit sector that effectively connects money to mission. To date, NFF of New Jersey has primarily served the needs of nonprofit organizations in the arts and social service sectors. With the recent passage of health reform, NFF is presented with an opportunity to expand its services to the community healthcare sector. To assist NFF in identifying how it can expand to this sector, the Capstone team researched provisions in the recently-legislated Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) that are relevant to primary care providers. The Capstone team also assessed the financial needs of members of the New Jersey Primary Care Association (NJPCA). With this information, the Capstone team recommended a role for NFF in meeting members' financial needs resulting from PPACA, either independently or in partnership with NJPCA

Capstone Team: Carlo Balane-Bolivar, Eda Chan, Andrea Hardee, Pauline Poompan, Robbie Pruthi

# Advanced Projects in Urban Planning

FACULTY: KATE COLLIGNON AND KEI HAYASHI

## **CIVITAS**

*Upper East Side and East Harlem  
Community Engagement Study*

CIVITAS is a member-based nonprofit organization serving the Upper East Side and East Harlem communities for the last 30 years on a variety of initiatives in the areas of zoning, transportation, streetscape, and environmental quality. With the assistance of the Capstone team, CIVITAS wanted to gather data to ensure its current and future initiatives correspond with the needs of the community and engage a broader spectrum of the community than it has historically. The Capstone team conducted a comprehensive community engagement study of its large and diverse community districts in East Harlem and the Upper East Side. The Capstone team analyzed survey results and produced recommendations on issues to pursue that are a high priority for local community members and feasible to undertake given the organization's capacity.

Capstone Team: Heather Diaz, Kathryn Johnson, Naama Lissar, Lauren O'Toole

## **Deutsche Bank Americas Foundation**

*Commitment to Community*

Executives at Deutsche Bank have developed an interest in the social impact of loan programs and awards that they provide for community development initiatives. Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) regulations measure financial investments in neighborhoods, but do not measure the short- and long-term impacts of these investments. The Deutsche Bank Americas Foundation (DBAF) and the Community Development Finance Group have granted awards to NYC community based initiatives over the past decade. The programs have provided pre-development funding for housing rehabilitation and development in New York City. In order to fully understand the social impacts associated with DBAF's investments, the Capstone team analyzed the financial impact of the awards on the developments, the social impact of the developments on the tenants, and the social impact of the project developments on the local communities. Utilizing community input, the team also provided suggestions on ways to enhance the award programs as well as how to include these findings in the due diligence process.

Capstone Team: Sapna Bhatt, Connie Lee, Matt Murphy, Rachel Wieder, Chunzi Junko Wu

## **Enterprise Community Investment, Inc**

*St. Luke's Hospital Redevelopment: Understanding the Risks of Federal Historic Tax Credits in a Multi-Phase Redevelopment*

Enterprise Community Investment, Inc. has invested in a senior affordable housing project, St. Luke's Hospital, located in Cleveland, Ohio. The project will be completed in three phases and will utilize both Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and Federal Historic Tax Credits.

Enterprise wanted to know what risk the uncertainty of a multi-phased project poses on the viability of Historic Tax Credits and how this risk will be transmitted to its investors. The Capstone team traveled to Cleveland to visit the site and conducted research regarding similar developments across the country. The Capstone team's final product was a case study with best practices for future multi-phased historic tax credit projects and recommendations for Phase III.

Capstone Team: Rashi Kumar, Timothy Pendrell, Lyle Sclair, Leigh Trucks, Elizabeth Webb

## **Greater New Orleans, Inc.**

*Best Practices and Economic Development Opportunities in Water Management*

Greater New Orleans, Inc. (GNO, Inc.) was charged by the State of Louisiana to coordinate the development of a new municipal

water management system for the City of New Orleans and portions of its adjacent suburbs. In conjunction with this endeavor, the Capstone team prepared a reference document of case studies detailing best practices in worldwide water management systems, including physical components, financing mechanisms, and implementation strategies. In light of the area's post-Hurricane Katrina setting, the team emphasized storm water mitigation strategies in other low-lying and flood-prone areas. Additionally, the team analyzed potential economic development opportunities and impacts that may present themselves with the implementation of the best management practices. GNO, Inc. will use these recommendations as it engages local political stakeholders, the general public, and consultants who will contribute to the creation of this new plan.

Capstone Team: Nicole Aimone, Michael Lenore, Paul Salama, Mathew Sanders

## **Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance**

*Strategic Plan to Expand Ferry Service in the New York Region*

The Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance (MWA)—an umbrella nonprofit representing nearly 500 organizations—is a leader in public access, planning, and environmental work related to the New York Harbor. The Capstone team developed a step-by-step strategic plan for MWA to work toward expanded passenger ferry

service in the metro area. The plan uses eleven case studies of ferry systems, interviews with industry experts and government officials, NYCEDC's Comprehensive Citywide Ferry Study, the upcoming East River ferry service, and the team's creative input as a basis for its recommendations. The team's recommendations include an East River ferry partnership with EDC and NY Waterways, strategies to engage Community Boards, opportunities for upland transportation connections, funding opportunities, an exploration of expanding commuter ferry capacity for emergency service, and a partnership with business leaders interested in strengthening the New York region.

