

2020/2021

CAPSTONE

PROJECT SUMMARIES



NYU

ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE



CAPSTONE

PROJECT SUMMARIES
2020/2021

LEARNING IN
ACTION

PUBLIC SERVICE IS
THE HIGHEST **AND**
GOOD, **WHEN**
DONE
HONORABLY
AND WELL,
THE MOST REWARDING.

ROBERT F. WAGNER,
MAYOR OF NEW YORK CITY
1953-1965

ABOUT CAPSTONE

Capstone, in architecture, is the crowning piece of an arch, the center stone that holds the arch together, giving it shape and strength. Similarly, NYU Wagner's Capstone Program provides students with the centerpiece of their graduate education where they turn their classroom learning into practice. Capstone teams spend an academic year addressing challenges and identifying opportunities for clients, or conducting research on a pressing social question—in a complex and real-world environment. Students must quickly become familiar with an issue or content area; demonstrate process skills such as project management and teamwork; and effectively gather, analyze, and present data.

The summaries in this booklet represent the 63 Capstone projects from the 2020-2021 academic year, conducted by 252 Wagner graduate students. These projects reflect the challenges that our client partners are facing during the COVID-19 pandemic; and as they focus on addressing historic and ongoing racism in the US.

The Capstone Program was originally funded with a generous grant from the Ford Foundation in 1995 and subsequently received financial support from FJC: A Foundation of Philanthropic Funds. Since the program's inception, more than 6,600 students have completed over 1,450 projects for more than 950 organizations.

BECOME A CAPSTONE CLIENT

Organizations—from the public, nonprofit, or private sector—interested in being a Capstone client should visit wagner.nyu.edu/capstone/clients for more information.

ABOUT NYU WAGNER

New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service prepares public service leaders to translate ideas into actions that have an effective and lasting impact on the public good. Our faculty's research changes the way people frame, understand, and act on important public issues. We provide our students with critical skills, access to all that New York City has to offer, and a deep understanding of context surrounding public service challenges—which they use to improve cities and communities across the globe.

Ranked 9th nationally among all schools of public affairs, NYU Wagner has been educating the world's future public service leaders since 1938. We offer a Master of Public Administration in Public & Nonprofit Management & Policy, Master of Public Administration in Health Policy & Management, Master of Urban Planning, Online Master of Health Administration, Master of Science in Public Policy, Executive Master of Public Administration, and PhD in Public Administration.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

8 **MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP**

- 8 Broadway for Arts Education
- 8 Center for Employment Opportunities
- 9 Children's Arts Guild
- 9 DAYLIGHT
- 10 Futures and Options
- 10 Greenwich Village Chelsea Chamber of Commerce
- 11 Jewelers of America
- 11 Land to Learn
- 12 New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services

13 **FINANCE**

- 13 Banco Popular
- 13 Guidehouse
- 14 New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development
- 14 Opening Act

15 **PUBLIC POLICY**

- 15 Fines and Fees Justice Center
- 15 New York City Civic Engagement Commission
- 16 New York State Senator James Sanders Jr.
- 16 Office of the Mayor of Trenton, New Jersey

17 **ADVOCACY & POLITICAL ACTION**

- 17 IMPACCT Brooklyn
- 17 Make the Road New York
- 18 Mi Familia Vota
- 18 One Fair Wage
- 19 Purpose

20 **SOCIAL IMPACT, INNOVATION & INVESTMENT**

20 **CLIENT-BASED PROJECTS**

- 20 Global Opportunity Youth Network
- 20 IBM
- 21 Majira Project
- 21 Urbane Development

TABLE OF CONTENTS, CONT.

22 **TEAM-GENERATED PROJECTS**

- 22 DaBaShou
- 22 DriveHer
- 23 Lentils
- 23 ZamPads

24 **HEALTH MANAGEMENT, FINANCE & POLICY**

- 24 FAIR Health
- 24 Innovative Resources for Independence
- 25 Institute for Community Living: Designing a Value-Based Proposition Proposal
- 25 Institute for Community Living: Unit Cost Analysis for Community Living Programs
- 26 LIFE Camp
- 26 Milbank Memorial Fund
- 27 Mount Sinai Health System Department of Medicine
- 27 NYU Langone Health, Department of Emergency Medicine
- 28 NYU Langone Orthopedic Hospital
- 28 Partnership to End Addiction
- 29 SPM Marketing & Communications
- 29 Vibrant Emotional Health

30 **URBAN PLANNING**

- 30 Citizens Housing & Planning Council
- 30 Jerome Gun Hill BID
- 31 New York City Department of City Planning, Staten Island Office
- 31 New York City Department of Small Business Services
- 32 New York City Department of Transportation
- 33 New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission
- 33 Port Authority of New York and New Jersey

34 **INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- 34 Association of Forest Communities of Petén
- 34 The Belize Association of Planners
- 35 Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime
- 35 The Hunger Project
- 36 Médecins du Monde France
- 36 Uganda Village Project
- 37 United Nations Capital Development Fund: Investigating the Impact of Digital
Platforms on Local Economies and Fiscal Spaces
- 37 United Nations Capital Development Fund: Investing in Municipal Waste Management
- 38 World Bank

39	RESEARCH IN QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS
39	Air Quality and Heating Fuel
39	New York City's 421a Property Tax Exemption Program
40	Paid Family Leave and Parental Health Outcomes
40	School Finance Reform
41	Terrorism and Public Opinion
42	CAPSTONE FACULTY
43	INDEX

PROJECT
SUMMARIES

BROADWAY FOR ARTS EDUCATION

DESIGNING A SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT SYSTEM

FACULTY:

Erica Foldy

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Kimberly De Jesus

Lara Fu

Lily Pfeifer

Bethany Rickwald

Broadway for Arts Education (BAE) is a nonprofit organization that provides arts education to underserved youth by engaging volunteers from the Broadway community. BAE strives to shape a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community for its students and volunteers. BAE enlisted a team to develop a method for assessing the impact of its Urban Assembly program in NYC, with the objective of creating and implementing a sustainable measurement system of student-oriented key performance indicators, including racial sensitivity, confidence, program enjoyment, and teacher effectiveness. This system will allow BAE to evaluate its impact and articulate its value to prospective donors and grantmaking institutions. The team undertook a literature review, case study analysis of similar organizations, and extensive interviews with students and staff. With this research, the team helped develop performance goals and pilot a pre- and post-survey system, which it linked to a live dashboard that visualizes key results in relation to BAE's mission

CENTER FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN REENTRY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

FACULTY:

Quintin Haynes

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Luisanna Sosa

Caraballo

Livia Fry

Maoz Lauber

Bria Mathis

The Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) is a national nonprofit organization focused on the workforce reentry process of individuals returning home from prison. CEO operates in 28 cities and has achieved over 34,000 total placements into full-time employment. Serving a large number of participants from marginalized communities, CEO recently established a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) program. CEO enlisted a team to research supplier diversity and the impact of employer adoption of DEI principles on participants' sense of belonging in the workplace. The team conducted a literature review on workplace DEI and the reentry process, surveyed and interviewed staff and participants, and analyzed employer diversity metrics, participant satisfaction surveys, and public data on Minority- and Women-owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs). The team's recommendations include

the development of a DEI training program, guidelines to prevent discrimination and enhance support for participants, and a supplier diversity framework for the recruitment of MWBEs and employers that embrace DEI principles and best practices.

CHILDREN'S ARTS GUILD

EXPANDING CREATIVITY EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO NEW REGIONS

FACULTY:

Tricia Davies

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Kathryn Falato
Gracie Gottlieb
Sara Pattiz

Founded in 2010, The Children's Arts Guild is a New York-based nonprofit organization that partners with parents, educators, and students to build supportive and creative learning spaces where children in grades K-12 can become socially engaged, emotionally intelligent, and productive citizens of the world. The organization enlisted a team to provide recommendations as its Authenticity in the Classroom program undergoes a period of strategic growth and endeavors to enter new domestic markets in 2022. The team completed case studies of potential school partnerships, conducted interviews with teachers, and attended an Authenticity in the Classroom day-long session. The team then produced a presentation and a final report that included a research tool for the client to use and recommendations on marketing and market entry and expansion.

