THE CAPSTONE PROGRAM
2012-2013

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 4,500 students have participated in nearly 1,000 projects for more than 700 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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# Table of Contents

**Capstone is Learning in Action** viii

## Advanced Projects in PNP Management
1

*Bridge Street Development Corporation, Quincy Senior Residence*
1

*Mississippi Center For Justice*
1

*Sunnyside Community Services*
2

## Advanced Projects in PNP Management
2

*Break Away: The Alternative Break Connection*
2

*Jewish Communal Fund*
3

*Opening Act*
3

## Advanced Projects in PNP Management
4

*Bronx Council on the Arts*
4

*Career Gear*
4

*Footsteps*
5

*LatinoJustice PRLDEF*
5

*Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty*
6

*Repair the World*
6

## Advanced Projects in PNP Policy
7

*Citizens Union*
7

*Community Voices Heard*
7

*Literacy Assistance Center*
8

## Advanced Projects in PNP Policy and Management
8

*Agora Partnerships*
8

*Mount St. Mary College, Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress, and the City of Newburgh, New York*
9

*New York City Administration for Children's Services*
9

*New York City Human Resources Administration*
10

## Advanced Projects in PNP Policy and Management
10

*The 52nd Street Project*
10

*New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence*
11

*Sauti Yetu Center for African Women*
11

*Times Square Alliance*
12
Advanced Projects in PNP Policy and Management: Governing with Technology

Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
Delaware Department of State Division of Corporations and UK Companies House
World Bank - Procurement

Advanced Projects in PNP Finance and Policy

Myrtle Avenue Revitalization Project
New York City Mayor’s Office of Operations
Washington, D.C.’s Office of the State Superintendent of Education

Advanced Projects in PNP Management and Finance

Catholic Big Sisters and Big Brothers
Child Mind Institute
Housing Works Thrift Shops

Advanced Projects in Health Policy and Management

Bronx Community Health Network - Emergency Department
Bronx Community Health Network - Strategic Planning
Mercy Home for Children
New York Civil Liberties Union
NYU-HHC Clinical and Translational Science Institute
United States Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Advanced Projects in Health Services Management and Finance

FEGS
Maimonides Medical Center
NYCRx
Palladia
Transitional Services for New York
William F. Ryan Community Health Center

Advanced Projects in Urban Planning

Enterprise Community Partners
Made in Lower East Side
McCormack Baron Salazar
South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation
Advanced Projects in Urban Planning
Institute for Rational Urban Mobility 25
New York City Department of Transportation 26
Rockaway Waterfront Alliance 26
Vision Long Island 27

Advanced International Projects 27
Lincoln Institute of Land Policy 27
Municipal Development Partnership for Eastern and Southern Africa 28
National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development 28
United Cities and Local Governments 28
United Nations Capital Development Fund 29
World Bank - East Asia and Pacific 29
World Bank and National Council for Education Development 30

Advanced International Projects 31
Academy of Responsible Management 31
East Meets West Foundation 31
Foundation Rwanda 32
Global Goods Partners 32
Local Government Unit of Libon, Albay Province, Philippines 33
World Connect 33

Advanced International Projects 34
Amend 34
Counterpart International 34
Planned Parenthood Global 35
Scholars at Risk Network 35
United Methodist Committee on Relief 36
United Nations Development Programme 36

Advanced Projects in Qualitative Research Methods: Studies on International Migration 37
World Bank - Labour Mobility 37

Advanced Projects for Nurse Managers 38
Hospital for Special Surgery 38
New York-Presbyterian Hospital - Improving Discharge Efficiency 38
New York-Presbyterian Hospital - Weill Cornell Dialysis/Apheresis Unit 39
| Applied Research in Public Finance and Policy | 39 |
| Drug Abuse and Enforcement: Impact of Regulatory Controls on Prescription Drug Abuse | 39 |
| The Effect of New Immigrant High Schools on Immigrant Students’ Academic and Social Performance: Causal Evidence from New York City Public High Schools | 40 |
| An Evaluation of New York City’s Stop, Question, and Frisk Policy | 40 |
| Federal Student Aid and Loan Default Rates at Postsecondary Institutions | 41 |
| The Influence of Micro Food-Environments on Food Consumption and BMI Outcomes | 41 |
| Faculty and Directors | 42 |
| Index | 43 |
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 80 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 Management
FACULTY: RONA AFFOUAMADO

Bridge Street Development Corporation, Quincy Senior Residence
Identifying and Addressing Service Delivery Gaps for Seniors in Bedford-Stuyvesant

Quincy Senior Residence, founded in 2006 by Bridge Street Development Corporation (BSDC), provides affordable independent living apartments to low-income seniors in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn. Quincy offers a range of need-based, elective programs and services to its residents and members of the local community. BSDC requested a Capstone team to conduct a community needs assessment of seniors residing in Bedford-Stuyvesant, and to provide the organization with strategic recommendations to address some of the most significant gaps in services and programming. The team interviewed staff and community leaders, engaged seniors in a series of focus groups, and conducted a survey in partnership with local organizations. Taking into account the research findings, organizational capacity, potential funding sources, and best practices in senior services, the team developed both short- and long-term recommendations for BSDC. Their report informed BSDC’s decision-making as the organization seeks to expand its services and further its mission.