Capstone Team: Todd Kimmel, Daniel Scorse, Evan Seiler, Rosa Taveras, Lynn Vande Stouwe

## **New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets**

*A Study of Food Processors in New York City*

The Department of Agriculture and Markets (DAGM) is charged with fostering a competitive and safe New York food and agricultural industry for the benefit of producers and consumers. As part of its goal to serve producers, DAGM enlisted the Capstone team to study food processors in New York City in order to better understand the benefits and threats they face in choosing to locate here. The team studied

businesses in a variety of phases (start-ups, expanding businesses, large-scale processors, and recently closed) and examined their location choices within the context of economic and policy landscapes. Geographic hotspots of processing were identified through use of GIS and the team conducted case studies of firms within those hotspots or other relevant boundaries.

Capstone Team: Chris Barker, Laura Imperiale, Chris Keeley, Jeff Leyco, Megan Quirk

## **THE POINT**

*Community Interim Site Use Plan for the Hunts Point Riverside Campus for Arts and the Environment*

THE POINT Community Development Corporation is focused on youth development and community revitalization in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx. THE POINT asked the Capstone team to develop an interim site plan for an undeveloped land parcel that it had acquired, but was not using to its full potential. The Capstone team performed a rigorous community outreach process to collect input from residents and local stakeholders on the community's needs and preferred uses for the site. The team also considered financial feasibility, market conditions, organizational capacity, and mission alignment, in addition to community input to determine the best use for the site. The report

includes final recommendations for the use of the site, potential opportunities for partnerships, funding sources for implementation, as well as general considerations for longer-term site development as

further space and funding become available.

Capstone Team: Alan Biller, Sally Smith Greenspan, Traci Sanders, Andrew Sigal, Lindsay Wech

## Advanced Projects in Urban Planning

FACULTY: MELISSA KAPLAN-MACEY

### IBM

*IBM City Forward: Creating Data Visualizations for Urban Policy and Analysis*

IBM has a longstanding history of technological excellence and innovation. Its Corporate Citizenship division has recently launched the Smarter Cities Challenge, inviting cities across the world to apply for funding and technical assistance grants. Part of this portfolio includes City Forward, IBM's newly released, free online public data comparison tool. The Capstone team piloted the tool before and after its release, providing IBM with perspective on the user experience. As part of the analysis of City Forward, the team developed evaluation criteria, including user experience, aesthetics, accessibility, data availability, and visualization best practices. The Capstone team gathered research through market analysis, interviews with leaders in the field of data visualization, and a literature

review. The team provided IBM with a report documenting this research along with recommendations on how to transform City Forward into a more useful tool for practitioners of urban policy and planning.

Capstone Team: Adam Attar, Nancy Chang, Matthew McKeon-Slattery, Christine Paglialonga, Hillary Stuchin

### Rye YMCA

*Complete Streets Project*

The Rye YMCA Complete Streets Project is an initiative to promote safer and multi-modal streets in the City of Rye, Village of Mamaroneck, Town of Mamaroneck, and Village of Larchmont as part of the Rye YMCA's Activate America campaign. The Capstone team evaluated physical, policy, and funding possibilities for the four communities. Using one study site in each community, the Capstone team applied

Complete Street principles to develop a series of physical recommendations that enhance the site for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists alike. The Capstone team also provided recommendations for policy implementation and funding opportunities. At the culmination of the project, the Capstone team presented its findings to the communities and stakeholders.

Capstone Team: Paul Chenard, Scott Johnson, Rebecca Krauss, Albert Silvestri, Elisabeth Wooton

### **York College** *The New York*

York College engaged a Capstone team to develop physical design and programmatic recommendations that both improve the physical connectivity of the York Campus

and help to increase a sense of community at the College. In particular, the team looked to identify projects of progressive scale that would have a large impact on the York Community. The Capstone project worked within the guiding principles of promoting health, connecting students with history and cultural resources, and strengthening York's brand. The team developed a "Pilot Project" which is a one day event on-campus designed to foster informal interactions among students and faculty and promote school spirit. The Capstone team's recommendations are the result of consultation and collaboration with York students, faculty, and administration as well as with community stakeholders.

Capstone Team: Steven Higashide, Samuel Masters, Sara Oliver, Renata Silberblatt, Joanna Todaro

## **Advanced International Projects**

FACULTY: CHARLES BAILEY AND DAVID WINDER

### **EA Consultants, Inc.**

*Confía – "El Futuro en Tus Manos"*

The Mexican community is one of the fastest growing immigrant communities in New York City and also one of the most disenfranchised and excluded from the financial sector. EA Consultants envisions

a new organization, Confía, to empower the Mexican immigrant community through information and access to formal financial markets. The Capstone team first conducted an extensive environmental scan and needs assessment to determine current opportunities. The team then analyzed the interview information to diag-

nose specific needs and construct a business plan for Confia. Confia will work with the community, banks, and community organizations to develop appropriate services to better facilitate financial access for Mexican immigrants.