DAYLIGHT

DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE SCALING AND FUNDING PATHWAYS

FACULTY:

Tricia Davies

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Emma Asumeng
Jasmine Charbonier
Mia Schulman
Geoffrey Wood

DAYLIGHT was founded in 2013 to build intersectional racial justice across disciplines, sectors, and geographies through a range of activities, including research, advocacy, and client-specific interventions. DAYLIGHT's founder enlisted a team to help move the organization forward into its next phase by expanding the enterprise and securing sustainable funding sources. The team outlined potential scaling options and researched and analyzed several sustainable funding pathways for DAYLIGHT's consideration, including the pros and cons, action steps, and examples of potential partners for each pathway. The team delivered a report and companion slide deck on DAYLIGHT's model, program offerings, and work to date to clarify its message and offerings for potential partners and stakeholders.

FUTURES AND OPTIONS

CREATING AN EQUITY-FOCUSED TALENT STRATEGY

FACULTY:

Quintin Haynes

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Stephanie Bennaugh

Ryan Chiew

Nou Moua

Ashley Richardson

Futures and Options is a NYC-based youth workforce development nonprofit organization that aims to empower underserved youth by providing paid internship opportunities to high school students. Since 1995, Futures and Options has worked with over 7,000 students and 500 businesses. The organization has expanded to provide additional programming that includes career essentials and college counseling. The organization partnered with a team to create a strategic plan that reduces employee turnover and equitably recruits, retains, and develops employee talent. The team conducted market research and an environmental scan on current competitors, mapped the trajectory of former employees, researched talent retention best practices, developed and implemented a survey, and conducted interviews with current employees. Using this data, the team produced a report outlining recommendations for strengthening Futures and Options' talent pipeline by creating consistent and transparent organizational processes.

GREENWICH VILLAGE CHELSEA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

STRATEGIES FOR GROWING LOCAL BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP

FACULTY:

Tricia Davies

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Sabrina Kesler

Paul Longo

Jack Osea

Emily Rosenbach

Founded in 1949, the Greenwich Village Chelsea Chamber of Commerce (GVCCC) serves businesses in Greenwich Village, Chelsea, SoHo, NoHo, Union Square, Flatiron, and the East Village by providing programs and services in four key areas: advocacy, education, networking, and member promotion. GVCCC enlisted a team to develop a strategy for recruiting new members, with special interest in brick-and-mortar businesses with 10 to 50 employees. By growing its membership, the Chamber hopes to generate additional revenue, build a robust network for its members, and establish a more powerful voice for its advocacy work. The team completed an environmental scan of comparable chambers of commerce in New York and across the country; conducted a literature review of best recruitment practices for membership organizations; administered a survey of members and non-members; and conducted interviews with several highly involved members ("ambassadors") who hold leadership roles

within GVCCC. Using this data, the team developed a final report that included recommendations for how GVCCC can revamp its new member recruitment strategy.

JEWELERS OF AMERICA

REIMAGINING MEMBER EXPERIENCE TO STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS IN THE JEWELRY INDUSTRY

FACULTY:

Quintin Haynes

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Alicia Bell-Molina

Mabel Fung

Amber McColl

Lu Zhang

Founded in 1906, Jewelers of America (JA), is the leading and oldest nonprofit association in the American jewelry industry, connecting and serving more than 3,000 businesses in the gem and precious metal trade as well as the jewelry design and sales industries. Following a decline in membership growth in recent years, JA engaged a team to evaluate member satisfaction and recommend a strategy to increase the value and usage of member benefit offerings. The team conducted industry research, surveys, and interviews of active, former, and prospective members to understand their perceptions of the value of JA membership. Based on its research, the team developed strategic recommendations to refine benefits, revamp the member experience, and restore satisfaction and confidence in the association.

LAND TO LEARN

CREATING IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOLS FOR A GARDEN EDUCATION PROGRAM

FACULTY:

Erica Foldy

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Marlene Artov

Shruti Bengani

Alexis Contreras

Christal Somar

Land to Learn is a nonprofit organization dedicated to growing food justice and community wellness through education. Its SproutEd Program brings garden education to students in grades K-2 in the Newburgh, Beacon, Kingston, and Garrison areas of New York State. Lacking easy-to-use and adaptable assessment tools to measure the program's impact, Land to Learn engaged a team to construct effective and efficient impact assessment tools for its limited staff to use and sustain over time. To gather data in support of the organization's short- and long-term goals, the team conducted educator interviews, researched case studies and best practices in garden education, and piloted tools with participating school districts. The team created a final report that includes a case study analysis, literature review, logic model, and recommendations for usable impact assessment tools that meet the organization's needs.

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CITYWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

DEVELOPING AN INTRAPRENEURSHIP CAPACITY-BUILDING PROGRAM

FACULTY:

Erica Foldy

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Rachel Bigio

Julia Boyaval

Jeffrey Claude

Joseph Valiakulathil

The New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) is a city agency that provides shared services to support the operations of NYC's government. Although the agency has over 2,000 employees spanning 13 units and various internal and external facing functions, it lacks a formal mechanism to foster innovation and facilitate collaboration between units. DCAS's Strategic Operations Office contracted a team to help build out the Intrapreneur Capacity Building Program, which was first launched in the summer of 2020 to provide training opportunities for employees and build a community of practice around innovation. The Capstone team conducted a literature review and case study analysis on intrapreneurship in the public sector, interviewed various DCAS employees, and developed and administered a survey. The team used its results from this analysis to produce a training curriculum and a toolkit of employee resources for the Intrapreneur Capacity Building Program.

BANCO POPULAR

LENDING IN CRISIS: REIMAGINING FUND IMPACT IN POST-PANDEMIC COSTA RICA

FACULTY:

John Ceffalio

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Benjamin McCarthy
Andrew Schons
Scott Trumbull

The Fondo de Desarrollo de la Micro, Pequeña, y Mediana Empresa (Fund for the Development of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) is a fund of Banco Popular in Costa Rica. Its mission is to create quality jobs, improve business productivity, and generate new wealth for underserved business owners and communities. Given recent challenges in approving new loans, the bank enlisted a team to reimagine its lending practices and recommit to its social purpose of deploying much-needed capital to current and future businesses. The team's work included an initial review of published research and institutional reports, interviews with bank personnel and Costa Rican agency officials, and additional interviews with peer development financial institutions in Latin America, the US, and Europe. The team provided the bank suggested modifications to its lending practices, guidance on incorporating more robust impact metrics and measurement systems, and a proposed timeline for implementation.

GUIDEHOUSE

DIGITIZING A SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION LOAN PROGRAM

FACULTY:

Michael Dardia

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Jungeun Chloe Cha
Nadine Fouad
Olvy Nunez Cruz

Guidehouse is a global consultancy that serves as a Central Servicing Agency for US Small Business Administration (SBA) loan programs. Guidehouse engaged a team to analyze the SBA 504 Loan Program, which provides financial assistance to small businesses for major fixed assets that promote business growth and job creation. The team assessed the digital maturity of the program's end-to-end lifecycle, identified digital gaps, examined the impact of COVID-19 on loan applications, and conducted interviews with stakeholders. It identified benchmarks by comparing the SBA 504 loan process to conventional mortgage loans with advanced digital processes. The team adopted best practices from its research to create a set of recommendations for digitizing the SBA 504 loan program.

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON NEW YORK CITY'S MULTI-FAMILY AFFORDABLE HOUSING

FACULTY:

Michael Dardia

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Chaoer Chen

Yu Dong

Yuxin Huang

Zhusha Huang

China Palmore

Faina Shenfeld

The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) is responsible for developing and maintaining the city's affordable housing stock. HPD engaged a team to investigate the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the cost of preserving and operating affordable rental housing in New York City. The team assessed the experiences of multifamily building owners in NYC by conducting a literature review, stakeholder interviews, and financial modeling. The team's qualitative and quantitative analyses provided critical policy insights around ensuring the long-term viability of affordable housing, and informed the team's final recommendations on priorities and strategies for achieving an equitable economic recovery.

OPENING ACT

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF NEW FINANCIAL AND SERVICE MODELS

FACULTY:

John Ceffalio

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Xuanqi Bao

Erik Freels-Vargas

Junqing Yan

Xibai Yu

Opening Act is committed to advancing arts equity in New York City and beyond by providing free, high-quality theater programming to the city's highest need schools. The organization works in 57 schools throughout NYC and has served over 5,000 young people over its 20 year history. Opening Act engaged a team to explore new service models and revenue streams, and identify its potential impacts on the organization. The team evaluated the adoption of a fee-for-service model and new earned income opportunities. It conducted staff and alumni interviews, school partner surveys, desktop research, and a competitive analysis. The team's recommendations and resources include insights into fundraising trends, feedback from stakeholders, an actionable guide to the NYC Department of Education contracting process, and market research on professional development classes and online education platforms.

