THE CAPSTONE PROGRAM
2009-2010
Project Summaries

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

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A University Resource

The Capstone Program was originally funded with a generous grant from the Ford Foundation. Since 1995, more than 3,500 students have participated in over 700 projects for more than 550 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 76 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 Policy and Management

FACULTY: ANA OLIVEIRA AND DENNIS SMITH

Americans for Informed Democracy

Planning the Way Forward for Americans for Informed Democracy

Americans for Informed Democracy (AID) is an organization dedicated to empowering students to address global issues related to development, peace and security, the environment, and public health in their communities. In 2009, AID faced a dramatic re-organization of its staff and leadership. As a result, the organization requested a Capstone team to support its strategic planning process and help focus its goals and resources. The Capstone team developed a student survey, an assessment of AID’s capacity to meet the needs of the student base, a literature review, and an analysis of peer organizations. The team analyzed funding resources; interviewed the staff, board, and founder; and conducted information-gathering meetings to gauge the efficiency of AID’s internal operations. The Capstone team also surveyed AID’s college student base to determine how the organization could better meet its members’ needs and address characteristics of today’s student activist culture. The team provided a report complete with comprehensive data, an organizational analysis, and implementation recommendations for AID's strategic planning process.

Capstone Team: Catherine Coleman, Nicole Gill, Rosie Richards, Erin Weber-Johnson

Brennan Center for Justice

Impact of Legal Representation in New York City's Mandatory Settlement Conferences on Foreclosures

In September 2008, New York State implemented legislation that entitles homeowners in foreclosure to a Mandatory Settlement Conference, with the hope of reaching settlements with their respective mortgage lenders. A 2009 study by the Center for New York City Neighborhoods, however, revealed that only 3% of 800 observed cases reached a satisfactory settlement. The Capstone team was asked by the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law to determine the impact of legal representation for homeowners during New York City’s Mandatory Settlement Conferences. They wanted to know if distressed homeowners stand a better chance of negotiating settlements with
legal representation. What kind of attorneys matter? What can be done with Mandatory Settlement Conferences to give foreclosure victims a better chance? The Capstone team interviewed Judicial Hearing Officers, relevant attorneys, and other judicial personnel to clarify the nature and impact of New York City’s Mandatory Settlement Conferences.

Capstone Team: Timothy Farrell, Henry Gascon, Anthony Giancatarino, Ashley Mueller

Legal Momentum
Girls Can: Empowering the Next Generation of Girls in Career and Technical Education

Gender segregation and the under-enrollment of girls in career and technical education programs are pervasive problems in New York City and across the country. Although robust federal, state, and local legislation exists to protect women and girls from discrimination in education, stereotypes about “proper occupations” for men and women deter many girls from pursuing educational opportunities that can lead to lucrative, nontraditional careers. Legal Momentum’s Pipeline Project works to increase the number of New York City middle and high school aged girls who enroll in and complete educational programs focused on skilled trades. Through this work, Legal Momentum hopes to forge systemic change to end the long history of gender segregation in these programs. The Capstone team conducted a process evaluation of the Pipeline Project’s recruitment and retention processes and provided Legal Momentum with recommendations on how it can improve the program.

Capstone Team: Dalsie Andrade, Habiba Koroma, Rosemary Linares

New York City Department of Education’s New York City Mentoring Program
An Assessment of the Effectiveness and the Evaluation Processes of the New York City Mentoring Program

The New York City Department of Education’s New York City Mentoring Program (NYCMP) connects New York City public high school students with adult mentors selected from New York City corporations and member associations in order to help the youth grow socially, professionally, and academically. At the end of each school year, NYCMP participants, including mentees, mentors, as well as school and mentor coordinators, complete surveys to provide data for program assessment. The Capstone team analyzed survey data from the past two academic years, collected additional data through interviews and focus groups, and created an external report to provide stakeholders with the results of the analysis and recommendations for program improvement. The team also created an internal report for
the program’s director, which included an assessment of the NYCMP’s current method of data collection and analysis and recommendations for improving and expanding the program’s evaluation processes.

Capstone Team: Elizabeth Brown, Kate Landon

New York City Department of Probation
From Policy to Practice: A Process Evaluation of the New York City Department of Probation’s Containment Model for Sex Offender Supervision

The Capstone team conducted a process evaluation of the New York City Department of Probation’s (Department) containment model for supervising sex offenders. The Department commenced this new model in October 2008, but had not examined the extent to which it had been implemented as intended. The purpose of the evaluation was to take stock of current practices and assess ways for enhancing the supervision model. The Capstone team employed a series of quantitative and qualitative analyses to document and describe current practices, identify successes and challenges in implementing the containment model, identify the extent to which policies have been implemented consistently across boroughs, and assess how different partners and agencies have worked together to provide services and supervision to probationers. Based on the findings, the Capstone team developed a series of recommendations on how to improve program operations going forward, using the Department’s policies and national best practices as a guiding framework.

Capstone Team: Lauren Baranco, Gaurav Gogoi, Lora Krsulich, Grace Lee, Maggie Peck

New York City Deputy Mayor’s Office of Health and Human Services
Development of a Community Needs Assessment for “The City for All Ages” Project

The New York City Deputy Mayor’s Office of Health and Human Services is working within the World Health Organization’s guidelines to transform New York City into a city livable for people of all ages, with an emphasis on the elderly population, a large and growing proportion of New Yorkers. Given the need to ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of existing senior services, the Deputy Mayor’s Office asked the Capstone team to develop and implement a community needs assessment. The team researched and produced a literature review of global, national, and citywide practices that best capture seniors’ needs. Based on the findings, the team developed a pilot survey with several community stakeholders to determine the “age friendliness” of various services. Based on the survey results, the team made recommendations that would assist the Deputy Mayor’s Office and its associat-
Capstone Team: Jennifer Agmi, Douglas Chiu, Thomas Coquerel, Kristen Ellis, Maria Eulo

New York City Leadership Academy
Innovations in School Leadership: An Analysis of Alternative Models of the Principalship

The NYC Leadership Academy is an independent, nonprofit organization that recruits, prepares, and supports visionary school leaders for the complex work of transforming high-need schools into rigorous learning environments. The role of school leaders has changed significantly over the last 50 years and is likely to continue to change in the future, and the NYC Leadership Academy requested that the Capstone team research alternative models of school leadership and identify the benefits and barriers associated with them. Through literature reviews and interviews with policymakers, principals, teachers, advocacy groups, and research organizations, the Capstone team gathered information about the different forms principalship can possibly take. The information was compiled and analyzed to produce a report of findings and recommendations which would assist the NYC Leadership Academy in anticipating the ways principalship, and by extension principal training, may change in the future.

Capstone Team: Adam Gromis, Oceane Keou, Adrian Saldaña, Rebecca Solow, Marykate Zukiewicz

United Nations, Office of the Under-Secretary General for Management
Development of a Performance Management System for the United Nations Secretariat

The United Nations system adopted results-based management (RBM) as part of a broad reform initiative, though implementation of this framework has proven inconsistent across programs. The Office of the Under-Secretary General for Management requested that a Capstone team develop recommendations for a fully integrated performance management tool within the UN Secretariat. The proposed system would need to foster the strategic use of goal formation and performance indicators in short and long-term planning, while complementing RBM and the existing management structures. The Capstone team first conducted a gap analysis between RBM in theory and practice at the UN, based upon a document review of internal reports and interviews with managers in New York and Geneva. Using best practices and techniques of alternative performance management systems, like Balanced Scorecard, the Capstone team then provided tailored solutions to address gaps within the implementation of RBM in the Secretariat.
Advanced Projects in PNP Policy

FACULTY: CHARLES BRECHER

Brennan Center for Justice

Campaign Finance Reform Project

The Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law is a non-partisan public policy and law institute that focuses on fundamental issues of democracy and justice. Recently, the organization has focused on public financing of political campaigns and completed an empirical analysis of electoral competition and low contribution limits. To build on this research, The Brennan Center proposed to study the impact of public financing on the competitiveness of elections, contestedness of elections and diversity of candidates in the states and municipalities that have adopted such systems. In response to the request, the Brennan Center Capstone team examined the impact of public financing on key factors in gubernatorial, state senate and state house/assembly races.