Capstone Team: Melissa Blechman, Aquene Freechild, N. Kayden Kim, Becky Rafter, Sabrina Szklanny

## **Episcopal Relief and Development**

### *Value Chain Analysis and Food Security*

Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) is the international relief and development agency of the Episcopal Church of the United States. The global food crisis has highlighted the need for the international community to address food insecurity in developing countries, and the Capstone team conducted a value chain analysis of ERD's food security programs in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. While food security was the primary focus, the team also considered the intersection between gender and inequality. The Capstone team produced a report offering recommendations on how to improve programs and incorporate value chain analysis in partnership with local organizations while adhering to ERD's global organizational strategy.

Capstone Team: Casey Box, Calvin Hadley, David Hong, Courtney Montague, Kuo Jeng Yang

## **Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior (Institute for Mexicans Abroad)**

### *Evaluation and Certification of Middle-Skilled Mexican Workers in the US*

In 2005 the Mexican Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (IME) worked in conjunction with public and private partners in the United States to develop four pilot programs to evaluate and certify middle-skilled migrant workers. The programs focused on dairy farm workers in Minnesota and Wisconsin, food management workers in Chicago, Illinois and food management and construction workers in Dallas, Texas. Currently IME is promoting a new program to evaluate the skills of strawberry farm workers in Oxnard, California. After interviewing key stakeholders and participants, the Capstone team analyzed and evaluated each of these programs to map strengths and weaknesses, necessary roles, and other vital components in order to produce a manual of best practices for IME. This guide will enable IME to scale-up and institutionalize its programs in other industries and cities across the United States.

Capstone Team: Gilberto Corral, Jr., Nilbia Coyote, Lucia Goyen, Madeline Kane, Ana Villavicencio

## **Planet Habitat**

### *Improving the Supply Chain for Post-Disaster Shelter Response in India and Pakistan*

Planet Habitat, a global advisory and investment platform focusing on affordable housing, invests in locally sourced and sustainable shelter options. The post-disaster shelter sector is extremely fragmented and there is a wide gap between emergency response (provision of tents) and permanent housing options that can help survivors regain stability. The Capstone team investigated how international and local organizations, citizens, governments, and the private sector can collaborate to create streamlined and efficient shelter responses with sustainable, culturally appropriate options. The Capstone team conducted a literature review, interviews with organizations involved in disaster relief, and field research in India, including an assessment of post-tsunami reconstruction in Tamil Nadu. The team produced a final report examining the successes and challenges of past responses in India and Pakistan, analyzing existing systems to develop recommendations about the optimal characteristics for potential investees to successfully enter the shelter supply chain.

Capstone Team: Teagan Bigwood, Aerin Cho, Sehee Chung, Daryn Kobata, Faiza Mawjee

### **United Nations Development Group**

*Delivering as One: United Nations Joint Programs*

Joint Programs are designed to enhance the UN's work in cross-cutting issue areas by facilitating collaboration and coordina-

tion between distinct UN agencies, government partners, and local NGOs. Through shared planning, reporting, and evaluation mechanisms, Joint Programs are intended to improve information flows, reduce duplication, decrease transaction costs, and create synergies in service delivery and program implementation. But do Joint Programs deliver the gains in efficiency and effectiveness that they promise, or are they just another layer of bureaucracy? The Capstone team examined two Joint Programs in Ghana: the UN Joint Program for Human Security and the Joint UN Program on HIV and AIDS, each of which attempted to coordinate the work of over a dozen agencies and partners. Based on data collected from in-country observations, key informant interviews, focus-group discussions, and extensive document review, the team identified and analyzed the practical challenges of Joint Programming on the ground. The Capstone team provided a set of recommendations focusing on ways to harmonize operational procedures across agencies, facilitate communication between partners, and ensure that Joint Programs are in alignment with national priorities and development coordination mechanisms.

Capstone Team: Mischa Byruck, Audrey Campbell, Manasee Desai, Amy Southworth, Alicia Wolcott

## **United Nations Development Programme**

### *World Alliance of Cities Against Poverty*

The World Alliance of Cities Against Poverty (WACAP) is a global network of municipal governments established in 1996 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to mobilize information and resources enabling municipal governments to combat poverty. Currently WACAP is undergoing a change in leadership but has not undergone an evaluation. UNDP-Geneva requested the Capstone team work to identify WACAP's unique niche, consult stakeholders to assess its usefulness, and provide a recommendation on whether WACAP should be discon-

tinued or redesigned to have a more engaged membership base, greater financial support, and contribute to the Millennium Development Goals. The Capstone team interviewed UN staff, representatives from member cities, professors, and representatives from relevant public service organizations and also conducted secondary source research. The team subsequently used this analysis to develop a set of recommendations to improve several areas of WACAP including its funding, organizational structure, member services, and conferences.