FINES AND FEES JUSTICE CENTER

ABOLISHING ABUSIVE FINE AND FEE COLLECTION PRACTICES IN NEW YORK STATE

FACULTY:

Erin Connell

CAPSTONE TEAM:Benjamin Heller
Daniel Patterson
Alec Slatky
Chao Zhang

The Fines and Fees Justice Center (FFJC) advocates nationally for a fairer criminal justice system through the end of abusive fine and fee collection practices. FFJC engaged a team to conduct research and make data-driven recommendations to inform the organization's campaign for fine and fee abolition in New York State. The team reviewed research connecting fines and fees, municipal budgets, and police incentives; gathered data on the connection between local fines, fees, and municipal budgets; and compiled several case studies to illustrate the ways in which jurisdictions rely on fines and fees to increase municipal budgets, particularly during economic downturns. The team created a scorecard to screen jurisdictions for abusive fine practices and empower FFJC to conduct further investigations. The team's recommendations include how to best advocate for fine and fee abolition in New York State as part of FFJC's upcoming campaign.

NEW YORK CITY CIVIC ENGAGEMENT COMMISSION

DEVELOPING AN INCLUSIVE POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

FACULTY:Alexander
Shermansong**CAPSTONE TEAM:**Lauren Abbatiello
Sara Cohen
Andrew Edelman

The New York City Civic Engagement Commission (NYC CEC) was established by the 2018 Charter Revision Commission to enhance civic participation in order to strengthen civic trust and democracy in NYC. With the help of the Capstone team, NYC CEC sought to create an inclusive, diverse, and culturally sensitive policy framework for civic life in NYC. The team conducted background research on the state of civic engagement in NYC, analyzed past and present government civic engagement policies and initiatives, and collected information on existing civic engagement policy frameworks. The team determined engagement categories for a quantitative civic engagement index and recommended key indicators of civic engagement, strategies for data collection, and best practices for future outreach.

NEW YORK STATE SENATOR JAMES SANDERS JR.

COMMUNITY-LED INITIATIVE TO ADDRESS FOOD INSECURITY AND GUN VIOLENCE

FACULTY:

Erin Connell

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Coryn Grange

Chloe Moore

Lois Shah

Mindy Wong

New York State Senator James Sanders Jr. represents the 10th Senate District, which encompasses Southeast Queens. The community that he represents has historically faced high levels of food insecurity and gun violence, and these issues have sharply increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. Senator Sanders engaged a team to provide recommendations for implementing a community-led initiative addressing both food insecurity and gun violence in District 10. The team conducted research on the current state of these issues in Southeast Queens, produced a literature review of pertinent surveys and initiatives that have been implemented nationwide, and carried out a needs assessment of the community. The team's analysis included designing and administering a community survey and conducting in-depth interviews with local community leaders and other programs to assemble best practices. In response to its findings, the team compiled a comprehensive action plan with recommendations for community-led initiatives to reduce food insecurity and provide meaningful opportunities for residents of all ages.

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR OF TRENTON, NEW JERSEY

STRATEGIES FOR CANNABIS INDUSTRY INVESTMENT

FACULTY:

Alexander

Shermansong

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Theja Pamarthy

Mark Tsyrouk

Naomi Weinblatt

The Office of the Mayor of Trenton enlisted a team to help the city take advantage of New Jersey's legalization of recreational cannabis in November 2020. The city's goal was to understand the cannabis industry's impacts on a majority-minority city facing economic adversity, and to assess its current infrastructure, social challenges, and economic opportunities for attracting cannabis companies. The team interviewed key stakeholders and conducted extensive research on best practices implemented by municipalities across America in which cannabis has been legalized. The team compiled a final report with recommendations for taking advantage of Trenton's "impact zone" status—prioritizing community buy-in for welcoming cannabis companies, creating regulations that support both large and small businesses, investing revenue back into the community, and uplifting those disproportionately impacted by the nation's war on drugs.

IMPACCT BROOKLYN

DEVELOPING BEST PRACTICES FOR TENANT ENGAGEMENT AND RIGHTS ADVOCACY

FACULTY:

Elizabeth Angeles

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Jesslyn Katherine

Diana Kichler

Lee Sfadya

Adam Stein

IMPACCT Brooklyn, also known as the Pratt Area Community Council, is a community development corporation that owns over 1,000 units of affordable or supportive housing. Since 1964, IMPACCT Brooklyn has advocated for Central Brooklyn residents and entrepreneurs on issues including affordable housing, tenant rights, small businesses, and homeownership. In 2015, the organization contracted out its property management services, resulting in a degree of separation between IMPACCT Brooklyn and its tenants. A team was engaged to conduct external research—on the community district, housing legislation, local and state representatives, and the 2021 NYC Mayoral race—and stakeholder interviews—of staff members, business affiliates, tenant associations, and board members. The team designed a pilot survey for IMPACCT Brooklyn to use to assess its residents' satisfaction with their housing, awareness of their tenant rights, and wellbeing during the pandemic. The team created a final report containing a toolkit of recommendations for strengthening the organization's tenant engagement and rights advocacy efforts.

MAKE THE ROAD NEW YORK

EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF AMAZON'S EXPANSION ON NYC COMMUNITIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

FACULTY:

Matthew Camp

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Theodora Makris

Alexis Richards

William Sommer

Make the Road New York is the largest community-based membership organization representing immigrants and working-class people of color in New York State. Through its Workplace Justice team, the organization fights for the rights of all workers by organizing for workers' rights, providing health and safety education and support, and advocating for policy and systems change. In the context of COVID-19 and forthcoming recovery efforts, Make the Road New York enlisted a team to evaluate the impact of Amazon's NYC expansion on local communities and the climate. Since opening its first warehouse in Staten Island three years ago, Amazon has grown and spread its

operations throughout the greater New York City area. The team engaged the impacted communities, investigated the felt impact of Amazon's growth, and developed policy recommendations to inform a forward-looking legislative campaign.

MI FAMILIA VOTA (MY FAMILY VOTES)

EXPANDING DEMOCRACY ACCESS IN TEXAS

FACULTY:

Matthew Camp

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Ashley Emery

Abraham Nelson

Javon Robinson

Mi Familia Vota (My Family Votes) is a leading Latinx civic engagement organization whose mission is to build Latinx political power by expanding the electorate, strengthening local infrastructure, and engaging voters year-round. In Texas, a long state history of voter suppression has led to low voter registration and participation. Mi Familia Vota's Texas division engaged a team to help expand its capacity to advance a proactive voting rights agenda. The team researched and analyzed electoral access policies, designed a survey to gauge community members' voter access experience, tracked and evaluated new legislation introduced in Texas, and created a power map of key legislators and committees in the Texas House of Representatives to identify potential allies and opponents. With this information, the team produced a legislative action plan to guide Mi Familia Vota's mobilization around affirmative and restrictive voting access proposals.

ONE FAIR WAGE

POLITICAL ANALYSIS OF STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT FOR A LIVABLE MINIMUM WAGE

FACULTY:

Elizabeth Angeles

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Selamawit Gashaw

Margaret Slowey

Stephanie Rosas-Garcia

One Fair Wage (OFW) is a national coalition, campaign, and organization working to ensure that all tipped workers are guaranteed a livable minimum wage. The organization seeks to accomplish its goal through state and federal campaigns, including legislative relationship building, policy advocacy, voter engagement, and community organizing. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated preexisting wage inequality and increased the urgency for legislative change, and the new political landscape has shifted OFW's legislative focus from the state to the federal level. OFW engaged a team to conduct research and produce political analysis on the legislative support needed to pass fair wage legislation. The team delivered three legislative reports—two providing state-level analyses and the third analyzing

the behavior of US Senators from select states. The team's final report also includes a state case study containing best practices for OFW's use in future research efforts.