Mississippi Center For Justice
Faces of Hunger: Designing an Anti-Hunger Campaign and Framework for a Statewide Coalition

The Mississippi Center for Justice (MCJ) is an organization that works toward racial and economic equity through legal services, policy advocacy, and education. Founded in 2003, MCJ seeks solutions that address social justice in disaster recovery, housing, healthcare, consumer rights, and education. Through their work, MCJ determined that hunger in Mississippi (20% rate of food insecurity, highest in the US) is particularly relevant to the organization’s mission. MCJ charged the Capstone team with designing an anti-hunger campaign that would improve the conditions for those most affected. The team first conducted demographics research to determine localized needs, a nationwide scan of best practices, an assessment of statewide resources, and interviews with MCJ staff and individuals from anti-hunger related groups. With this information, the team produced recommendations designed to elevate the issue of hunger in the state,
provide anti-hunger strategies specific to particular regions, and set the foundation for developing an anti-hunger alliance.

Capstone Team: Charla Duncan, Zili Fang, Michael Reed, Adam Shepherd, Emily Tanner-McLean

**Sunnyside Community Services**
**Assessment of Youth Development Programs**

Sunnyside Community Services (SCS) is a nonprofit organization located in Western Queens that provides a continuum of services to members of all ages in its local community and the broader NYC metro area. SCS requested a Capstone team to evaluate the effectiveness of its two youth development programs - College Readiness Program (CRP) and Grounded and Positioned for Success (GPS). The team first interviewed both internal and external stakeholders, participated in strategic planning meetings with SCS Management, and conducted focus groups to gain a better understanding of SCS’ approach to youth development and how they can be more effective. Next, the team conducted an assessment of the programs, an environmental scan of the competitive landscape, and looked at research on national best practices. The team’s final report focused on strategic recommendations to assist SCS in the determination of the best program model to serve their target youth population in the future.

Capstone Team: Conor Brady, Ilana Levinson, Danica Murphy, Sam Sims, Xu Zhang

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**Advanced Projects in PNP Management**

**FACULTY: ERICA FOLDY**

**Break Away: The Alternative Break Connection**
**Developing a Community Impact Assessment System for Short-Term Service-Learning Programs**

Break Away, a nonprofit organization, supports the development of quality alternative break programs by providing training and information to over 170 universities and 500 nonprofit organizations and by promoting the Active Citizens movement. The organization emphasizes the impact of alternative break programs on student volunteers, but had no method for measuring impact of students’ work on the community partner organizations and host communities in which they serve. The
Capstone team interviewed and surveyed student chapters, community partner organizations, Break Away staff and board members to assess their capacity for measuring impact, and performed an environmental scan of current assessment practices within the service-learning field. At Break Away’s Atlanta headquarters, the team facilitated a theory of change workshop to articulate their vision for community impact. The team created tools, user guides, and an implementation plan for Break Away to measure qualitative and quantitative impact on community partner organizations and host communities.

Capstone Team: Julie A. Cornell, Karle Scroggins, Morgan Soloski, Aimee Weiss, Sara Williams

Jewish Communal Fund
Donor Research and Service Design

The Jewish Communal Fund (JCF), a publicly supported foundation, promotes charitable giving to sectarian and non-sectarian organizations through donor-advised funds. JCF engaged a Capstone team to determine which factors influence a donor to invest philanthropic dollars with a donor-advised fund versus a private foundation. The team focused on determining which value-added services JCF should consider offering in order to retain and attract new donors at the $1 million to $10 million-asset levels, with an overarching goal of informing JCF’s forthcoming strategic planning process. The team’s research methodology consisted of performing an environmental scan of Jewish and non-Jewish foundations, an existing services analysis, and a cost-benefit analysis of donor-advised funds versus private foundations; conducting interviews with financial, legal, and philanthropic advisors as well as high net-worth donors; and developing an electronic survey of a subset of JCF donors.

Capstone Team: Rachel Ackoff, Eliza Danielson, Dunyang Li, Yasaman Pishvazadeh, Rebecca Schumer

Opening Act
Implementing Performance Measurement Tools at an NYC After-School Performing Arts Program

Opening Act is a free, after-school theater program operating in 33 underserved New York City public high schools. Opening Act requested assistance from a Capstone team to refine and implement a newly developed performance measurement system. After consulting subject matter experts, surveying stakeholders, and conducting best practice research, the team identified a series of refinements and additions that would improve the system. The team streamlined beginning and end-of-year student surveys, created systems for collecting school data, built a dashboard for displaying data and analyses, and wrote detailed instruction documents.
for implementation and use of the tools. The team aimed to leave Opening Act in a position to collect performance data accurately and efficiently, interpret and report on that data in a compelling and clear fashion, and train future staff members on the effective use of performance measurement tools.