Capstone Team: Lizzie Benson, Kristina Hestvik, JuLee Leopard, Finn Smith, Margaret Wall

## **Advanced International Projects**

FACULTY: KATHERINE BOURNE AND STEVEN SCHALL

### **The Centre for Human Development and Social Transformation**

*From Project-Based to Mission-Driven: The Challenges of a Peace-Building Organization in the Niger Delta*

The Centre for Human Development and Social Transformation (CHDST) was formed in 2005 to implement community development projects in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. CHDST requested that

the Capstone team perform an organizational assessment and create a strategic plan to help the organization become more mission-driven. The assessment focused on three major areas: inconsistent funding, internal organizational structure, and projects' adherence to mission. The Capstone team conducted interviews with stakeholders and executed on-site strategic planning workshops with staff members and the Board of Directors. The team used the data collected as the foundation

for a 3-5 year strategic plan, which identified the following areas for development: enhancing CHDST's brand identity by highlighting accomplishments and programs, improving internal and external communication, engaging staff in planning processes, and leveraging networks for broader partnership and fundraising opportunities.

Capstone Team: Whitney Bonham, Victoria Jalang'o, Effie O. Johnson, Shanti Nandiwada

### **Jordan River Foundation**

#### *Developing a Volunteer Management System*

The Jordan River Foundation (JRF) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering Jordanian citizens by establishing sustainable social and economic programs based on community needs and priorities. JRF partnered with the Capstone team to develop a formalized volunteer management system. The team researched common volunteer experiences, consulted JRF documents, and visited the organization's headquarters and field operations in Jordan to interview key stakeholders. The team also interviewed volunteer-based NGOs in New York to identify best practices. Drawing on interviews and research, the Capstone team developed an infrastructure to identify, hire, place, monitor and evaluate volunteers. The new system also includes a method to incorporate volunteer feedback and lessons learned. The

team provided JRF with a deliverable that will both harness the skills and passion of the surrounding community and stimulate volunteerism in Jordan.

Capstone Team: Lora du Moulin, Amy Finnegan, Seda Kocabas, Andrew Regenstreich

### **Maisha Film Laboratory for East Africans**

#### *Arts and Culture Development in Uganda: A Community Needs Assessment*

The Maisha Film Laboratory, a Uganda-based nonprofit organization founded by Mira Nair, trains aspiring East African filmmakers. Since its inception, the organization has trained nearly 300 filmmakers in the disciplines of directing, screenwriting, acting, producing, cinematography, editing, and sound design. Maisha would like to build an arts and culture center—the MACC—to house its cultural outreach efforts and training initiatives. Maisha requested a Capstone team to conduct a stakeholder analysis of the proposed arts and culture center. The Capstone team went to Kampala, Uganda to interview prospective MACC users and key stakeholders, and the team produced a report of findings and recommendations which will assist Maisha in creating a space that is responsive to the needs of the local community.

Capstone Team: Chesray Dolpha, Nicole Pierron, Angelena Serrano, Sindy Yiu

## **Mali Health Organizing Project**

*Methodology to Evaluate Community Participation in Health Actions*

The Mali Health Organizing Project (MHOP) aims to provide basic healthcare to underserved communities of Sikoro and Bandiagara Coura. MHOP is currently developing a program called Actions for Health to engage community members to take control of their personal health. MHOP is recruiting and training local leaders to mobilize and create health-related actions within their community. The organization has struggled to identify a system to promote and encourage participatory processes. To address this issue, the Capstone team conducted an intensive literature review process on Community Based Participatory Research. Incorporating feedback from MHOP, the team modified a methodology of evaluation specific to Actions for Health. The methodology assesses community-based participation through four value indicators: information sharing, mobilization, collaboration, and empowerment, and is intended to be easy to implement and tailored to foster reflection.

Capstone Team: Alma Castro, Jenny Kim, Soo Yeon Grace Kim, Andrew Richmond

## **The Mountain Institute**

*Re-Branding for Improved Visibility*

The Mountain Institute (TMI) works with high altitude communities that face rapid environmental change in Appalachia, the Himalayas, and the Andes. Despite the Mountain Institute's strong programs, the organization's visibility is limited by a diffuse brand identity. The Capstone team interviewed TMI staff, local community members, and other key stakeholders to understand TMI's competitive advantage and the challenges to implementing a cohesive brand strategy. Through interviews, research, and collaborative workshops with staff, the Capstone team devised a new brand identity and brand strategy for TMI. The new brand identity includes a tagline, key messages, an elevator pitch, and branding guidelines. The brand strategy includes directions for implementation and management, including coordination among TMI offices and the launch of a branding team.

Capstone Team: Christopher Banoub, Sowjanya Kilaru, Sierra Visher, Liz White

# Advanced International Projects

FACULTY: ANDREA ROGERS

## Global Opportunity Fund

*An Interim Assessment of the Sew for Sisterhood Women's Cooperative*

The Global Opportunity (GO) Fund engaged the Capstone team to assess the structure and interim outcomes of its Sew for Sisterhood program that is designed to expand the economic and social opportunities of financially disadvantaged women in Asebu, Ghana. The program operates as a cooperative and provides professional training in batikting and sewing for women between the ages of 17-60. The GO Fund also maintains an online shop where it markets finished products to consumers in the United States. The Capstone team reviewed relevant program documents, academic research on women's cooperatives in Africa and conducted interviews with program participants, partners, and other stakeholders. The team subsequently provided a set of program management recommendations and tools to monitor and guide the program toward its long-term objectives of women's empowerment and sustainability.