Capstone Team: Justin Eppley, Daniel Ferris, Annie Gleason, Mucio Godoy, Xavier Smith, Stephen Sumner

New York City Food and Fitness Partnership

Improving Access to Healthy, Fresh Foods in East and Central Harlem

The NYC Food and Fitness Partnership is a task-force comprised of members from several local organizations and city agencies dedicated to improving access to healthy food and increasing opportunities for physical activity and active living for all New Yorkers. The Partnership charged the Capstone team to study the disparities in access to supermarkets for residents in East and Central Harlem. The Partnership was particularly interested in identifying ways the City of New York can help current and potential supermarket operators in these neighborhoods overcome operational barriers that affect store quality and often limit the availability of healthy, fresh foods in their stores. To identify these barriers, the Capstone team designed and conducted a survey assessing store quality, operations, design, and management. Using the survey data, the team identified ways the City can better support supermarket operators and improve the provision and consumption of healthy foods in East and Central Harlem.

Capstone Team: Pamela Corbett, Ivonne Garcia, May Hui, Jessica Schwartz
Fire Department of New York

Increasing Gender Diversity at the FDNY

The Fire Department of New York (FDNY) currently employs almost 12,000 firefighters, but fewer than 1% of them are women. The FDNY is seeking to increase these numbers so that its firefighter workforce will better reflect the diversity of the population it serves. The FDNY employed the Capstone team to gather both quantitative and qualitative data from past research studies, interviews with the FDNY’s current female firefighters, and a survey of women between the ages of 15 and 30. The team made recommendations to the FDNY in regard to what characteristics, if any, predict greater interest in becoming a firefighter, how and where to locate these women, and what types of marketing messages are more appealing to them. These recommendations will provide a point of reference as the FDNY begins its new recruitment campaign.

Capstone Team: Deborah Apeloig, Lara Freishtat, Casey Heim, Tinia McCoy, Emily Pickens

Free Arts NYC

Strengthening the Agency-Partner Relationship: Liaison Management

Free Arts NYC provides under-served children and families with educational arts and mentoring programs that help them realize its fullest potential. Many of its programs take place under the auspices of other organizations, and its relationship with their On-Site Coordinators (OSC’s) – the staff who oversee the Free Arts programming in their organization – is critical, as the OSC’s performance directly impacts the quality of three Free Arts programs. The Capstone team was asked to help Free Arts more clearly understand, strengthen, and support this partnership role. OSC’s from partner agencies were surveyed and interviewed to get an ‘insider’ understanding of the OSC role and identify the challenges specific to OSC performance. The data were then analyzed to produce a comprehensive set of materials to help Free Arts best support high-functioning OSC relationships, including a handbook that outlines Free Arts NYC’s policies for the position and recommendations for systems of accountability.

Capstone Team: Shanita Gopie, Candice Manzano, Yvonne Shen, Murat Tuysuz
National Council for Research on Women

Identifying The National Council for Research on Women’s Competitive Edge

In an effort to ensure the full utilization of the research produced by the National Council for Research on Women’s network of member centers, the Capstone team conducted an internal and external audit analyzing the organization’s current position in the marketplace. To achieve this outcome, the team administered an online survey to the Council’s member centers and conducted a series of interviews with the Council’s staff, executive leaders at select member centers, members of the Board of Directors, independent organizations not currently partnering with the Council, and potential funders. Analysis of the data collected allowed the Council to better understand its public image and the overall environment in which it operates, determine its strengths and weaknesses, and identify potential partnerships for growth. The results of this audit will be incorporated into The Council’s case statement and strategic plan.

Capstone Team: Eunice Hong, Lindsy Klar, Ari Pinkus

Palladia, Inc.

Exploring the Alumni Association as a Vehicle for Outcome Evaluation and Substance Abuse Recovery

Founded in 1970, Palladia, Inc. is one of the largest nonprofit, multi-service agencies of its kind in New York City. In its tenth year partnering with Capstone, Palladia commissioned a Capstone team to develop a model for an alumni association for its substance abuse treatment programs. Primary project goals were to explore the feasibility of using an alumni association to gather outcome data and to deepen Palladia’s approach to substance abuse recovery. The Capstone team engaged in internal research consisting of staff interviews and focus groups with current participants in substance abuse programs as well as with alumni of such programs. External research focused on interviews with peer organizations as well as a literature review. Strong interest in an alumni association was identified by key stakeholders. Recommendations include a model for a Palladia-wide alumni association as well as an exploration of the ways in which the association could support Palladia’s goals of obtaining outcome trends and supporting alumni in their continued recovery.

Capstone Team: Lani Santo, Caryn Teitelbaum, Jos Thalheimer, Diana Yi
Asphalt Green
Asphalt Green Battery Park City Expansion

Asphalt Green is a nonprofit organization dedicated to assisting individuals of all ages and backgrounds to achieve health through a lifetime of sports and fitness. Asphalt Green was recently awarded a contract to operate a community center in Battery Park City scheduled to open by January 2012. At a crucial stage of expansion, the Capstone team was charged to conduct an extensive scan of the community and cultural landscape in Battery Park City and surrounding areas, including Community Boards 1, 2 and 3. Information gathered included demographics, public schools, senior services, community sports leagues, youth and senior organizations, pools, and arts organizations. The results of the community scan will assist Asphalt Green in understanding existing resources and its programming value to the community’s unmet needs. The report summarizes these findings and provides recommendations for Asphalt Green to consider with respect to identifying the strongest potential partners for community and cultural programming.

Capstone Team: Amy Chou, Desma Deitz, Adrienne Dobsovits, Judith Rosenfeld, Hanh Tran

Imagine Project
Helping the Imagine Project Move to the Next Phase by Perfecting Internal Processes

Imagine Project is a nonprofit organization dedicated to nurturing creativity and imagination of at-risk children through the performing arts. The Imagine Project presents its program at a variety of homeless shelters, schools, and community centers throughout New York City. Founded in 1992, the program is designed to provide children with a unique creative outlet and training ground in which they learn to cultivate and treasure the imaginative process. Imagine is at a key turning point as it is eager to expand its program reach to touch as many children as possible. In order to do so, internal processes and board participation needs to be optimized. After an in-depth analysis, the Capstone team compiled and analyzed this information to produce recommendations to help Imagine perfect its internal processes. A program guide was also created in order to help educators truly understand the Imagine program and eventually recreate the program at other locations. These recommendations will aide in guiding Imagine as it creates a solid financial structure, builds an effective board, continues to expand its partnerships, and
focuses on taking its internal processes to the next level.

Capstone Team: Haliyma Barrow, Alison Devenny, Carly Highsmith, Ryan Richards, Daniel Torrez

Advanced Projects in PNP Management
FACULTY: SARA GRANT AND MERLE McGEE

Council on Accreditation
Improving Workflow Processes for the Council on Accreditation

The Council on Accreditation (COA) partners with human service organizations worldwide to improve service delivery outcomes by developing, applying, and promoting accreditation standards. Currently at a critical juncture in its expansion, COA regards workflow, efficiency, effectiveness, and staff morale as significant components for the organization’s continued and future success. The Capstone team was tasked to work with COA to isolate existing workflow constraints, identify best practices from related fields, and craft recommendations to promote efficiency and effectiveness. The Capstone team gathered data by conducting interviews and focus groups and surveying COA’s staff. The team’s final report provided COA with research and recommendations that will assist the organization in its efforts to achieve its organizational goals and, more specifically, improve workflow. The final research deliverables will allow the organization to recognize methods that will maximize efficiency and reduce staff workload. Optimally, these recommendations related to workflow will also positively affect employee morale and customer satisfaction.

Capstone Team: Keven Lee, Leora Lipton, Emily Pallin, Anjali Singh, Antonio Whitaker

The Innocence Project
Designing and Preparing a Comprehensive Volunteer Management System

The Innocence Project is a national litigation and public policy organization dedicated to exonerating wrongfully convicted people through DNA testing and reforming the criminal justice system to prevent future injustices. Recently, the organization experienced both an increase in individuals offering to volunteer and a greater
internal need to use volunteer assistance to reach programmatic goals. Without a formal volunteer system in place, the Innocence Project has not been able to take full advantage of the numerous offers from individuals wanting to volunteer. The Capstone team tackled this issue by assessing the current volunteer needs of staff members, researching best practices and current trends in volunteer management, and exploring volunteer management software options. The team then designed a comprehensive volunteer management system; strategy and process for the Innocence Project, including a software plan; procedures for staff to communicate volunteer needs; outlines of handbooks for volunteers and volunteer supervisors; and recommendations for the new system’s overall implementation.