PURPOSE

RENEWABLE ENERGY ADVOCACY IN INDONESIA

FACULTY:

Matthew Camp

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Steven Morales

Alexander Smith

Leena Zelman

Purpose has constructed climate advocacy plans in many countries by bringing together key organizations and local groups to advocate for more environmentally friendly policies in the fight against pollution and climate change. The organization is laying the groundwork for an advocacy campaign in Indonesia that pushes key decision makers to shift public and private investments away from fossil fuels and toward renewable energy. Purpose enlisted the team to conduct research for its Indonesian campaign policy brief. The team investigated the economic landscape of the Indonesian fossil fuel and renewable energy industries, and completed a stakeholder analysis that examined the international players in the Indonesian energy market and identified potential allies and adversaries. The team's analysis forms the basis for an advocacy campaign focused on the economic benefits of renewable energy, which, coupled with the organization's grassroots work, sets the foundation for a complete climate advocacy plan for Indonesia.

CLIENT-BASED PROJECTS

GLOBAL OPPORTUNITY YOUTH NETWORK

LAUNCHING A GLOBAL YOUTH GRANTMAKING PROGRAM

FACULTY:

Mo Coffey

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Deirdre Dolan

Tasia Hawkins

Emmily Kissa

Lusine Muradyan

In 2020, the Global Opportunity Youth Network (GOYN) partnered with the Aspen Institute to launch the Youth Innovation Fund, which provides micro-grants to youth addressing challenges in their local communities related to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Youth Innovation Fund is a new program that lacks rigorous internal protocols and processes for its grant application process. GOYN engaged a team to establish best practices for program management and create a grantee application and evaluation process. The team compiled relevant research on engaging youth around SDGs, identified best practices for establishing youth grant funds, and developed an application and selection framework to guide GOYN in selecting diverse and influential grantees.

IBM

ACCELERATING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ADOPTION IN THE
NONPROFIT SECTOR

FACULTY:

Mo Coffey

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Abdulla Alhussam

Madeline Dinsdale

Julia Maloney

Kyle Roland

IBM is a leading technology company that provides integrated solutions and services worldwide. In 2016, the IBM Research arm launched the Science for Social Good initiative, with the mission of using data science and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to tackle emerging social and environmental issues. IBM tasked the team with investigating ways to scale the adoption of AI tools in the nonprofit sector. The team reviewed the literature on AI and its relationship to the nonprofit sector, interviewed nonprofits and foundations to understand the field's current landscape and trajectory, and evaluated the nonprofit sector in terms of its receptiveness, preparedness, and need for new technologies. The team then provided IBM with strategic recommendations for how best to pursue its goal of scaling AI in the nonprofit landscape.

THE MAJIRA PROJECT

MEASURING AND COMMUNICATING IMPACT IN COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

FACULTY:

Mo Coffey

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Sarah Abebe

Margaret Ackah-

Yensu

Jessie Miller

Caleb Palley

The Majira Project seeks to build wealth in communities of color through entrepreneurship, by helping small business founders access capital and build strategic connections to advance their work. The organization pairs small business owners with consultants from Boston Consulting Group to facilitate a cohort-style experience with networking opportunities and personalized coaching. The COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement have increased the demand for Majira's services. To meet this increased demand, the organization engaged a team to measure the organization's impact, communicate its value, and develop recommendations for expanding the program to more entrepreneurs and start-ups. The team conducted a comprehensive literature review and developed a competitive landscape analysis, a communications strategy, and an impact reporting framework to help prepare Majira for future growth.

URBANE DEVELOPMENT

DEFINING AND MEASURING JUST OUTCOMES IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

FACULTY:

Mo Coffey

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Zachary Hill-Whilton

Neel Naik

Kayla Tyrrell

Urbane Development is a certified minority-owned business enterprise that develops and deploys customized wealth building and equitable community development interventions in underserved communities by cultivating "anchor" institutions and investing in entrepreneurial activities within the communities it serves. In the absence of a standard mechanism for comparing justice outputs across projects or identifying junctures at which justice might be advanced, the organization engaged a team to help develop and apply meaningful key indicators of justice to its work. The team examined different definitions and manifestations of justice, empirically validated methodologies for measuring justice within the community development sector, and performed an intensive literature review. The team synthesized its findings to develop a justice rubric consisting of evaluative questions for Urbane Development's staff, and created a customizable dashboard for calculating quantifiable justice "scores."

TEAM-GENERATED PROJECTS

DABASHOU

CONNECTING RURAL-TO-URBAN MIGRANT WORKERS TO JOB OPPORTUNITIES

FACULTY:

Andy Moss

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Yipeng Dong

Xinchi Wang

China's growing aging population and its removal of the one-child policy has led to a strong demand for housekeeping services, creating an opportunity for the millions of workers with limited education and skills who migrate from rural villages to cities. DaBaShou, the team initiative, seeks to improve the ability of migrant workers to secure hourly jobs in the housekeeping industry. The team's mission is to improve efficiency and transparency, and promote a safe working environment for the women-dominated home cleaning industry. To assess existing solutions, the home service industry market, and the challenges that urban-to-rural migrants face when looking for employment, the team conducted desktop research, stakeholder interviews, and over 60 customer discovery interviews. The team's solution—a mobile application that connects clients seeking home services to migrant workers searching for hourly work—is currently being tested in Beijing as a minimum viable product prototype.

DRIVEHER

ADDRESSING HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR WOMEN IN PUNJAB, INDIA

FACULTY:

Andy Moss

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Kaela Barna

Kah Yoke Ho

Elizabeth Kalu

Rajwinder Kaur

In Punjab, current employment rates for women are historically low, hovering at around 14 percent, while overall rates for men are approximately 55 percent. Factors that contribute to this employment gap include restrictive cultural norms, limited and unsafe transportation options, and a lack of access to education and skills development for women. To address this gap, the team conducted multiple interviews with key stakeholders including nonprofits, policymakers, and potential customers. The team discovered a strong demand for more women rideshare drivers, as it makes women passengers feel safer. To bridge the gender and skills gap in the transportation industry, the team created DriveHer, a social enterprise that aims to train the next generation of women drivers and help them become economically independent. DriveHer also plans to connect women drivers with ridesharing

companies to create a seamless pipeline of qualified drivers for the growing rideshare market in India, while also making ridesharing a safer transportation option for women.

LENTILS

SOLVING ECONOMIC INEQUALITY THROUGH PERSONAL LOAN ACCESS

FACULTY:

Andy Moss

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Osa Aihie

Divya Jethwani

Derrick Spencer

Black and indigenous people of color in the US have less access to low-interest loans, pay high interest on government-backed loans, and pay an average of twice as much as their white counterparts in bank fees. The Lentils team has designed an initiative that employs long-term capital through public and private means to provide low-interest loans and free checking accounts. The team interviewed individuals and business owners to better understand loan barriers, and conducted a comparative analysis of loans by type, region, interest rate, and qualifications. It created a database to help increase seed funding for minority-owned businesses by 8 percent and decrease the average interest rate for personal borrowers in Central Brooklyn by at least 3 percent. The team's long term goals are to reduce the interest divide by at least 50 percent and restore long-term wealth-building.

ZAMPADS

INCREASING PERIOD PROTECTION FOR YOUNG WOMEN IN ZAMBIA

FACULTY:

Andy Moss

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Ashley Otto

Olivia Thompson

Camilla Zard

Menstrual Health Management (MHM) is a key aspect of safeguarding the health, dignity, and overall life opportunities of girls and women. A study by Zambia's Ministry of Education shows that girls miss an average of 36 school days per year due to ineffective MHM. While there are many challenges to implementing effective MHM rooted in social norms and beliefs, access to safe and affordable MHM products is a critical component of ensuring individual protection and gender equity. The team conducted over 60 customer discovery interviews with Zambian women and health organizations, and discovered that many young women in Lusaka still feel unprotected by the cheap pads that are most accessible there. As a result, the team created ZamPads, a social enterprise that seeks to manufacture high-quality, low-cost sanitary pads locally. By leveraging Zambia's thriving cotton sector and establishing short, cost-effective supply chains, ZamPads can fulfill its mission of providing "period peace of mind" for all women, not just those who can afford it.