Capstone Team: Nick Hanzel, Deddeh Howard, Anna Iwasa, Kathleen Letchford

## International Center for Transitional Justice

*Strengthening International Policy Initiatives in Transitional Justice*

Founded in 2001, the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) works to redress and prevent the most severe violations of human rights by confronting legacies of mass abuse. This work entails informing international policymakers of best practices in transitional justice, strengthening the recognition of transitional justice as a crucial feature of post-conflict peacemaking and peace building, and contributing to the development of international norms for accountability and justice. On the occasion of its tenth anniversary, ICTJ charged the Capstone team with investigating the role ICTJ played in the development of two seminal transitional justice framework documents that guide practices within the United Nations: the 2004 Secretary-General's report on rule of law and transitional justice in conflict and post-conflict societies; and the 2005 revised UN Mediator Guidelines. The Capstone team reviewed relevant documents and conducted interviews with UN officials and former and current ICTJ staff and consultants. By documenting successes and key challenges

throughout the organization's work, the Capstone team enhanced ICTJ's understanding of its role in creating these frameworks. The Capstone team provided ICTJ with a set of recommendations that will help the organization create more impactful strategies for future policy advocacy.

Capstone Team: Melissa Ah-Sue, Nadia Farra, Dorea Jackson, Hsiang-Yin Lin, Jared Pruzan

### **Jordan River Foundation**

#### *Impact Assessment Design*

Founded in 1995, the Jordan River Foundation (JRF) aims to improve the quality of life of all Jordanians, particularly women and children, through its two

national programs, the Child Safety Program (CSP) and the Community Empowerment Program (CEP). While JRF is widely recognized for its work, the organization wanted to quantify its impact. JRF commissioned the Capstone team to design an impact assessment methodology to measure the effectiveness of its two core programs. The Capstone team developed a toolkit that included theories of change, logic models, and a menu of indicators and assessments. These technical support resources will be used by JRF to improve program design, generate donor support, and inform strategic decisions.

Capstone Team: Carla Eliana Godoy, Maduratna Noteman, Melanie Vander Valk, Panagiotis Vergetis

## **Advanced International Projects**

FACULTY: PAUL SMOKE

### **The Asia Foundation**

#### *Decentralization in Cambodia*

Decentralization in Cambodia has been an evolving process of transitions and reforms that impact the fundamental structure and operations of government. The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit, non-governmental organization committed to supporting Asian initiatives to improve

governance, law, and civil society. In support of the Foundation's work in Cambodia, the Capstone team conducted research on the most current policy initiatives for decentralization and sub-national planning in order to analyze the capacity and challenges for strengthening district level government and decentralization. The Capstone team conducted fieldwork and interviewed key stakeholders including

district councilors and governors, commune councilors, provincial administration staff, and representatives of civil society organizations. The team prepared a final report with recommendations intended to assist the Asia Foundation in developing further programming to pursue its mission.

Capstone Team: Caitlin Gokey, January Romero, Emilia Shapiro, Nhu Truong

### **Egyptian Decentralization Initiative – AECOM/USAID**

*Baseline Assessment of Egypt's Deconcentrated Health Sector: A Case Study of Beheira Governorate*

The Egyptian Decentralization Initiative (EDI) is an AECOM/USAID project designed to support Egypt's emergent vision of a more decentralized government. USAID works at local and central levels of government to support Egypt's efforts towards decentralization. Egypt has a legacy of centralized government, but the national government recently decided to promote decentralization by empowering the local administration as part of a larger national development strategy. To ensure access to quality health care services, the government is considering how to deliver and finance services in a way that involves local communities in identifying priorities and making decisions. At EDI's request, the team assessed the deconcentrated health sec-

tor, analyzed the administrative structure in the Beheira governorate, and completed a comprehensive baseline assessment in preparation of a health specific national decentralization strategy.

Capstone Team: Akua Apraku, Suhaly Bautista, Aicha Benmansour

### **Institut Africain de Gestion Urbaine** *Improving the Municipal Waste Management System of Kaolack*

With the support of the Institut Africain de Gestion Urbaine (IAGU), a Senegalese NGO and a technical expert in urban management, the Capstone team studied the waste management systems of Kaolack, Senegal. Kaolack is a rapidly growing urban area with a waste management problem: the city lacks coordinated efforts to manage increasing waste generation and experiences frequent illegal dumping of trash at the main axis of the city's entrance. The Capstone team interviewed local municipal officials, NGO representatives, and owners of trash collection businesses to assess Kaolack's current waste management services and practices, and identify the technical, financial, social, and administrative weaknesses and opportunities of the system. With this report, IAGU intends to inspire action to improve solid waste management internationally.