Capstone Team: Marc Cincone, Ben Clark, Hillary Cohen, Micah Goldfus, Michaella Holden

New York Women’s Foundation
Measuring Impact: A Blueprint for Building an Internal Evaluation Program

The New York Women’s Foundation (NYWF) has awarded over $19 million in grants to hundreds of local grassroots organizations working toward the creation of an equal and just future for low-income women and girls in New York City. The NYWF requested a Capstone team to identify the benchmarks critical to a successful internal evaluation process. Through the implementation of this process, the NYWF can measure the impact of its grantmaking activities. The Capstone team conducted literature reviews, meetings with staff members, interviews with nonprofit consultants and peer organizations, and a competitor analysis. These findings informed the Capstone team’s recommendations to the NYWF about how to engage in a process that will effectively measure the impact of its work. Key findings and recommendations were organized into a comprehensive summary report that will guide the NYWF as it continues to develop internal evaluation processes and procedures.

Capstone Team: Kate Iovieno, Normel Jean-Pierre, Kimberly Bernard Karol, Remy Martin, Marta Okoniewski, Alya Wilhelm

Uri L’Tzedek
Two-year Organizational Development Plan

Uri L’Tzedek is a social justice organization that seeks to engage, empower and inspire the Orthodox Jewish community to create a more just world. Dedicated to combating suffering and oppression, Uri L’Tzedek creates discourse through community-based education, leadership development and issue-based advocacy. Now in its third year of operation, Uri L’Tzedek is evolving from a start-up organization into a dynamic fixture in the Jewish social jus-
Advanced Projects in PNP Management and Finance
FACULTY: JOHN BROTHERS AND MONTE KURS

Brooklyn Botanic Garden
Increasing the Financial Capacity of the Continuing Education Programs at Brooklyn Botanic Garden

The Capstone team analyzed revenues and expenditures from certificate and non-certificate Continuing Education programs at Brooklyn Botanic Garden (BBG) with the goal of increasing earned income to fund the garden's general operations. The team researched adult education curricula, course pricing, instructor pay rates, and registration policies at competitor and peer institutions to determine a baseline for industry standards, with a special emphasis on certificate programs in horticulture and floral design. Interviews with other divisions at BBG increased the team's understanding of organizational culture and the interrelatedness of garden operations affecting this project. Additional considerations were added to the project’s scope including the implications of the current economic crisis on present and future budgets. The team analyzed course offerings and schedules, fees, and attendance rates to identify courses and certificate programs with the highest profit margin and the highest demand by students. This analysis yielded recommendations for scheduling, pricing, and registration policies for certificate and non-certificate courses at BBG in order to maximize Continuing Education program participation and revenues while adhering to the organization's overall mission.

Capstone Team: Seth Chalmer, Sari Diseンhouse, Michal Kalinsky-Frankel, Eric Lightman, Courtenay Burley Speir, Rebecca Weinstock

Uri L’Tzedek
With a growing community presence and increasingly diverse programs, Uri L’Tzedek sought to assess its activities and internal systems to maximize the organization's impact. The Capstone team created a two-year organizational development plan, with particular focus on the areas of development, communications, operations and governance. Using a demographic analysis of the American Orthodox Jewish community, the Capstone team recommended key messaging and fundraising strategies. The team also documented Uri L’Tzedek’s current operations and programs to identify measures of success, craft an organizational logic model, and make comprehensive governance and policy recommendations.

Capstone Team: Seth Chalmer, Sari Diseンhouse, Michal Kalinsky-Frankel, Eric Lightman, Courtenay Burley Speir, Rebecca Weinstock
Citizens Union Foundation
New York City and State Tax/Revenue Relationship

Citizens Union Foundation is a nonpartisan organization for good government which ensures New York local and state governments operate in a fair, open, and fiscally sound manner while informing and engaging its citizens. Citizens Union Foundation requested a Capstone team provide a quantitative and qualitative analysis on the tax and revenue relationship between New York State and New York City from 1998 to 2008. This tax and revenue structure is seen by many city residents as overly complex, antiquated and inequitable. The report focused on the history of how this relationship has been shaped over time and examined its effects on key areas of city services, specifically education and Medicaid. Finally the report examined how a few other city/state relationships compare to that of New York and the effect it may have on their ability to meet the needs of its citizens.

Capstone Team: Matthew Bukirin, Ada Feng, Melissa Husby, Clara Janis, Kimberly Wittmer

Jewish Community Relations Council
Forecasting the Financial Future of Jewish Cemeteries in the New York Area

The Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) requested a Capstone team to review the finances of regulated Jewish cemeteries in New York. It has been suggested that the expenses of some of the regulated cemeteries in New York City will outdistance their income and reserves over the next 25 years. Absent outside funding, it is possible that some cemeteries will be unable to meet their significant future liabilities. The Capstone team worked with JCRC to quantify the extent of the problem and how much demand it will place on the communal dollars of Jewish nonprofits. The Capstone team developed a database of these cemeteries’ publicly-available financial information and produced a report that informs the Jewish community of the extent of the problem. Recommendations were submitted to JCRC regarding how to approach the problem from within the Jewish community. Finally, the Capstone team developed policy recommendations addressing state regulations and the amount of financial information reported by cemeteries to the IRS and the state.

Capstone Team: Rachel Chaskey, Dan Feder, Tara Goodwin, Stephanie Gunn

Lenox Hill Neighborhood House
Marketing and Fee Structure Analysis

Lenox Hill Neighborhood House is a multiservice community-based organization that provides education and social servic-
es to over 20,000 individuals each year on the East Side of Manhattan and Roosevelt Island. The Capstone team devised a marketing plan and related data management tools for Lenox Hill Neighborhood House’s fee-based programs, including their Fitness and Aquatics Center, Computer Training classes, and English for Speakers of Other Languages. The team conducted research on local competitors, market trends, and demand for the targeted services, in addition to surveying senior citizens regarding fitness and exercise interests. A financial model was developed to aid fee setting practices, and databases were created to streamline client demographics and feedback for future marketing efforts. Research results and recommended marketing strategies were presented in report format. Collectively, the recommended strategies and accompanying data management tools should play a vital role in maximizing revenue streams from the specified fee-based programs.

Capstone Team: Brooke Ansnes, Jonathan Chapman, Pranav Sharma, Meredith Sofka, Hiroto Uchino

Mississippi Center for Justice
The Business of Child Care in Mississippi: Helping Providers Become More Efficient Through Improved Business Practices

There are approximately 1,800 licensed child care providers in Mississippi. While some of these providers serve more affluent clients and/or receive federal funding from the Head Start and Early Head Start programs, many low-income providers struggle to break-even and face constant financial hardship. The Mississippi Center for Justice, a public interest law firm, tasked the Capstone team with exploring how best to help these providers reduce financial stress and improve their operations in the current Mississippi child care environment. Over the course of the project, the team identified mechanisms for providers to operate more efficiently and examined the advantages of encouraging collaboration among groups of providers, as well as potential partnerships with participating Head Start centers. The team found that basic financial management skills, a sound understanding of regulations and making the administrative paperwork manageable are among the providers’ greatest needs. The team developed a handbook for providers containing financial management and assessment tools, information on additional revenue sources and a set of best practices.

Capstone Team: Toyin Alli, James Geraghty, Michael LoBiondo, Adam Morris, Tracy Steele
Congressional Research Service
Assessing the Adequacy of the Federal Employee Compensation Act: A Study of Federal Civilian Employees Deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan

Increasing numbers of federal civilian employees (FCEs) are being deployed to help aid reconstruction and intelligence operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Working side by side with troops, FCEs engage in work that can put them at similar risk for injury and mortality as uniformed military. However, in case of injury or death, the medical and workers compensation benefits FCEs receive through the Federal Employee Compensation Act (FECA) are distinctly different from the benefits military personnel receive through the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs. Despite some preliminary investigation by the US Government Accountability Office, the adequacy of the medical benefits and

New York City Department of Education
Improving NYC Schools through Innovative Best Practices

Under the outdated “industrial model” of education utilized in New York City public schools, many students are ill-prepared for the challenges they are faced with when they enter the work force. To partially mitigate these problems, the NYC Department of Education seeks to implement programs at individual schools and at the district level to use technology to promote student achievement by tailoring instruction to the individual needs of students. The NYC Department of Education requested a Capstone team to compile and disseminate a comprehensive taxonomy of innovative best practices that can be implemented by teachers and school leaders. The Capstone team researched, analyzed, and collected best practices from domestic and international school districts. Then, the team created an accessible report that would inform New York City school and district leaders on how to implement these best practices, highlighting various barriers or constraints, such as costs and legal concerns. The NYC Department of Education will then disseminate the report to teachers, principals, and district leaders, and use it for emphasis in implementing new programs.