FAIR HEALTH

ANALYZING RISK FACTORS FOR ADVERSE OUTCOMES TO COVID-19

FACULTY:

Lloyd Torres

CAPSTONE TEAM:

John Gordon

Krisztina Mechtler

KeTaira Phillips

FAIR Health is a nonprofit organization committed to bringing transparency to healthcare costs and insurance. The organization engaged a team to uncover the most important risk factors for adverse outcomes to COVID-19 (such as hospitalization and mortality). Leveraging material from the organization's collection of 32 billion health insurance claims—the largest collection of private health data in the country—the team ran statistical analyses on claim data to identify significant risk factors associated with patient demographics and clinical characteristics. The team used this analysis, along with findings from a literature review, to compile a report that includes key findings, recommendations for at-risk populations, and a dissemination plan for various policy and clinical stakeholders to use.

INNOVATIVE RESOURCES FOR INDEPENDENCE

MANAGED CARE AND NUTRITION FOR THE INTELLECTUALLY AND DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED POPULATION

FACULTY:

Lloyd Torres

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Adam Fein

Serena Hou

Christonia Joseph

Leighton Pitter

Mariecia Pook

Innovative Resources for Independence (IRI) is a nonprofit organization that operates 36 locations throughout New York City. Its mission is to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and comorbid behavioral disorders to live, work, and participate in their community and maintain healthier lives. IRI engaged a team to help determine whether Medicaid Managed Care and Value Based Payment are the best payment systems for the IDD population. The team collected and analyzed aggregate clinical data on weight and physical, mental, and behavioral issues for individuals within the IRI system, and conducted extensive research into the impact of the Medicaid Managed Care and Value Based Payment methodologies on the IDD population in terms of cost, quality, client satisfaction, and perception. The team completed an executive report and presented its findings and recommendations for future nutrition and exercise management practices to IRI's leadership team.

INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

DESIGNING A VALUE-BASED PROPOSITION PROPOSAL

FACULTY:

Brian David

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Katie Allen

Sajjad Hossain

Annes Kim

The Institute for Community Living (ICL) is a New York-based nonprofit human services organization that provides integrated trauma-oriented, recovery-oriented, and person-centered care. In its continual effort to improve patient health, ICL identified an opportunity to propose a Value-Based Proposition (VBP) to one of its Managed Care Organizations. ICL tasked a team with developing a VBP proposal with a cost saving incentive and a strategy for improving patient lives by addressing social determinants of health. The team conducted an extensive literature review and performed a data analysis using ICL data, New York State Office of Mental Health data, and patient demographic information. The team developed a VBP proposal focused on delivering community-based integrated care to a target patient population in order to reduce unnecessary hospitalizations and ER visits, ultimately saving the Managed Care Organization nearly \$4 million.

INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

UNIT COST ANALYSIS FOR COMMUNITY LIVING PROGRAMS

FACULTY:

Brian David

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Heather Dumorne

Binal Patel

Sushant Thomas

Chloe Von Ancken

The Institute for Community Living (ICL) is a nonprofit human service agency that provides clinical, rehabilitation, housing, and other support services to assist individuals and families affected by or at risk of mental illness in New York City. ICL runs two programs, Assertive Community Treatment and Personalized Recovery Oriented Services, that offer integrated comprehensive care designed to improve well-being, recovery, and participation in community living. In anticipation of operating these programs with reduced funding due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and potential cuts to New York State Medicaid, ICL enlisted a team to analyze both fixed and variable program costs. The team conducted a unit cost analysis and determined break-even points. With this analysis, the team developed recommendations for promoting data driven management, increasing program sustainability, and improving quality of care to improve the financial performance of both ICL programs.

LIFE CAMP

SHOWCASING THE SUCCESS OF A GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM

FACULTY:

Rain Henderson

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Robin Allen

Andrew Dahl

Jacqueline Meilak

Silvio Olivares

Anna Vasilyeva

LIFE Camp is a gun violence intervention and prevention organization in Southeast Queens that emphasizes customized wraparound services to prevent violence in at-risk communities and address the specific needs of each community. The organization enlisted a team to help locate gaps in its services and strengthen its public outreach and messaging, with a focus on communicating what makes LIFE Camp effective and distinct. In order to further the organization's goals of helping other organizations replicate its approach, the team conducted a landscape analysis to understand what differentiates LIFE Camp from similarly motivated organizations. The team utilized a powerful digital storyboard for promotion and funding, developed a white paper describing LIFE Camp's services and highlighting its impact, and created a video that provides an inside look at the people who execute LIFE Camps' vision, showcasing how its staff drive LIFE Camp's organizational success.

THE MILBANK MEMORIAL FUND

EVALUATION OF A LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC SERVICE PROFESSIONALS

FACULTY:

Rain Henderson

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Anthony Monaco

Seila Radoncic

Sanjana Rahman

Beatrice Simon-Ogan

Sarah Yolleck

The Milbank Memorial Fund (MMF) is an endowed foundation that works to improve population health by connecting leaders and decision makers with the best available evidence and experience. MMF's Emerging Leaders Program (ELP), launched five years ago, seeks to cultivate leaders who can address the challenges and opportunities in today's complex health policy environment by developing practical, hands-on leadership skills in future public service officials. In anticipation of a future redesign with a more virtual program model, MMF solicited a team to conduct ELP's first formal program evaluation. The team designed and conducted interviews and surveys with past ELP participants and mentors, and analyzed the results using both qualitative and quantitative methods to identify key themes. With this evaluation, the team generated specific recommendations for improving program monitoring and data collection and implementing mechanisms to improve ELP's mentorship, networking, curriculum, activities, and program format.

MOUNT SINAI HEALTH SYSTEM, DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE

ANALYZING AND MITIGATING TELEHEALTH DISPARITIES AND BARRIERS

FACULTY:

Lloyd Torres

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Brielle Blatt

Chiamaka Ojiako

Kyaolin Rajbhandary

Lucrezia Renzetti

Olivia VanGundy

The Department of Medicine is the largest academic department in the Mount Sinai Health System, a large New York City-based hospital network. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, the Department of Medicine logged over 4,000 telehealth encounters. By June 2020, the number of telehealth encounters spiked to over 18,000, and remains far greater than prior to the pandemic. The Department of Medicine enlisted a team to identify and analyze the major barriers to telehealth access and utilization, and to develop mitigation strategies to address telehealth disparities in underserved populations. The team conducted a literature review, interviewed leaders in the field, ran provider and staff surveys, and analyzed de-identified aggregate patient utilization and satisfaction data. With its findings, the team produced a final report that confirms telehealth disparities across race, payer type, age, and sex/gender, and provides targeted recommendations to foster equitable telehealth utilization.

NYU LANGONE HEALTH, DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE

ESTABLISHING A VIRTUAL URGENT CARE TELE-PREP PROGRAM

FACULTY:

Regina Gurvich

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Arvin Akhavan

Hanan Almarzooqi

Ruoding (Ruby) Wang

Jamillah Williams

Jimmy Yoder

NYU Virtual Urgent Care is a 24/7 video chat service that allows patients to connect with a NYU Langone Health care provider from the privacy of their home. NYU Langone Health tasked a team with spearheading the launch of a Virtual Urgent Care program for PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis), a preventative HIV drug regimen that is nearly 100 percent effective when taken daily. The team conducted a literature review on best practices and created a workflow for PrEP initiation via telehealth, which includes a PrEP initiation protocol and an “express lane” of orders and documentation in the electronic health record for provider use. The team generated an educational presentation on the protocol, and assisted the client with outreach and marketing to the LGBTQ+ community and other groups at risk for HIV infection. Throughout the project, the team partnered

closely with the NYU Langone Health corporate marketing team, the community-based Family Health Centers program, and the IT and Emergency Departments.

NYU LANGONE ORTHOPEDIC HOSPITAL

IMPROVING THE ACCURACY OF ORTHOPEDIC DIAGNOSIS THROUGH A CLINICAL FEEDBACK SYSTEM

FACULTY:

Regina Gurvich

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Fazeela Ali

Sara Hashimi

Adam Philip Schwartz

Amber Vandeyar

Shani Yeheskiel

The Department of Orthopedic Surgery at NYU Langone Medical Center ranks among the top five orthopedic facilities in the nation, providing tens of thousands of patients with world class care in orthopedics, rheumatology, and rehabilitation. A team was tasked with recommending a feedback system within EPIC (an electronic health record system) on the accuracy of patient diagnosis in the Emergency Department. The goal was to find mechanisms for providing real time feedback to the Emergency Department that would otherwise require orthopedic consultation and an alternative course of treatment. The team conducted a comprehensive literature review, analyzed patient-level data, and compiled insights from key stakeholders, including Orthopedic and Emergency Department physicians and Quality Team leadership. The team's final report offers practical recommendations for interdepartmental collaboration and physician education, and outlines data specifications for an EPIC feedback system aimed at reducing discrepancies in diagnoses.