Capstone Team: Sena Segbedzi, Iria Touzon Calle

## **Lincoln Institute of Land Policy**

*Examining Metropolitan Governance and Finance in Cairo and Manila*

The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy provides a nonpartisan forum for discussion of the use, regulation, and taxation of land and related issues. The Lincoln Institute engaged the Capstone team to develop case studies of Cairo and Manila in order to assess metropolitan finance and governance practices in developing countries. The team's research framework focused on documenting institutional linkages, revenue sources, innovative financing mechanisms, and service delivery management. The Capstone team used field interviews and secondary research to produce two working papers illustrating how institutional and financial structures affect public financing and service provision in particular contexts. The two working papers are bridged by a third document synthesizing the cases and placing them in the broader context of different approaches to metropolitan finance and governance. These documents will be publicly available on the Lincoln Institute website as a resource for scholars and practitioners interested in local public finance.

Capstone Team: Dave Algoso, Jenna Magee, Carly Nasehi, Rahil Rangwala

## **United Nations Capital Development Fund**

*Local Economic Development Planning in Takeo, Cambodia*

United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) supports development through microfinance, infrastructure investment, capacity building, and technical advisory skills. Recently, UNCDF and the Royal Government of Cambodia released a national "Local Development Outlook" report that evaluated local development trends (economic, social, demographic, and environmental) countrywide and offered recommendations for policy reform. The Capstone team was asked to build on this effort at the provincial level. The team first conducted a literature review and analysis on local economic development practices and then conducted field research interviewing representatives of government, the private sector, and NGOs in Takeo province. The main task was to identify services and industries with the greatest potential to promote economic diversification in the province. As part of this work, the team developed a tool to evaluate services and industries by ranking various criteria according to the type of impact desired. The research will aid UNCDF and the local community in selecting value chains for further investigation and support production of a provincial development outlook.

Capstone Team: Arianna Butturovic, Yuk Chan, Maria Kolaitis, Alberto Orozco-Ochoa

## **United Nations Capital Development Fund**

*Agriculture Development in Uganda: Resource Allocation for Local Economic Development Related Expenditures*

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) requested a Capstone team to assist in improving the way it allocates basket funds for local economic development projects. The Capstone team traveled to Uganda to perform an institutional assessment of public service delivery in the agriculture sector. The main tasks involved conducting a stakeholder analysis for the agriculture sector and documenting service functions and the flow of resources to local governments from various actors, including central ministries, donor partners, and NGOs. The information generated through this research is intended to facilitate dialogue between central ministries, UNCDF, and the Local Government Finance Commission regarding the targeting of resources and technical assistance to local governments.

Capstone Team: Tiffany Carson, Justin Jarboe, Alexandra Talbot

## **United Nations Capital Development Fund**

*UNCDF LED Policy Manual*

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) is currently creating programs to support local governments in fostering and coordinating economic growth in least developed countries. UNCDF's Local Economic Development Program (LEDP) aims to build local government capacity to support and promote LED by investing in governance, business-enabling environments, and catalytic interventions. In support of these efforts, the Capstone team created an LED Policy Manual that analyzes the type and scope of LED promotion in selected local authorities. The team conducted its analysis using case studies focused on the experiences of local governments in select municipalities of South Africa and Sweden. The lessons learned from the experiences promoting LED in advanced and middle-income contexts are intended to provide UNCDF with the tools to develop best practices for local governments in developing countries.

Capstone Team: Darek Ciszek, Annie Denes, Samia Khan, Peter McNally, Mara Patashnik

## **United Nations Capital Development Fund**

### *Process Evaluation of the Investment Fund for Local Economic Development in Nicaragua*

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) is a special purpose fund for small-scale investment aimed at reducing poverty in the least developed countries affiliated with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). In 2007, UNCDF collaborated with the Government of Nicaragua to initiate the Decentralization and Millennium Development Goals Localization Support Program (PADETOM). PADETOM's main component, the Investment Fund for Local Economic Development (FIDEL), aims to provide financial support to local governments for LED projects with an emphasis on food security, the capitalization of small farmers, and rural enterprises. UNCDF requested a Capstone team to assess FIDEL's impact on local and national institutions' planning policies, uncover cross-influences between FIDEL and a pre-existing food security initiative, Hambre Cero, and provide a set of recommendations for the global strategy for Local Economic Development Promotion (LEDP). The Capstone team conducted a series of interviews in Nicaragua with a broad spectrum of stakeholders including local UNCDF personnel, national and local government officials, civil society representatives, and direct beneficiaries. The

information collected was subsequently compiled and analyzed to produce a report on UNCDF's approach to building local partnerships and structuring responsibilities in projects.

Capstone Team: Walid El Asmar, Huma Haque, Eleazar Ortiz, Virginia Zuco

## **United Nations Capital Development Fund and The Asia Foundation**

### *Assessment of Decentralization and Planning in Cambodia*

After an extended period of internal conflict in Cambodia, decentralization was introduced as part of a larger wave of public sector reform to promote democratic development and increase participatory governance. Decentralized planning and financing mechanisms were initially piloted and then institutionalized at a lower level (commune), and similar reforms are now being introduced at higher sub-national levels (district and province). The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and The Asia Foundation engaged the Capstone team to assess the recent decentralization efforts in Cambodia. The Capstone team conducted a document review of the decentralization process as well as field interviews with researchers, local and international development partners, and government officials at the national and sub-national levels. As a final deliverable, the Capstone team produced an assessment of the sub-national plan-

ning process and guidelines, documentation and assessment of the pilot planning process undertaken in the Takeo province, and recommendations for a future sub-national planning system for Cambodia.