Capstone Team: Riley Bauling, Mike Larson, Abigail Talcott, Tim Truong

Advanced Projects in Health Policy and Management
FACULTY: JOHN DONNELLAN

Increasing numbers of federal civilian employees (FCEs) are being deployed to help aid reconstruction and intelligence operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Working side by side with troops, FCEs engage in work that can put them at similar risk for injury and mortality as uniformed military. However, in case of injury or death, the medical and workers compensation benefits FCEs receive through the Federal Employee Compensation Act (FECA) are distinctly different from the benefits military personnel receive through the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs. Despite some preliminary investigation by the US Government Accountability Office, the adequacy of the medical benefits and
compensation received by deployed FCEs remained unclear. The Capstone team analyzed the insurance claims data from all injured and fallen FCEs to assess the adequacy of FECA, which is one of the oldest workers compensation systems in the country and was designed for domestic federal employees.

Capstone Team: Cristin Lavelle Goerke, Justine Kelly-Fierro, Nicole Marshall, Joseph Polizzi

New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Cancer Prevention and Control Program

*Developing Educational Tools to Increase Breast, Cervical, and Colon Cancer Awareness in the Queens and Harlem Communities*

Over 13,000 New Yorkers die of cancer annually. In 2004, NYC’s Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) launched a citywide health policy initiative called Take Care New York, listing cancer screening as a top 10 agenda item. Specifically, breast, cervical, and colon cancers can be effectively detected through early screening mechanisms. Although the city has made some progress increasing these screening rates, some neighborhoods lag behind, including parts of Queens and Harlem. To help facilitate the DOHMH’s goal, the Capstone team conducted research in target neighborhoods via surveys and focus groups to develop effective educational tools that are culturally appropriate and encourage diverse populations to participate in the recommended early cancer screening regimen. Based on the research collected, the team developed prototypes of two promotional tools and devised recommendations for implementing relevant public health education interventions.

Capstone Team: Anne Hottle, Laura Rich, Melissa See, Kim Shao-Wen Wang

New York University Langone Medical Center

*Finding Solutions: Providing Effective Ambulatory Care Training*

NYU School of Medicine (NYUSoM) seeks to improve its medical school training curriculum to reflect the change in health care delivery from in-patient to out-patient care. As part of this effort, NYUSoM charged the Capstone team to improve the ambulatory (out-patient) clerkship experience for NYUSoM medical students and faculties. The team conducted a literature review of ambulatory care models and researched nationwide best practices, analyzed survey results of medical students, and developed a survey for various NYU affiliated physician groups. Physician surveys identified existing barriers to teaching and suggestions for physician teaching incentives, while interviews with physician-faculty and practice directors specified recruit-
ment challenges and financial impact of students in clinical settings. The team’s report offered recommendations to create an effective teaching environment for ambulatory clerkships, viable incentives to encourage physicians to teach medical students, and a system to manage teaching and recruiting for clerkship rotations.

Capstone Team: Jinean Carabai, Jennifer Ewing, Jen Lau, Kevin Lyu, Megan Meagher

**VA New York Harbor Healthcare System**

*Assessment of Veterans Administration New York Harbor Healthcare System Missed Opportunities*

The VA New York Harbor Healthcare (VA NYHHS) system encompasses the veterans’ healthcare system for the boroughs of Queens, Manhattan, Brooklyn and Staten Island. The organization consists of campuses throughout the boroughs and provides care to over 52,000 veterans a year. The VA NYHHS uses the VA national standard known as the “missed opportunity” measure to improve services in their outpatient clinics. The system is struggling with a large number of appointments that are not kept or cancelled. The Capstone team assessed the high missed opportunity rates, and created plans for improvement. The team explored six performance measure clinics to identify areas that are leading to missed opportunities, including surveys and interviews with patients, administrators, service chiefs, clerical and centralized scheduling staff, as well as clinic observation. The team evaluated the findings to determine the cause of the poor missed opportunity rates, and made recommendations for reminder system policies.

Capstone Team: Adam Boll, Veronica Bugenis, Aubrey Hanft, Heather Tompkins, Kasha Ziubinska

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**Advanced Projects in Health Services Management and Finance**

*FACULTY: AMY GOLDMAN AND ROGER KROPF*

**HIV Care Services, Public Health Solutions**

*Assisting HIVCS in Developing a Continuous Quality Care Improvement Plan*

HIV Care Services (HIVCS) is a program of Public Health Solutions, whose mission is to manage federal and city funding for HIV preventive, educational, and clinical services across NYC. HIVCS lacks a continuous
quality improvement plan (CQI) to evaluate the different processes required to execute their contracts. The team’s goal was to incorporate their current performance standards into a comprehensive CQI plan that suits the needs of the organization. The team identified an effective way to monitor HIVCS’ performance indicators, and the major deliverable of this project was a quality improvement plan which includes an implementation strategy that establishes all the activities that HIVCS should undertake to manage and monitor the allocation and use of resources. This model will enhance the accuracy and timeliness of HIVCS’ internal processes.

Capstone Team: Fredelyne Paris, Emalyn Saladino, Paola Torres, Albert Yu

Maimonides Medical Center
Development of a Pediatric Urgent Care Center

The goal of this Capstone team’s project was to assist Maimonides Medical Center in creating a pediatric urgent care center service model. By routing non-acute pediatric patients to a setting more appropriate for treatment of non-emergent problems, Maimonides can provide them, as well as acute emergency room patients, with higher quality medical care. In order to develop a business plan for the urgent care center, the group researched and evaluated existing pediatric urgent care models, both free-standing and hospital-affiliated, throughout the country to acquire best practice characteristics. Patient demographic and volume data was collected and analyzed to help identify an appropriate location and size for the center. The team also performed an urgent care needs assessment by interviewing and surveying key stakeholders within Maimonides and physicians in the community. Financial data was incorporated to project revenue for the center. Based on this information, the team presented Maimonides with recommendations for the creation of a successful pediatric urgent care center.

Capstone Team: Phoebe Garcia, Heraa Hajelsafi, Molly Kreider, Naiqi Sun, Lauren Tanenbaum

New York-Presbyterian Hospital
Drug Distribution and Medication Administration – Next Generation Planning

New York-Presbyterian Hospital’s (NYPH) ultimate goal is to provide patients with high quality, safe and compassionate care. As one of the initiatives towards this goal, NYPH requested a Capstone team to evaluate the impact of a cart-less medication administration system on nurses’ time spent in direct patient care. The team conducted observations and focus group interviews with nurses in both cart-less and carted units to study the respective medication administration processes. Based on this information, the team composed a list of barriers to the medication
administration process in each of these units. In the final report, the team provided recommendations to overcome these barriers and improve the process in these units based on the data obtained and literature review. In addition, the team also provided NYPH with recommendations for the transition to and implementation of a cart-less system throughout the NYPH facilities.

The team surveyed faculty and staff at New York-Presbyterian Hospital and Columbia University to assess the needs and strengths of the institution. With the knowledge gained from these studies, the team developed a business model and a set of recommendations to implement a consortium for geriatric studies at NYP and Columbia University.

Capstone Team: Laura Carrell, Eileen Donohue, Lawrence Miller, Annie Nussbaum, Hsing Hwa Jessica Tsai

New York-Presbyterian Hospital, Columbia University

The Capstone team assisted the Department of Geriatrics at New York-Presbyterian Hospital to create a plan and make recommendations for a Consortium on Aging at the institution, encouraging greater collaboration and communication regarding geriatric work between departments at NYP and Columbia University. It is important that NYP/Columbia, located in an area with the highest density of nursing homes in the nation, be prepared to meet the needs of the community, particularly as the baby boom generation reaches retirement age. The team researched the best practices of geriatric centers and consortia across the United States through a series of phone interviews and a web-based survey.

New York-Presbyterian Hospital, Cornell Weill

Improving Equipment Procurement Processes for Nurses

The Capstone team worked with New York-Presbyterian Hospital to review the distribution of medical equipment throughout the Weill-Cornell campus. The team was charged with finding an efficient process for nurses to procure the equipment they need for the right patient at the right time. Unfortunately, attempting to locate the needed equipment absorbs a significant amount of time. This equipment is currently distributed by the central distribution department once a nurse places an order. In order to identify barriers between ordering the equipment and delivering it to the nurses, team members interviewed several equipment and nurse managers, held focus groups with nurses, and compiled equipment utilization data through observational
audits and database queries. Once the data was fully analyzed, the team was able to determine the optimal equipment par levels and designed efficient processes for delivering the equipment to the nurse staff in a timely manner, allowing them to spend more time by their patients' bedsides.