PARTNERSHIP TO END ADDICTION

DESIGNING A SCHOOL-BASED SUBSTANCE USE EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR PARENTS

FACULTY:

Rain Hendersson

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Rahitul Bhuiyan

Yi Ping Bong

Sherline Dolin

Shivani Mehra

Kiely Turgeon

The Partnership to End Addiction provides services to families impacted by substance use and addiction through its helpline, educational resources, and toolkit of training sessions. With the help of a Capstone team, the organization sought to deliver fee-based substance use programs for parents and caregivers through schools. The team conducted a needs assessment to identify potential barriers to successful implementation and a competitor analysis of the landscape of existing substance use and prevention programs. The team worked with the client to develop strategies for financial sustainability through mixed revenue sources, program

implementation, toolkit marketing, and increased accessibility. The team also provided a framework to measure program success and effectiveness.

SPM MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

EXAMINING DIVERSITY AND HEALTH INEQUITY AND IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICES

FACULTY:

Lloyd Torres

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Matthew Scott

Megan Trenerly

Emma Watson

Founded in 1983, SPM Marketing & Communications (SPM) is a healthcare brand consultancy and integrated marketing communications firm that has partnered with more than 300 organizations in 40 states to help establish meaningful brand strategies and deliver results across the healthcare sector. SPM engaged a team to identify leading practices in addressing race- and gender-based health inequities that have been exacerbated by COVID-19, and to translate these findings into corporate values and actions. To evaluate best practices, the industry landscape, and SPM's positioning, the team conducted an extensive literature review and interviewed 12 internal and external stakeholders. Based on its findings, the team highlighted consistent themes for addressing race- and gender-based health inequities, and created actionable short- and long-term recommendations for best practices.

VIBRANT EMOTIONAL HEALTH

MEASURING AND IMPROVING EFFECTIVENESS IN A BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CALL CENTER

FACULTY:

Regina Gurvich

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Nazeea Akhter

Cynthia Chong

Alana Dudnath

Nadia Gakou

Sakura Miyazaki

Vibrant Emotional Health (Vibrant) operates NYC Well, a service that provides 24/7 mental and emotional wellbeing support services to individuals and families via call, text, and chat. Vibrant is contracted by the NYC Department of Mental Health and Hygiene through its ThriveNYC initiative to increase the accessibility of behavioral health services for New Yorkers. Vibrant commissioned the team to identify more effective metrics for measuring the impact of each support session. The team completed a literature review and market analysis, and reviewed the client's current data criteria. The team then recommended metrics for Vibrant to use to inform and improve rapport building, so that the organization can more effectively communicate its work to stakeholders, track variation in rapport based on call volume or intensity, and train counselors to build rapport.

CITIZENS HOUSING AND PLANNING COUNCIL

INTERACTIVE DATA TOOLS FOR CRAFTING TENURE-BASED HOUSING POLICIES IN NYC

FACULTY:

Michael Keane

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Andrea Asprelli
Christopher Polack
Annmarie Rodriguez

Citizens Housing and Planning Council (CHPC) works to develop and advance practical public policies to support New York City's housing stock by better understanding the city's most pressing housing and neighborhood needs. CHPC's ongoing initiative, A New Lens for NYC's Housing Plan, aims to widen the conversation around the city's next housing plan and develop new metrics for policymakers. CHPC enlisted the team to expand this initiative by exploring NYC housing policy through the lens of the city's housing stock broken down by tenure: rent stabilized rental, market rate rental, public housing, and owner-occupied units. Using public data, the team created interactive data tools to explore housing tenure overlaid with key demographics and other housing indicators. The team then used these tools to synthesize neighborhood-specific policy recommendations that meet the needs of the residents based on tenure and demographic composition.

JEROME GUN HILL BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

MEASURING THE IMPACT OF SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY INITIATIVES ON SMALL BUSINESSES

FACULTY:

Sarah Kaufman

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Paul Goebel
Cameron Haas
Christina Jang
Mayelly Moreno
Chase Rudner
Carlo Steinman

The Jerome Gun Hill Business Improvement District (BID) provides a myriad of supplemental support services to merchants in the Norwood section of the Bronx, an area which surrounds Montefiore Medical Center's main campus. In order to support and inform its merchant community as they adapt to a future with fewer cars, the BID enlisted a team to assess how new NYC Department of Transportation bike and bus lane projects might affect small businesses in commercial corridors, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The team analyzed how other projects have impacted commercial corridors, identified domestic and international interventions that were successful in helping small businesses adapt, and conducted a survey of the BID's merchants and its clients. The team produced a report

providing recommendations for demonstrating how shifting away from car usage can produce a sustainable neighborhood and economy.

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING, STATEN ISLAND OFFICE

REENVISIONING THE NORTH AND WEST SHORE INDUSTRIAL WATERFRONTS

FACULTY:

Michael Keane

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Andrew Jones
Catherine McGanity
Ryan Morgan
Jason Phillips
Megan Rosa
Lindsey Ross

The NYC Department of City Planning is the city's primary land use agency, and its Staten Island Office (DCPSI) is instrumental in shaping the built environment and economic activity in Staten Island. Competing visions and goals for the future of the borough's North and West Shore industrial waterfronts drove DCPSI to enlist a team to help envision their preservation and modernization. The team collected and analyzed data on the existing conditions of the waterfronts; interviewed city officials, local business organizations, and community boards; conducted a literature review on industrial waterfronts and industrial district preservation; and identified case studies of other localities that have navigated tensions between industrial and economic development, sustainability and resiliency, and quality of life. The team provided a report to guide DCPSI's decisions, outlining a potential future for the Staten Island waterfront districts that benefits residents, businesses, and workers alike.

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES

RETHINKING COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT AN EQUITABLE RECOVERY OF SMALL BUSINESSES

FACULTY:

Elizabeth Larsen

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Maxwell Bernstein
Michael Kim
Cynthia De La Rosa
Samantha Vickers-Hymowitz
Yuanchen Zhao

The New York City Department of Small Business Services' Neighborhood Development Division (NDD) pursues commercial revitalization projects across the city to support small businesses and commercial corridors and enhance community resilience. Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, many small businesses were struggling to make ends meet in a rapidly changing economy; the pandemic exacerbated this struggle, particularly in low income neighborhoods and communities of color. NDD engaged a Capstone team to assess the impact of COVID-19 on small businesses in heavily impacted neighborhoods, and to make recommendations for redeveloping its

toolkit of commercial revitalization strategies. Focusing its efforts on three neighborhoods (East Harlem in Manhattan, Brownsville in Brooklyn, and Southern Boulevard in the Bronx), the team worked with community-based partners to conduct interviews and distribute surveys among key stakeholders, researched policy levers deployed in other localities, and analyzed publicly available datasets to evaluate the neighborhoods' critical needs. Based on these findings, the team made programmatic, tactical, structural, and legislative recommendations to support an equitable economic recovery.

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BETTER BUSES EQUITY ASSESSMENT

FACULTY:

Elizabeth Larsen

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Rachel Brown

Ayesha Lilaoonwala

Caroline Morris

Maitri Pujara

William Sklar

The New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) initiated the Better Buses Action Plan in 2019 to improve the speed of buses throughout NYC by 25 percent and increase the number of bus riders by the end of 2020. Although the COVID-19 crisis impacted these plans, in June 2020 DOT launched Better Buses Restart, a program that focuses on improving service for vulnerable populations and essential workers on an expedited timeline. The team evaluated DOT's project selection methodology through an equity lens to determine if DOT's Better Buses projects are equitably distributed and assess whether DOT could do more to reach equity populations. The team conducted a comparative analysis of equity initiatives in other US cities, analyzed the needs of equitable populations, and evaluated how DOT serves these populations through its project selection, planning, engagement, and evaluation practices. The final report includes recommendations for how to improve the inclusion of equity in the DOT bus program.