Capstone Team: Chevonne Carnahan, Jennifer Ilekis, Louise Moretta, Shannon Small

## **The World Bank**

*Metropolitan Manila Slum Upgrading Background Memos: Housing Institutions, Policy, Financing, and Data Gathering*

Under a public sector decentralization process in the Philippines, Metro Manila's seventeen independent Local Government Units (LGUs) have been mandated with the challenge of addressing the needs of the sizeable slum populations living within their jurisdictions. City officials and local government agencies alike found themselves with increased financial, technical, and taxation responsibilities, but with insufficient authority to effectively execute their expected duties. While the National Urban Development & Housing Framework (NU DHF) provides an approach to shelter policy based on long-term poverty alleviation and economic growth objectives, the severe lack of housing continues to be a problem with few short-term solutions. The Capstone team assisted the World Bank in developing background material for its support of a Metro Manila-wide slum upgrading policy. Using a document review and field interviews, the Capstone

team prepared a series of policy memos on institutions and stakeholders, national housing policies, financing schemes, data gathering strategies, and international case studies of slum upgrading.

Capstone Team: Ariana K. MacPherson, Kimberly Powell, Melissa Reese

## **The World Bank**

*Preparation of a Concept Plan for a Model Resettlement Site in Metro Manila*

The Capstone team assisted the World Bank in the conceptualization and development of a model slum-resettlement site that promotes the principles of affordability, livability, and economic and environmental sustainability for the urban poor. The model adopts approaches that optimize urban space, considers socio-economic and cultural concerns of potential relocated residents, and incorporates disaster resilience. The team used field research in the Philippines, academic literature from other Southeast Asian countries, and global cases to develop a set of recommendations. The Capstone team provided the World Bank with a final report focused on the promotion of medium-rise, socialized housing developments and an analysis of the parameters of success associated with them.

Capstone Team: David Colner, Andres Mitnik, Javier Serra

# Advanced Projects for Nurse Managers

FACULTY: ANTHONY KOVNER, WILLIE MANZANO, AND ROSEMARY SULLIVAN

## **The Hospital for Special Surgery**

### *Manager Development Program*

Today's healthcare environment presents many challenges to nurse leaders, and effective leadership training for nurses is essential to successful transitions from the clinical to the managerial role. Addressing critical competencies and developing the required skills to manage staff and navigate the politics of a healthcare institution are instrumental to this process. Along with curriculum content, the method of instruction is key for successful integration of the nurse into this new role. The Capstone team developed an evidence-based curriculum within a mentorship and project-oriented framework that will provide a cohesive starting point to bridge the gap between clinical practice and effective leadership. This curriculum will be implemented within the nurse's home institution and with participation of senior leadership in order to reinforce newly acquired skills and the institution's culture.

Capstone Team: Lisa Abrams, Mely Chua, Tricia Dougherty, Linda Leff, Diana Monteleon, Joseph F. Zwarick

## **New York-Presbyterian Hospital**

### *Care Consultants: Improving Communication and Collaboration for the Allen Hospital and its Community*

The Capstone team was engaged by New York-Presbyterian (NYP) to develop a strategy to improve communication and collaboration at Allen Hospital. There are approximately 5,000 nursing home beds and a substantial elderly population in the local community surrounding Allen Hospital, and NYP wants to better coordinate the care of the geriatric patient in the hospital with the providers in the community. The team performed a literature review on communication among providers and continuity of care; researched health care reform and Accountable Care Organizations; conducted interviews with nurses, doctors, clerks, and patients; and observed the emergency room at Allen Hospital. In addition, the team reviewed the social work process and assessed the hospital website to determine whether it could better connect patients and providers. As a final deliverable, the Capstone team improved the initial visit data processing system and built a framework for participating in community activities and linkages between outside organizations and the hospital. The team's

final recommendations build awareness of community resources and empower patients and providers to remain informed and connected.

Capstone Team: Enrico Del Signore, Kim Flynn, Regina Madden, Mary Rose Mitchell, Megan Monahan, Ian Saludares

### **New York-Presbyterian Hospital**

*Improving Interdisciplinary Communication in Healthcare Organizations*

Effective interdisciplinary communication is associated with reduced length of stay, improved patient safety, and increased employee satisfaction. However, communication breakdowns are common in complex hospital settings and multiple communication structures often exist within the same organization. The Capstone team sought to evaluate current communication systems and make recommendations for

improving interdisciplinary communication in hospital settings. After conducting site visits and staff interviews at Columbia and Cornell, the team identified highly functional interdisciplinary teams at both campuses. The team also evaluated best practices in interdisciplinary communication during site visits to other organizations. Based on characteristics of the highly functional teams, detailed interviews, site visits, and research from an extensive literature review on this topic, the Capstone team developed a pilot program for implementing an effective interdisciplinary communication structure on a hospital unit. Significant components of the pilot program include greater accountability, a focus on teamwork, and strong support from leadership.