Capstone Team: Ray English, Bridget Foecking, Bob Fonhgho, Dan Gottelieb, William Hammond, M. Tom Manion

VA New York Harbor Healthcare System Evaluation of the Root Cause Analysis Process at the VANYHHS

The VA New York Harbor Healthcare System (VANYHHS) charged the Capstone team with the review of Root Cause Analysis (RCA) output measurements, through the Office of Patient Safety. It is the goal of the Office of Patient Safety to effectively use RCA processes as tools to improve clinical operations and quality of care. The team provided the VANYHHS with recommendations on methods, measurement metrics, and potential technological platforms for a database of quality and operational RCA outcome measurements tracking. The recommendations will initially be implemented with the VANYHHS at both the Brooklyn and Manhattan campuses, before being potentially released as recommendations to the national system as a whole.

Capstone Team: Matthew Curren, Christine Gomez, Sophia Seyal, Salma Walji

Advanced Projects in Urban Planning FACULTY: KATE COLLIGNON AND KEI HAYASHI

Community Board 10 of Manhattan Limited Equity Housing Programs in NYC: The Development of a Resource Guide for Community Board 10

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, New York City created an affordable program through which organized tenant associations could acquire their buildings through a cooperative ownership structure. There are over 1,100 of these limited-equity cooperatives in NYC, known as Housing Development Fund Corporations (HDFC).

While the program has had success over the years, many buildings are currently struggling to function as they once did. Many HDFC residents in central Harlem look to their community board (CB10) in times of duress, yet CB10 is not always equipped to respond. It is CB10’s goal to provide enough support so that HDFC buildings can remain self-sufficient and continue to be a viable mechanism for affordable housing in the future. Through interviews with residents and stakeholders, town hall meetings, and community
research, the Capstone team worked with CB10 to gain a better understanding of the challenges facing HDFC buildings in their community district. The Capstone team created a resource guide to assist HDFCs in their operations and devised a plan for CB10 to serve these residents more effectively.

Capstone Team: Aurore Circle DeCarlo, Alyse Erman, Douglas N. Le, Sandra L. Rothbard, Alexander Wolk

New Jersey Community Development Corporation
Hinchliffe Stadium Rehabilitation

The New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC) has identified Hinchliffe Stadium, a former Negro Baseball League venue and treasured community asset, as a key site for revitalization and creative historic preservation. The Capstone team conducted an implementation strategy and feasibility analysis for Hinchliffe Stadium that examined how to reopen the facility for athletic use, preserve and celebrate its historic and cultural importance, and ensure financial sustainability. The final project outlined the steps needed to bring Hinchliffe to a baseline reactivation, recommended an operating model and revenue structure, and described options for future site development. To determine the parameters for site development, the Capstone team examined case studies of comparable historic stadiums to identify appropriate operating models and potential expenditures and revenues. Additionally, the Capstone team analyzed different financing options, which involved profiling potential sponsors and partners. The final report provided a roadmap for stakeholders to use when moving forward with this project.

Capstone Team: Galin Brooks, Greg Holisko, Fedor Novikov, Julie Simon, Erin Young

New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
How Do They Do It? Landmarks Commissions Across the Country

New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) is responsible for identifying and designating landmark buildings and areas in the five boroughs. LPC requested a Capstone team in order to better understand, compare, and analyze how other cities landmarks and preservation commissions operate. The Capstone team chose the cities of Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Palm Beach, and San Francisco for the study. The team's research, which focused on differentiating stages in the designation processes and sub-processes for the cities as well as laying out a typology for each city, has yielded findings that are informative for LPC and will provide them with a set of best practices and recommendations.
Advanced Projects in Urban Planning
FACULTY: FRANK FISH

New York City Department of City Planning
Developing a Methodology for Evaluating the Effects of Areawide Rezonings in New York City

New York City does not currently conduct a routine practice of revisiting areawide rezonings after some years have elapsed to determine whether the consequences were as expected or different from what was anticipated. The Capstone team worked with the New York City Department of City Planning to create a methodology and perform an evaluation of the effects of areawide rezonings, providing insights into how the tools of zoning policy operate in the complex processes of neighborhood change.

Westchester Department of Transportation
The Opportunity for Bike Sharing in Westchester County

In 2008, Westchester County launched its Global Warming Action Plan, which acknowledged the importance of promoting alternative modes of transit. Viewing bike sharing as a possible solution to promoting alternative transportation, the Westchester Department of Transportation tasked a Capstone team to examine the opportunity for bike sharing in Westchester County. The first phase of a dual-phase report analyzed an array of bike share programs around the world, opinions of experts (stakeholders and non-stakeholders) on bike sharing and the feasibility of implementing a bike share program in the County, and existing relevant conditions in the County. This comprehensive examination informed the selection of four preliminary sites prime for bike sharing in Westchester, including Mount Vernon, White Plains, the Croton Aqueduct, and the Long Island Sound Corridor. With the input of Westchester DOT, the Capstone team chose the municipalities of Mount Vernon and White Plains for further policy, programmatic, infrastructure, and expansion recommendations for bike sharing.

Capstone Team: Daniella Bonilla, Mireille Martineau, Chris Minniti, Maria Pedroza

Capstone Team: Luke DePalma, Nicole Kolinsky, Patrick McCandless, David Sabatino, Andrew Steininger
During the past twenty years, Southeast Asia has witnessed a great push towards decentralization and increased responsibilities for sub-national governments. Among these responsibilities, financing urban infrastructure poses some of the greatest challenges. The Capstone team focused on the financing of urban service delivery in Indonesia, Philippines, and Vietnam, three countries which are at various levels of decentralization and all of which face considerable infrastructure finance challenges. The team developed a framework to assess infrastructure finance systems and applied it to the three countries. The team identified common and unique experiences and issues, as well as highlighted innovative or successful practices that could be applicable in other countries. The factors underlying the better practices are documented to the extent possible, and their potential relevance for broader application is considered.
Municipal Development Partnership of East and Southern Africa
Local Government Fiscal Discretion in Uganda

The Government of Uganda began a rapid decentralization process in the early 1990s, devolving service delivery responsibility to Local Governments in an attempt to reduce poverty under the national development framework. The devolution of responsibility later spurred the adoption of the Fiscal Decentralization Strategy (FDS), which seeks to strengthen the ability of Local Governments to achieve the goals of decentralization by strengthening local capacities and support mechanisms. Using the FDS as a benchmark, this project examined the level of *de facto* fiscal discretion at the local level. Based on fieldwork conducted in three Local Government Districts of Uganda — Kampala, Wakiso, and Kanungu — the Capstone team examined the level to which FDS policies are achieving successful outcomes in practice. The project highlighted some current successes, shortcomings, and constraints to local autonomy within these three Districts, and provided recommendations for next steps and future studies.

Capstone Team: Steven Jean, Tiphany Lee, Katherine Malarkey, Jewells McMahon

United Nations Capital Development Fund
Knowledge Management at the UNCDF

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) contributes to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Least Developed Countries through a variety of innovative approaches that include both local development and microfinance. UNCDF does not have a current Knowledge Management (KM) strategy to disseminate its knowledge throughout the world. The Capstone team worked with UNCDF to develop a KM culture map and formulate a best practices KM framework that promotes continual organizational learning and identifies innovative ways to disseminate knowledge. The team conducted extensive research to identify best practices, lessons learned, and relevant KM products and processes. Furthermore, the Capstone team assisted UNCDF with developing a survey and interviewing some of the organization’s key staff to analyze current KM practices and identify gaps. With the completion of the data analysis, the Capstone team produced a report comprised of background information, findings, and recommendations for the immediate implementation of a UNCDF KM strategy.

Capstone Team: Karina Catlin, Moschell Coffey, Chevelle Dixon, Polina Flahive, Haci Serif Nas
United Nations Capital Development Fund
Local Economic Development in Nicaragua

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), in collaboration with the government of Nicaragua and the Nicaraguan Institute of Municipal Development (INIFOM), established the Fondo de Inversión para el Desarrollo Económico Local (FIDEL) in 2008. Its mandate is to promote food security in communities with high or extreme poverty. The Capstone team observed how these funds were used in two municipalities, Morrito and San Miguelito. Over a ten-day period, the Capstone team conducted interviews with local municipal authorities, program beneficiaries, and representatives of Nicaraguan central government agencies. The team pursued two primary lines of investigation related to local economic development: municipal level capacity (institutional, technical, financial) for strategic planning; and the process employed by INIFOM to generate investment projects and ensure sustainable projects that address community needs.