NEW YORK CITY TAXI AND LIMOUSINE COMMISSION

LEVERAGING TAXI AND FOR-HIRE VEHICLE NETWORKS TO IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION EQUITY FOR SENIORS

FACULTY:

Sarah Kaufman

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Celeste Alsina

Joshua Koh

Liz Jae Yun Park

Khan Shing

The New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) licenses and regulates taxis, for-hire vehicles (FHV), paratransit, and commuter vans in NYC. TLC engaged a team to explore how the taxi and FHV industry can equitably improve access to transportation for the city's seniors and aging residents, who face a litany of well-documented barriers to meeting their transportation needs. The Capstone team conducted extensive research into how the city's existing transportation infrastructure serves seniors and older residents, analyzed the demography and geography of NYC's senior population, and identified gaps and barriers specific to older populations in the transportation network. Based on its research, the team created a set of programmatic recommendations to improve access and affordability alongside a set of outreach recommendations to improve senior access to taxis and FHV networks.

PORT AUTHORITY OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

EVALUATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE-COUNTING TECHNOLOGIES

FACULTY:

Sarah Kaufman

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Nicholas Cowan

Katherine Key

Olivia Limone

Trish Malubay

Guang Zhou

Port Authority Trans-Hudson (PATH), a subsidiary of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, is a heavy rail rapid transit system that serves commuters in Hoboken, Newark, Jersey City, and Manhattan. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and dramatic declines in ridership, PATH officials sought to address passenger concerns around safety, health, and overcrowding by engaging a team to evaluate the feasibility and procurement of a Car Density Information System (CDIS). Since a CDIS requires new hardware to monitor congestion on each train car and new software to relay information to passengers in real time, the team conducted extensive research and engaged with potential vendors and relevant stakeholders to ascertain the most vital criteria for assessing a range of technological solutions. Based on its findings, the team developed a robust scorecard and comprehensive report with recommendations to guide PATH's procurement process of people counting solutions and other technologies necessary for PATH's desired system improvements.

ASSOCIATION OF FOREST COMMUNITIES OF PETÉN

PROTECTING A SUCCESSFUL SOCIAL-ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVE IN GUATEMALA

FACULTY:

Natasha Iskander

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Katherine Kelly

Loreta Lancellotti

Luisa Portugal

Maria Talania

Abe Silberstein

The Association of Forest Communities of Petén (ACOFOP) is an association of 19 community forestry organizations that have successfully managed natural resources in the Petén region of Guatemala since 1995. Despite the social, economic, and conservation gains that ACOFOP has achieved, a bill introduced to the US Congress in 2019 is threatening its forest concession model. ACOFOP enlisted a team to explore private interests behind the bill and help lobby against its passage. The team defined the scope of work, conducted research, and interviewed experts. The centerpiece of the team's work was a detailed policy memo for US Congressional staff outlining how a well-managed forest in Guatemala serves American interests. In addition, the team produced resources for use in Guatemala—including a memo for the Guatemalan government, a press release, and a distribution strategy.

THE BELIZE ASSOCIATION OF PLANNERS

MEASURING CLIMATE RESILIENCE DISPARITIES AMONG VULNERABLE POPULATIONS IN BELIZE CITY

FACULTY:

Natasha Iskander

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Joey Baietti

Carrie Eidson

Jah-Milka McClean

David Zhong

The Belize Association of Planners (BAP) is a nonprofit professional planning organization committed to promoting social justice and sustainability in the natural and built environments. BAP enlisted a team to identify intersectional vulnerabilities between climate change and gender in urban Belize, including aspects of social identity that contribute to heightened climate impacts on women and other marginalized groups. The team created public-facing materials—including policy briefs, short-term pandemic recovery guidance, and an interactive story map highlighting the team's major research findings—to promote awareness of climate change and the importance of equitable urban planning. The team also created a framework for participatory action research projects for BAP to use to directly engage affected communities.

GLOBAL INITIATIVE AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME

CIVIL SOCIETY'S POTENTIAL TO DISRUPT ILLEGAL ENVIRONMENTAL TRADE

FACULTY:

Vanessa L. Deane

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Kha Dang

Kylie McDowell

Alex Ruzevich

Jacquelyn Spade

The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GITOC) seeks to create and promote innovative strategies to fight international criminal networks. GITOC engaged a team to analyze civil society's role in disrupting the illegal wildlife and environmental product trade in Vietnam and Indonesia. The team conducted a literature review of the illicit environmental and wildlife trade in Indonesia and Vietnam, and interviewed stakeholders representing law enforcement agencies, educational institutions, public media, and international and local nongovernmental organizations. The team's comprehensive report includes visual media tools; recommendations to support GITOC's efforts in disrupting environmental transnational organized crime; an analysis of opportunities for civil society to reduce environmental crime; and recommendations for capacity building and cooperation between local and national agencies and law enforcement.

THE HUNGER PROJECT

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISING OUTCOMES

FACULTY:

Kathleen Apltauer

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Adi Gorstein

Harvey Han

Sasha Lopez

The Hunger Project (THP) is a nonprofit organization committed to ending hunger and poverty by pioneering sustainable, grassroots, women-centered strategies and advocating for their adoption worldwide. THP enlisted a team to examine barriers to successful fundraising in select countries in Africa. The team investigated global funding trends, interviewed THP country directors and fundraising teams, and analyzed the organization's grant database. Based on its findings, the team recommended fundraising strategies for THP to adopt, including an emphasis on local fundraising opportunities, and designed strategies to improve communication among country offices, build technical capacity at the local level, and increase access to regional and local funding.

MÉDECINS DU MONDE FRANCE (DOCTORS OF THE WORLD FRANCE)

IMPROVING ACCESS TO SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES IN KINSHASA, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

FACULTY:

Kathleen Apltauer

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Lilian Law

Cristina Mihailescu

Emily Ralic-Moore

Grace Tran

Médecins du Monde (MdM), an international humanitarian organization serving vulnerable populations, has been working on improving sexual and reproductive health (SRH) outcomes in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) for over 10 years. Having launched a new SRH strategy in 2019, MdM engaged a team to assess its impact on contraception and abortion access, and help determine which of its current practices are most effective in reaching youth and adolescents. The team examined the current status of adolescent SRH services, access, and rights in Kinshasa and the DRC; reviewed other countries' practices to improve contraceptive and abortion services; and conducted interviews with youth, local health providers, pharmacists, NGOs, and community leaders in Kinshasa. Based on its findings, the team developed recommendations for MdM to expand access to SRH services for youth and adolescents in Kinshasa.

UGANDA VILLAGE PROJECT

ANALYSIS OF PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

FACULTY:

Kathleen Apltauer

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Akshara Anirjita

Emma Bryden-Brown

Ruirui Gu

Mercy Swarna

The Uganda Village Project (UVP) is a nonprofit organization that facilitates community health projects in rural Uganda by partnering with existing health infrastructure to provide education and preventative services for malaria, HIV/AIDS, water, sanitation, hygiene, and reproductive health. UVP engaged a team to analyze data from 2015 and 2020 program questionnaires, with a focus on UVP's Malaria Program. The team also assessed outcome differences between intervention and control villages, interviewed stakeholders, analyzed UVP's process documents, and conducted a literature review of other international malaria interventions. From this research, the team created a report that detailed the program's outcomes and impacts, and outlined recommendations for program design, data collection, and the reallocation of program funds to meet UVP goals more effectively.

UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS ON LOCAL ECONOMIES AND FISCAL SPACES

FACULTY:

Leonardo Romeo

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Rhea Almeida

Katherine Rivard

Tomoyo Sakai

Teguh Sasongko

Xinyi Wu

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) Local Development Finance Practice is a center for innovative research that supports local governments and economies. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the help of a team, UNCDF sought to understand how local economies and fiscal spaces are impacted by digital platforms. The team conducted research in Kumasi, Ghana and Chandpur, Bangladesh to assess the impact of digital platforms on local fiscal spaces. It also investigated the potential of different impact models and revenue structures to stimulate revenue generation, inter-governmental transfers, and local economic activity in three sectors: tourism and hospitality, urban transportation, and the delivery of goods and services. The team distilled its findings into a final report that will contribute to UNCDF's future initiatives to rebuild local fiscal spaces.

UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

INVESTING IN MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT

FACULTY:

Leonardo Romeo

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Sion Griffiths

Caitlin McTiernan

Feiras Rahman

Will Richards

John Zhang

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), in partnership with the International Municipal Investment Fund (IMIF) and other local capital financing programs, utilizes a range of blended finance models to support local government investments in the Sustainable Development Goals set forth by the United Nations. As communities in developing countries face rapid urbanization, population growth, and increasing volumes of household waste, UNCDF is exploring Municipal Solid Waste Management (MSWM) as an area for future investment. UNCDF tasked a team with devising a comprehensive investment appraisal framework for the organization to use to assess future UNCDF waste management projects. The team designed an assessment tool that included considerations for financial, economic, environmental, and social dimensions of MSWM projects. To illustrate the use of the tool, the team applied its model to a current UNCDF MSWM project in Guinea, and presented its findings to the UNCDF headquarters in New York.

WORLD BANK

DECENTRALIZATION AND COASTAL RESILIENCE

FACULTY:

Mitchell Cook

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Alexandra Kirton

Lisa Nyamadzawo

Charles Xiang Ren

Michael Watson

The World Bank's Governance Global Practice supports its client countries in building capable, efficient, open, inclusive, and accountable institutions. The rise of global climate change poses a serious threat to the World Bank's core foundations of development and shared prosperity. Seeking to understand best practices around climate change resilience, the organization enlisted a team to develop a series of case studies assessing whether decentralization is vital to coastal resilience. The team conducted extensive research and consulted both World Bank experts and professionals working in Bangladesh and the Philippines. The final report, intended for development practitioners and government officials, investigates how countries can confront coastal hazards and risks, outlining strategies that the World Bank's Governance Global Practice can use to build coastal resilience in decentralized government systems.

RESEARCH IN QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

AIR QUALITY AND HEATING FUEL

EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF BOILER FUEL REGULATIONS ON AIR QUALITY IN NEW YORK CITY NEIGHBORHOODS

FACULTY:

James Dunham

CAPSTONE TEAM:

Sihan Liu

Jane Sun

Micah Wood

Over the past two mayoral administrations, New York City's municipal government has implemented a series of local regulations designed to improve air quality across the city. One such policy, the Clean Heat initiative, curtailed the use of two heavy fuel oils used in building boilers for winter heating. Leveraging publically available data, the team analyzed whether the policy has been implemented as designed, and whether the implementation resulted in the intended outcome of meaningfully decreasing the concentration of dangerous particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) in street-level air in various city neighborhoods. The team developed a report that includes an analysis of differentiated impacts in high- and low-income neighborhoods and suggestions for future regulation design that prioritizes environmental justice and equity.

NEW YORK CITY'S 421A PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION PROGRAM

EXAMINING HOW 421A MAY HAVE REINFORCED RACIAL SEGREGATION THROUGHOUT GENTRIFYING AREAS IN NEW YORK CITY

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Section 421a of the New York State Real Property Tax Law, created during New York City's real estate nadir in 1971, offers developers of multifamily residential dwelling units various tax abatement options for building on vacant or undesirable land. In order to preserve affordable housing as the real estate market recovered, the 1985 State Legislature identified affordable housing criteria which developers must meet to qualify for the abatement. The team examined the consequences of the Section 421a program on racial segregation in Brooklyn and Queens from 2008 through 2019 by analyzing two particular provisions: Geographic Exclusionary Areas (GEA) and the Community Preference policy. The team used a spatial regression discontinuity design to understand the impact of the 2008 expansion of the GEA boundary and increases in community set-asides on racial

segregation. The findings and policy implications detailed in the final report are particularly relevant for current policy makers, as the Section 421a program is up for legislative renewal in 2022.

PAID FAMILY LEAVE PARENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES

ANALYZING THE IMPACT OF PAID FAMILY LEAVE ON PARENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES IN CALIFORNIA

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Because the US is the only developed country that does not have a comprehensive Paid Family Leave (PFL) program, many states have considered establishing their own programs. California implemented a PFL policy in July 2004, and several other states are currently in the process of implementing PFL policies, making it likely that other states will participate in these programs in the future. The team, hypothesizing that PFL policies lead to improved parental health outcomes in the years following a child's birth, analyzed California data to measure the causal impact of the PFL program on several parental health outcomes—including smoking, high blood pressure, diabetes, and psychological distress—while also exploring differences in outcomes by race. The findings provide additional evidence to support the impact of PFL policies and their implementation at the state and federal level.

SCHOOL FINANCE REFORM

ASSESSING THE EFFECTS OF THE “RACE TO THE TOP” PROGRAM ON STUDENT OUTCOMES

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In response to the financial crisis of 2007-2008, the Obama administration signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to stimulate job creation and jumpstart the economy. Under the Recovery Act, Race to the Top (RTT) was the largest federal competitive grant program focused on education. It aimed to improve school standards, increase the effectiveness of teachers and staff, promote failing schools, and identify better methods for tracking student and teacher progress. The team conducted research to estimate the causal effects of RTT on reading and math scores by comparing students in states that were awarded the RTT grant and students in states that were not. The team detailed its findings in a

final report that may be used to inform the design and implementation of current and future competitive grant programs amid the ongoing debate over school finance.

TERRORISM AND PUBLIC OPINION

ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC OPINION FOLLOWING A TERRORIST ATTACK IN OHIO

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Tiffany Rose Miller

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Though Islamic State-inspired terrorist attacks make up only a small subset of terrorist events in the United States, they loom large in the public consciousness and receive extensive media attention. The team used a natural experiment to investigate the impact of terrorist violence on public preferences for US military force and intervention abroad. Taking into consideration mediating factors such as partisanship and media consumption, the team analyzed data from the Cooperative Congressional Election Study, a national and state representative survey, which was being conducted at the time of the 2016 Jihadi-inspired terrorist attack at The Ohio State University. The team's findings provide insight into the impact of the attack on public opinion in Ohio, and contribute to the broader research on the influence of personal experiences on public preferences.

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CAPSTONE ORGANIZATIONS

Air Quality and Heating Fuel, **39**
Association of Forest Communities of Petén, **34**
Banco Popular, **13**
The Belize Association of Planners, **34**
Broadway for Arts Education, **8**
Center for Employment Opportunities, **8**
Children’s Arts Guild, **9**
Citizens Housing & Planning Council, **30**
DaBaShou, **22**
DAYLIGHT, **9**
DriveHer, **22**
FAIR Health, **24**
Fines and Fees Justice Center, **15**
Futures and Options, **10**
Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, **35**
Global Opportunity Youth Network, **20**
Greenwich Village Chelsea Chamber of Commerce, **10**
Guidehouse, **13**
The Hunger Project, **35**
IBM, **20**
IMPACCT Brooklyn, **17**
Innovative Resources for Independence, **24**
Institute for Community Living: Designing a Value-Based Proposition Proposal, **25**
Institute for Community Living: Unit Cost Analysis for Community Living Programs, **25**
Jerome Gun Hill BID, **30**
Jewelers of America, **11**
Land to Learn, **11**
Lentils, **23**
LIFE Camp, **26**
Majira Project, **21**
Make the Road New York, **17**
Médecins du Monde France, **36**
Mi Familia Vota, **18**
Milbank Memorial Fund, **26**
Mount Sinai Health System Department of Medicine, **27**
New York City Civic Engagement Commission, **15**
New York City Department of City Planning, Staten Island Office, **31**

New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services, **12**
New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, **14**
New York City Department of Small Business Services, **31**
New York City Department of Transportation, **32**
New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission, **33**
New York City's 421a Property Tax Exemption Program, **39**
New York State Senator James Sanders Jr., **16**
NYU Langone Health, Department of Emergency Medicine, **27**
NYU Langone Orthopedic Hospital, **28**
Office of the Mayor of Trenton, New Jersey, **16**
One Fair Wage, **18**
Opening Act, **14**
Paid Family Leave and Parental Health Outcomes, **40**
Partnership to End Addiction, **28**
Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, **33**
Purpose, **19**
School Finance Reform, **40**
SPM Marketing & Communications, **29**
Terrorism and Public Opinion, **41**
Uganda Village Project, **36**
United Nations Capital Development Fund: Investigating the Impact of Digital
Platforms on Local Economies and Fiscal Spaces, **37**
United Nations Capital Development Fund: Investing in Municipal
Waste Management, **37**
Urbane Development, **21**
World Bank, **38**
Vibrant Emotional Health, **29**
ZamPads, **23**

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