Capstone Team: Mary Anne Badillo, Elizabeth Farley, Susan Lantz, Diahann Roberts-Smith, Glodean Yorrick

## **Applied Research in Public Finance and Policy**

FACULTY: TOD MIJANOVICH

### **The Impact of State-Level Administrative Procedures on SNAP Participation Rates Among Eligible Individuals**

Nearly one in eight individuals is enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the

Food Stamp Program. However, only one in three eligible individuals actually receives benefits. Participation rates vary widely across states, ranging from 46 percent in Wyoming to 94 percent in Maine. The United States Department of

Agriculture (USDA) allows state agencies flexibility in deciding the administrative procedures they use to enroll beneficiaries in the program. Examples of procedures include finger imaging and face-to-face interview requirements. Prior research suggests that certain state level procedures may unduly burden individuals who have the greatest need for food assistance. The Capstone team used individual-level data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) and state-level policies from 2001, 2004, and 2008 to analyze the impact of state administrative procedures on SNAP participation.

Capstone Team: Katie Beal, Rebecca Halleran, Emma Hersh, Carrie Wolfson

### **Quality of Primary Outpatient Care for Medicaid Patients: Does a Practice's Share of Medicaid Patients Matter?**

The recently enacted Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act expands eligibility to Medicaid for millions of near-poor individuals. Given this expansion, policymakers need to understand the nature of the disparities that exist in the quality of care Medicaid beneficiaries receive as compared to their privately insured counterparts. Previous research has demonstrated that as the percentage of Medicaid patients in a physician's practice increases, health services and the quality of care received by Medicare beneficiaries and the privately insured decrease. Yet, the litera-

ture offers very little information about the impact of a practice's proportion of Medicaid patients on the quality of care received by Medicaid patients themselves. The Capstone team analyzed how the proportion of Medicaid revenue received by a physician's practice influences the disparity in quality of care between Medicaid and privately insured patients. The study assessed whether disparities in the quality of care between Medicaid and privately insured patients occur within or between practices, and whether such disparities are themselves associated with the proportion of practice revenue from Medicaid.

Capstone Team: Maggie Gribben, Dan Han, Eunha Kim, Julia Mitchell, Michael Rubin

### **Revisiting Components of Renewable Portfolio Standards and Their Impact on State Renewable Energy Generation**

Renewable energy is an increasingly important source of US electricity due to concerns about global climate change, energy security, and fossil fuel price volatility. This study focuses on the extent to which state regulatory policies impact state renewable energy generation. The Capstone team's research estimates the impact of Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) on a state's overall renewable energy generation. Unlike previous research on the effects of RPS, this study attempts to operationalize a number of elements that comprise RPS, such as annual required

share of renewable energy and the threat of penalty, in order to assess whether or not these variations have a significant effect on individual states' production of renewable energy.

Capstone Team: Sean Capperis, Douglas Coulter, Jung Soo Hur, Michelle Wong, Hyuk Yang

### **State Sentencing Policies and Recidivism Among Drug Offenders Released in 1994**

The New York State Rockefeller Drug Law of 1973 became the model for harsh sentencing policies for nearly all states in the country. Although the “war on drugs” and the “war on crime” sought to address violent criminal activity, the changes in policy and the emphasis on mandatory prison sentences have mostly resulted in the mass imprisonment of low-risk, nonviolent drug offenders who are often young Black and Latino men. The drastic increase in the number of people sentenced to prison for drug-related offenses has caused prison over-crowding, ballooning state expenses, and an influx of drug offenders returning to communities. While existing research on recidivism has focused on individual characteristics of offenders, very little is known about the state or neighborhood-level context to which offenders return. For this study the Capstone team examined the impact of state-level policy factors, such as indeterminate and determinate sentencing, on recidivism

among drug offenders released in 1994.

Capstone Team: Michael Deurlein, Catherine Lee, Chanelle Pearson, Alexander Vaisman

### **The Use of School-Wide Bonus Incentives on Educational Outcomes**

In most public school systems, teacher pay is based solely on level of education and years of teaching experience. Unlike professionals in other fields where performance is a factor in determining compensation, teachers have little economic incentive to strive for results in their work. During the 2007-2008 academic year, the New York City Department of Education introduced a pilot program whereby teachers at high-needs schools would receive bonuses if their schools reached targeted educational outcomes, as measured by test scores and other factors. This program differs from other incentive programs in that it rewards whole schools for raising overall student achievement, and not individual teachers for the progress that their particular students make. The Capstone team analyzed the impact of the program to determine what effect, if any, school-wide merit pay has on student performance and school quality.

Capstone Team: Andrew Davis, Emily Harrison, Alnisha Maniaci, Francesc-Roger Marti, Brent Morita



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