Capstone Team: Teresa Bergey, Makdyanet Cedeno, Gabriela Gutierrez, Nikita Ramchandani, Eva Rippeteau

United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCDF Global Forum on Local Development

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) has taken the lead on developing a Global Forum on Local Development, which is expected to be held in Africa in October 2010. This international event is intended to trigger a series of concrete activities designed to improve decentralization in interested countries. The Capstone team conducted two principal tasks. First, the team prepared case studies on decentralization in a set of countries of interest, including Cambodia, Egypt, Guatemala, and Uganda. Second, the team helped to gather and compile materials to assist with the development of more comprehensive and integrated diagnostic tools for assessing the state of the evolution of a local government system and the dynamics that have shaped it. These tasks are intended to help the UNCDF develop a variety of practical assessment tools that could assist with the design and implementation of policies and programs that improve decentralization and the attainment of the various potential benefits associated with it in specific countries.

Capstone Team: Megan Bolado, Yoshimi Horimoto, Rona-Kathleen Reodica, Laura Servin
World Institute for Leadership and Management in Africa
Feasibility Study on Entrepreneurship Training Program in Tanzania

The World Institute of Leadership and Management in Africa (WILMA) endeavors to promote development in Africa by increasing the capacity of local leadership for entrepreneurial and community projects. The Capstone team analyzed the feasibility of an educational program to develop future business leaders in Tanzania. The proposal linked students from Dar es Salaam University to existing community ventures in order to provide an experiential learning opportunity for students and local economic growth. The Capstone team visited stakeholders and explored the possibilities of various community association projects. The final report included a feasibility study, case study analysis, best practices, and recommendations for next steps.

Capstone Team: Leslie Gerhart, Daniela Hammeken, Lauren Hick, Julian Melcalf

United Nations Development Programme and the Government of Egypt, Ministry of Local Development
Study of Local Decentralization Progress in Egypt

The Government of Egypt’s Ministry of Local Development created a National Strategy for Decentralization, with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to empower local levels of government. The Capstone team performed a baseline study and preliminary evaluation of local development and administration reforms to date. Field research included visiting four governorates — Fayoum, Behera, Ismailia, and Luxor — to perform interviews with officials from various levels of local government, including the governors of Behera and Luxor. While in the field, the Capstone team collected information on the progress, performance, successes, and challenges faced by local officials during the implementation of local development planning and administration processes. Upon returning, the Capstone team conducted an analysis of local government performance, including a comparative review of normative approaches to decentralization and local development, and also produced several recommendations to improve and strengthen the current program.

Capstone Team: James Collins, Adib Fahim, Travis George, Luke Heinkel, Evian Patterson, Ashleigh Whelan
Gram Vikas
Gram Vikas: An Alternative to Community-Led Total Sanitation

Gram Vikas is a nonprofit organization located in rural east India with a mission to promote processes which are sustainable, socially inclusive and gender equitable to enable critical masses of poor and marginalized rural people or communities to achieve a dignified quality of life. The Capstone team was asked to evaluate Gram Vikas’ water and sanitation program in regards to health and community effectiveness. The team’s report integrated the program’s impacts on the community with an analysis of how the managerial structure of the organization affects the program. The team conducted literature reviews and read extensive field reports from the water and sanitation sector in India and worldwide to gain a fuller understanding of Gram Vikas’ role in the development community, while reviewing outside evaluations and in-house testimonials from the organization to gain a better perspective of the functioning organization. A three-week trip to India for field research gave the team a rich amount of data and insight into Gram Vikas, and the team’s recommendations are geared to help both the organization specifically as well as leave points of reference for other organizations involved with community-led methods.

Capstone Team: Molly Butler, Hallie Caplan, Maulin Mehta, Kimberly Worsham

United States Agency for International Development, Nicaragua
Nicaragua: Water Access, Sanitation, and Natural Disasters

Despite abundant water resources, contamination, weak institutions, and poor quality infrastructure have left much of Nicaragua without access to safe water and sanitation services. Throughout the country, the rural poor remain the population most in need, often relying on contaminated surface water and inadequate sanitation practices. The government’s efforts and those of the international community in the last two decades have yielded little expansion of the current system. The Capstone team was asked to report on this situation for USAID, collecting baseline country-wide data, interviewing individuals from all sectors involved, and surveying recent interventions. Field experience by the Capstone team in Nicaragua demonstrated that Comites de Agua Potable y Saniemento (CAPS) could
harbinger change after many years of slow progress in these sectors. Recommendations built on the successes observed in the country and were targeted to areas of severest need with regard to poverty, current access to water and sanitation, and incidence of natural disasters.

Capstone Team: Matthew Looney, Diane Nosseir, Andrew Quinn, Elizabeth van Dyke

World Bank Water and Sanitation Program
Horizonal Learning Program: An Independent Assessment

The purpose of this Capstone project was to assess the Horizontal Learning Program (HLP) in rural Bangladesh, an initiative driven by the World Bank as an effort to strengthen public service capacity amongst the lowest tier of government.

Capstone Team: Mikelle Adgate, Maryam Hariri, Kathryn Matheny, Ethel Mendez, Tammy Singer

Advanced International Projects
FACULTY: CAROL BELLAMY

Global Relief Technologies
Field Guide to Information Technology Deployment in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Operations: Support & Training

On January 12, 2010, an earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale hit the small island nation of Haiti, destroying nearly all of the nation’s infrastructure and resulting in one of the largest humanitarian emergencies in the past 20 years. Almost immediately, international relief organizations began deploying staff and volunteers to provide assistance, but they soon found themselves hampered by difficulties in
getting information from the field to headquarters (HQ) world-wide. Global Relief Technologies (GRT) is at the forefront of improving field-to-HQ communication and information transfer using information technology (IT). The Capstone team was commissioned to write a “Best Practices” guide for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) organizations, to help them develop the most efficient ways of getting necessary data from the field to their home offices. Utilizing interviews with operations and IT staff at various types of HADR organizations (multinational, military, non-governmental), the Capstone team focused on the best ways to support IT in extreme environments and how organizations can train their staff efficiently and effectively in new applications before and during response operations.

Capstone Team: Adrienne Dominguez, Arya Iranpour, Caitlin Ostomel, Samuel Sarkissian

Maisha Film Lab
Training East African Filmmakers: An Evaluation of Maisha through the Lens of its Participants

Maisha Film Lab empowers East African filmmakers to articulate their visions by providing them with access to world-class film training. Over the past five years, more than 250 East African filmmakers have participated in Maisha’s intensive film labs, taught by prominent international filmmakers. Looking to the future, Maisha feels confident in its ability to train filmmakers, but wonders if it is meeting its broader goal to plant the seeds of a self-sustaining film industry. To help Maisha evaluate its relevance, the Capstone team interviewed nearly 100 Maisha alumni and studied the impact of Maisha’s programs on each participant’s career. Interviews with Maisha lab mentors, leaders of the East African film industry, and Maisha staff — including its founder, Mira Nair — provided context for the evaluation. By comparing organizational goals to actual outcomes, the Capstone report shed light on Maisha’s strengths and weaknesses, and provided recommendations as to how Maisha can better meet the needs of the East African film industry.

Capstone Team: Sarah Bittenbender, Yael Gottlieb, So Yeon Kang, Karen Phillips

Radio La Benevolencija
Evaluating Impact of Humanitarian “Edutainment” in the Great Lakes Area

Radio La Benevolencija is a Dutch NGO that uses entertainment-education programming, events, and grassroots activities to encourage people to become active bystanders against incitement to hate violence. Currently operating in Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Benevolencija requested a Capstone team to devise an easy-applicable evaluation model that the organization
could use to continuously assess its impact. The Capstone team piloted an innovative evaluation survey methodology, one that had never before been employed in Africa. This methodology relied on a pre-recorded audio survey form, played on portable CD players to a random sample, that measured respondents’ understanding of and assimilation to La Benevolencija’s messages on a range of interim impact indicators. After conducting field work in Rwanda in January 2010, the Capstone team reported its findings and detailed how to employ this pioneering data collection model in existing and future Benevolencija projects.

Capstone Team: Jocelyn Atkins, Liba Beyer, Terkel Borg, Susan Bos, Johanna Simon

Advanced International Projects
FACULTY: STEVEN SCHALL

Catholic Medical Mission Board
Assessing Opportunities for Growth and Improving In-Country Monitoring and Evaluation of Healing Help Medical Donations Program

The Catholic Medical Mission Board (CMMB) is a U.S.-based Catholic charity established in 1928 that focuses exclusively on global healthcare. The Capstone team assessed opportunities for growth and improvement of CMMB’s Healing Help medical donations program. To reach this goal, the team designed a survey to assess absorption capacity and needs of CMMB donation recipients and tested the survey with partners in Nicaragua. Findings were compiled into a Nicaragua Case Study that highlights successes and limitations of CMMB’s donation work. The team also completed a more comprehensive report on the Healing Help program. Additionally, an online version of the survey was created and sent to key partners in Peru, Southern Sudan, Zambia and Kenya. Findings were used to improve the survey for CMMB to further utilize and disseminate more broadly as an industry standard impact assessment tool for donation programs worldwide.

Capstone Team: Eni Bakallbashi, Molly Hart, Felicity Loome

Corporate Council on Africa
Workforce Health Programs in Africa: Lessons from the Corporate Council on Africa Network

The Corporate Council on Africa (CCA) is a membership organization for U.S.-based companies and organizations with com-
commercial interests in Africa. The Capstone project involved a review of CCA corporate members’ health programs for African workforces, and consisted of a literature review of global best practices in workforce health for developing countries with special attention to monitoring and evaluation, a broad survey distributed to all members, and in-depth interviews with a subset of members. Organized into a map of members’ strategies and a small collection of case studies, this research will help CCA to better understand its members’ current efforts in workforce health and to disseminate lessons learned during the development and implementation of some well-established programs. Additionally, CCA can use the framework and survey developed for this project in the future to update the mapping of their members’ programs.

Capstone Team: Catherine Burns, Elira Coja, Jordan Henner, Tania Torres

HOPE Worldwide
Organizational Evaluation and Development of the Sihanouk Hospital Center of HOPE

Committed to serving the poor and underserved, HOPE Worldwide is a nonprofit organization that has been managing the Sihanouk Hospital Center of HOPE (SHCH) in Cambodia since the hospital’s inception in 1996. SHCH provides free health care services, clinical training to health care professionals, and has served over one million patients thus far. Due to the lack of sustainable funding streams, the organization has faced challenges with its organizational development and with achieving successful global awareness of its health care delivery model. HOPE Worldwide sought to identify ways in which SHCH could improve its visibility and expand its services. To address these issues, the Capstone team conducted a baseline organizational evaluation, which included assessing the awareness of the hospital, its quality, and potential to expand. Based on the findings, the team prepared a case study and an internal organizational report highlighting the organization’s current standing and options for further development.

Capstone Team: Feby Eng, Jacqueline Rosenhek, Negin Farrah Shapourian, Sang-Hyuck Yoon

Real Medicine Foundation, India
Research and Assessment Tools for a Nutrition Program in India

As of 2009, over 60 million children under the age of five are diagnosed with malnutrition in India. The state of Madhya Pradesh has the country’s highest malnutrition burden, with 60% of its children under-five malnourished. The Real Medicine Foundation addresses this issue
with the project “Eradicate Malnutrition” that focuses on identification, treatment and prevention. RMF requested a Capstone team to conduct field visits to provide a comparative analysis of the local clinic (Anganwadi) and government run nutritional rehabilitation centers. The team presented RMF with a catalog of nutrition programs focused on children under the age of five, providing them with a broader understanding of approaches improving nutrition. The final report includes an analysis of field data, a nutritional catalog, a working document for inclusion in baseline assessment surveys, and potential next steps.

Capstone Team: Jenny Hsieh, Hyein Lee, Eyiuwunmi Salako, Jaimie Shaff

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**Advanced International Projects**

**FACULTY: JODY SPIRO**

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**National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Nigeria**

*Collections Loan and Management Strategy*

The National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM) is a government agency charged with the care and preservation of Nigeria’s cultural antiquities. Among its many responsibilities is the management of 34 national museums located throughout Nigeria. Following a series of large-scale international loans, the Director of Museums requested a Capstone team to provide recommendations for improving lending and borrowing policies. This review took the form of a gap-analysis that compares current policies with internationally accepted best practices. Upon discovering that a comprehensive lending and borrowing policy should include additional material, the scope of the review was expanded to include risk management, data management and documentation, and marketing and communications. The recommendations highlighted in the final report provide a framework for the NCMM to improve current practices and ensure continued care and accessibility of its remarkable collection.

Capstone Team: Lina Duran, Duane Esteves, Noureen Faizullah, Danielle Gilbert, Zachary Naidich
World Bank Group

Mind the Gap: Progress and Opportunity for Growth in International Governance on Climate Change

The World Bank Group has historically demonstrated its strategic advantage in managing large development projects. The climate change crisis requires significant international coordination and funding for countries’ efforts in the areas of adaptation, mitigation, finance, and technology. Dependent on the outcomes of this year’s COP-15 Conference, the UN System may be mandated to manage part of the funds and implement projects. In order to ensure greatest efficiency and positive impact, it is necessary to better understand the strengths, challenges, and gaps in how current projects are implemented. The Capstone team first developed an understanding of these organizations’ internally-generated fiscal, operational, and implementations standards for projects. The team then conducted field research on World Bank and UN-affiliated projects to collectively grasp the on-the-ground reality of climate change project implementation, studying the complementary programs as well as tensions revealed in terms of underlying gaps in some of the organizations’ distributive and managerial capacities. From the findings, the team developed specific recommendations for the client and partner organizations.

Capstone Team: Nina Ivory, Rosa Kahurananga, Christopher Lindahl, Heidi Trow, Tory Watts

World Learning, Community Connections Program

Community Connections Program Evaluation

To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Community Connections program, World Learning, a global nonprofit providing international educational programs, engaged a Capstone team to conduct a program evaluation. Community Connections provides intensive three-week professional trainings in a variety of sectors offering participants an opportunity to learn both about their professional field and US culture. The program aims to promote public diplomacy and development in 13 Eurasian countries. The Capstone team evaluated Community Connections on multiple levels including the home-stay experience, professional development sessions, and the use of information technology. Through research instruments, such as interviews, on-site observations, participant observations, and home-stay family surveys, the team gathered data and analyzed Community Connections. The team provided conclusions and recommendations to World Learning in order to build on their current successes of the program.

Capstone Team: Scot Dalton, Sara Gojanaj, Rebecca Smith
World Learning, Global Undergraduate Exchange Program

_Determining and Increasing the Impact of World Learning’s Global UGRAD Program_

The Capstone team conducted an independent evaluation of the impact of World Learning’s Global Undergraduate Global (UGRAD) Exchange Program for East Asia and the Pacific and the Western Hemisphere on its alumni. The team created an evaluation toolkit and employed two of the tools to survey and interview the program’s alumni. The evaluation revealed the alumni’s perceptions of how the program affected their English language skills, academic and career goals, and community service, as well as their attitudes about gender equality, diversity, civil participation, and the United States. It also uncovered their thoughts on how the program has changed their lives. Additionally, the Capstone team conducted a field scan of competitors. The data from the evaluation and the field scan informed the team’s recommendations for ways to improve Global UGRAD’s policies and methodologies so that the impact of the program can increase.

Capstone Team: Benjamin Case, Shannon Kowalski, Caitlin Mitchell, Mima Stojanovic

Advanced International Projects

_FACULTY: DAVID WINDER_

**Aliméntate Ecuador**

_Methodologies of Monitoring and Evaluation System and Information Management for a Nutrient Program called PANI_

The Capstone team worked with Aliméntate Ecuador (AE) of Ecuador’s Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion to provide a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategy, as well as an information management system, for the use of Chis-paz, a micronutrient food supplement. Chis-paz is being introduced in AE’s Programa Alimentario Nutricional Integral (PANI), a national program aimed at reducing widespread anemia among children under the age of five. The Capstone team’s goal was to provide a sustainable methodology to assist AE in monitoring results and assessing program impact. The team designed an M&E and information management system for AE that incorporated both short and long-term recommendations, along with varied implementation scenarios. Key recommendations included the incorporation of positive deviation, time series design, trigger identification for program evaluation, and tiered analysis of information at both the provincial and national levels.
Capstone Team: Minerva Arias, Erin Barr, Keumran Ha, Andrea Pacheco

**Bhavishya Alliance**  
*Girls Gaining Ground*

The Capstone team performed a qualitative evaluation of Bhavishya Alliance’s Girls Gaining Ground program, a pilot program to empower adolescent girls in Maharashtra, India. The team traveled to India, where it conducted site visits in Mumbai slums and rural areas of Maharashtra. Team members interviewed girls participating in the program, mothers of these girls, program facilitators, government officials, and diverse NGO staff. After completing fieldwork, the Capstone team analyzed the interviews and composed a comprehensive evaluation, highlighting the unique strengths of the program and making suggestions for improvements.

Capstone Team: Amber Baker, Mutsumi Nakagami, Tara Noronha, Katherine Potaski, Emily Puckart

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**Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition**  
*Best Practices of Public-Private Partnerships for Effective Midday Meal Delivery in India*

In 2001, the Indian government mandated that all government schools in the country serve a hot lunch to primary school students. As a result, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and other local groups have stepped in to provide service delivery. Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) provides funding to one Indian NGO, Naandi Foundation, which serves meals to over one million children daily across four states. GAIN requested a Capstone team to visit a number of sites where Naandi works, observe operations, and interview kitchen staff, students, teachers, and government officials. The Capstone team also gathered information about the variety and complexity of relationships Naandi maintains across the public and private sectors, as well as the business principles it utilizes to create effective and efficient service delivery. The Capstone team compiled this information and produced a report that other NGOs and governments working with GAIN can use to develop effective school lunch programs in their own locales.

Capstone Team: Kristina Corvin, Rubina Khan, Debbie Koh, Hanan Nassau, Cecelia Tanaka
Advanced Projects for Nurse Leaders
FACULTY: ANTHONY KOVNER, WILLIE MANZANO, ROSEMARY SULLIVAN

New York-Presbyterian Hospital
Care Management at New York-Presbyterian: An Opportunity for Change

Care management is a collaborative process of assessment, planning, facilitation, and advocacy to meet a patient’s health needs through communication and available resources to promote quality, cost-effective outcomes. At New York-Presbyterian Hospital, care management is organized and addressed differently at its two largest campuses, Columbia and Cornell. The Capstone team performed a current state assessment of care management at these campuses for the adult medical/surgical populations. Interviews were performed with members of the multidisciplinary team — Social Workers, Care Coordinators, Physicians, and Nurses — who coordinate care management for patients across the cardiac service lines. Additionally, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to identify industry best practices, and three institutions that were identified as embodying these practices were visited by team members. The team synthesized these findings to recommend a care management model that promotes efficiency of resources and quality outcomes for the population studied.

Capstone Team: Edgar Benavides, Toby Bressler, Jessica Gallinaro, Kimberly Reyes, Sydete Rothery, Daniel Sorbello

New York-Presbyterian Hospital
Improving Nursing Information Dissemination Practice at NYP

The Capstone team worked with a leadership team from New York-Presbyterian (NYP) Hospital to examine the elements of the current transfer of information to nursing staff and to improve the current nursing information dissemination practice across all five campuses. Focus groups with Nursing Leadership were conducted to identify opportunities for improvement as well as best practices among the sites. A staff survey was sent electronically to all nurse employees via Survey Monkey. Interviews with hospitals and companies outside of NYP that had been identified as leaders in communication with their employees were completed. Departments within NYP that were critical in data collection included IT, HR, and Nursing Education. The recommendations can be utilized by the hospital to improve communication, ensuring effectiveness of communication across all of nursing.
Farming practices in the United States have shifted dramatically over the past 30 years, trending toward increased use of factory farms and single crop production. Evidence has emerged that these types of input-intensive agricultural methods come at steep environmental, health, and social costs that may not be offset by benefits. This study examined federal and state policies to assess their impact on farm ownership structure and crop diversity. In order to compare diversity trends across states from 1978 to 2007, the Capstone team composed various county-level crop indices based on models suggested in...
existing literature. Using panel data constructed from the Census of Agriculture, the team then analyzed policy as a contributor to state agricultural landscapes, ranging from industrial monoculture to diverse cropping. This study focused on analyzing the effects of state and federal policies on crop diversity as a vehicle for understanding the role government policy plays in impacting sustainable agriculture.

Capstone Team: Zayne Abdessalam, Fernando Henao, Shana Wright

The Effect of Policy Interactions on Maternal Smoking Rates

While smoking remains a salient public health issue, maternal smoking is also a key reproductive health concern. Women who smoke are at a higher risk of infertility and complications during pregnancy. Despite what is known about the dangers of maternal smoking, it is still an issue for state health departments nationwide. Previous research has explored the elasticity and burden of cigarette taxation across demographic groups. However, it is unknown how cigarette taxation might actually interact with other public health efforts to generate a unique response with pregnant women. This study analyzed the interaction between changes in cigarette tax rates and health care utilization (prenatal care services) on smoking behaviors during pregnancy, among other policies of importance to maternal health.

Capstone Team: Philethea Duckett, Hyung Jo Hur, Ye Wang

The Effect of State Support on Educational Attainment

Public higher education in the United States is of particular interest as state governments are forced to cut spending in the face of lower revenues during this currently unstable economic period. Higher education funding is not immune to these cuts, and universities will have to manage with less government funding. Additionally, tuition growth rates continue to outpace inflation. With student loan markets strained from the credit crisis, public universities will struggle with increasing tuition to minimize funding gaps, while keeping college affordable. The focus of this Capstone project was on the effects produced by variation in state support for higher education, both over time and among states. Through appropriations, states have been able to fund public higher education institutions, and the Capstone team examined the effects of changes in state higher education support on the rate of educational attainment at higher education institutions.

Capstone Team: Casey Megan, Rosa A. Ortiz, Stephen Vassallo
The Impact of the School Tax Relief Exemption on School Spending in New York State

The Capstone team studied the impact of New York State’s School Tax Relief (STAR) exemption on school district spending in New York State. STAR is a state-funded property tax relief program that reduces property taxes for homeowners and indirectly decreases the cost of additional school spending. Anything that induces more school spending is a source of great concern, given that New York State has long had the highest local taxes and school expenditures of any state in the United States. While the theory suggests that the STAR exemption has led to increased education spending, it is worth noting that STAR’s implementation in the early 2000’s coincided with other changes in pension laws and state and federal educational standards. The Capstone team used data from the New York State Office of the Comptroller and the U.S. Census to analyze the impact of STAR on school education expenditures.

Capstone Team: Suraj Abdulai, Naheeed Afroz, Alvin Wong

Pennies from Heaven: Assessing the Impact of New York State’s STAR Exemption on School District Property Taxation

New York State’s School Tax Relief (STAR) program exempts a portion of homestead property values from school district property taxation. The inception of this program immediately preceded a period of increased school property tax levies and expenditures. Using a public choice theory framework, this applied research Capstone project attempted to determine whether STAR was a causal factor for school district tax increases. The extent to which individual-level and regional differences influenced local variation in the tax-price elasticity of demand was also examined.

Capstone Team: Andrew Berger-Gross

Measuring the Effect of the Generosity of Welfare Benefits on Maternal and Infant Health Among Low-Educated, Unmarried Women

Single mothers comprise the majority of adult welfare recipients in the United States, and policies and programs that affect the health of this population may affect their children’s health. Yet, there is little empirical evidence of how, and the extent to which, welfare benefits impact maternal and infant health. This study aimed to fill this empirical gap. By creating a variable for the generosity of welfare, the Capstone team examined how the generosity “bundle” of welfare benefits across states affected maternal health (prenatal care utilization) and infant health (birth weight) among low-educated, unmarried women from 1996-2004. The team employed an individual unit of observation and a difference-in-difference model.
with a comparison group in a time series and cross-sectional analysis to measure the cumulative effects of various welfare policies on maternal and infant health.

Capstone Team: Rebecca DiBennardo, Blanca Esquivel, Kristin Van Busum, Alissa Vladimir, Elizabeth Wolff

**Refining Reinvestment: The Impact of the 1995 Community Reinvestment Act Enhancements on Minority-Owned Businesses**

The American Dream has often been understood as the opportunity for every American citizen to strive for and achieve certain bedrocks of modern prosperity, including homeownership and personal wealth. Additionally, small business ownership has often been seen as a chance to rise financially, while also cementing oneself in a place of importance in the community. The Community Reinvestment Act of 1977 (CRA) encouraged financial institutions to meet the particular needs of minority borrowers formerly affected by redlining and other pernicious practices. CRA was modified in 1995 to improve financial institutions’ compliance with CRA regulations. Previous studies focused on CRA’s role in improving homeownership opportunities among minorities, with little research dedicated to the Act’s role in improving credit access for small businesses. This study analyzed the impact of increased CRA monitoring on the growth of minority-owned small businesses nationwide.

Capstone Team: Courtney Davis, Oguz Karakadilar, Vanessa Leon, Aynur Saygin
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