Capstone Team: Miriam Altman, Ben Espinosa, Danielle Mindess, Diana Norton, Elizabeth Sewell

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

Bronx Council on the Arts
Developing a Sustainable Volunteer Program

Bronx Council on the Arts (BCA) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to encourage and increase public awareness and participation in the arts, and to nurture the development of artists and cultural organizations. BCA requested a Capstone team to assist in developing a formalized volunteer program. The Capstone team began by conducting an environmental scan, competitor analysis, and evaluation of successful volunteer programs, followed by the development and distribution of an extensive survey to internal members of BCA. The information was compiled, researched, and analyzed to produce a report of findings and recommendations which would assist BCA in establishing and implementing a volunteer program. The report’s recommendations will guide BCA in fulfilling their mission by assessing their image, increasing their brand, developing a successful recruitment plan, implementing marketing strategies, increasing fundraising, and selecting and training engaged volunteers.

Capstone Team: Rachel Cochran, Jackie Gerard, Lisa Maher, Julie Teague, Jacquelyn Ward

Career Gear
Strengthening the Management, Development and Programming Structures Necessary for a Nonprofit Organization’s Success

Career Gear is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping disadvantaged men obtain and maintain jobs by providing them with business-appropriate clothing, professional development counseling, and follow-up support to achieve self-sufficiency. At a pivotal point in its development, Career Gear requested a Capstone team to provide assistance with executing proper organizational development and management structures. The team first interviewed staff
members in order to provide a clear picture of the existing internal management structures. Additionally, the team observed programming and board meetings to clarify the scope and nature of Career Gear's services and needs. The information was then compiled, researched, and analyzed to produce a report of management tools, development models, and programming suggestions. These recommendations will assist Career Gear in the building of a sustainable financial path, a strong organizational structure, and ultimately drive the organization's success in fulfilling its mission.

Capstone Team: Hedieh Fakhriyazdi, Cynthia Fredericks, Molly Heffernan, Bin Hong Plume, Gabrielle Raymond

Footsteps
Volunteer Program Management and Engagement

Footsteps is an organization dedicated to providing services to those seeking to enter or explore a world beyond the ultra-Orthodox religious environment. Footsteps was seeking a Capstone team to assess the feasibility, provide recommendations, and develop resources for a newly structured volunteer program for their existing volunteer base. In order to do this, the Capstone team conducted both internal and external research on Footsteps and other organizations with volunteer programs. After completing the analysis, the team provided Footsteps with recommendations for structuring a volunteer program that best utilizes the skills of volunteers, motivates and retains passionate individuals, and creates systems that will help effectively manage and measure the impact their volunteer program has on their participants.

Capstone Team: Ari Berkowicz, Elizabeth Hoagland, Arlene Peralta, Brandi Womack

LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Developing a Human Resources Tool

LatinoJustice PRLDEF (LJP) is a national civil rights organization, founded in 1972, that focuses on defending the civil and human rights of Latino communities. The organization was seeking a formal method to objectively capture the experiences and viewpoints of its employees. The Capstone team was tasked with capturing this information to enable management to make informed decisions through the continuous feedback of its employees, thereby aiding in expansion efforts and the implementation of the organization's strategic plan. First, the team developed a Human Resources tool to gather employee information, which focused on internal communications, policies and procedures, mission alignment and impact, and employee self-assessment. Development of the tool was guided by insights from staff interviews, a SWOT and STEEP analysis, and an in-depth literature review related to organizational culture, communication, and human resource practices. Following the development phase, the team made recom-
recommendations on tool implementation and best practices.

Capstone Team: Lani Hart, Joy Lindsay, Jane Schuldiner, Kirsten Singleton, Kimberly Tortora

**Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty**

*How to Show Success: Developing Performance Measures for Anti-Poverty Programs*

The Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty (Met Council) is one of New York City’s largest human service agencies, providing thousands of New Yorkers with critical services and assistance in their fight against poverty. As part of an organizational effort to expand the way in which it presents its community-based work, the Capstone team helped create a set of performance metrics that measure the long-term benefits to Met Council’s clients. Working with Met Council staff, the team examined academic literature on performance measurement, and put together a set of measurements that could be used immediately by the Crisis Intervention and Housing programs. These indicators will be used by the organization when communicating with a variety of partners on the utility of their programs in fighting poverty. The team also provided Met Council with a framework that can be used moving forward when measuring other programs within the organization.

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**Repair the World**

*Improving Gender Imbalance in Volunteering*

Repair the World is a nonprofit organization dedicated to making service a defining element of American Jewish life, learning, and leadership. Repair the World is poised to move from grant making to program implementation, and has identified a gender disparity in volunteering as an obstacle to success, in both their own work and the service field at large. Repair the World commissioned the Capstone team to examine the current state of gender-based recruitment in order to develop a set of recommendations and best practices. The team conducted extensive research, both through a comprehensive literature review and a broad-spectrum of information-gathering interviews. The interviews focused on gender issues, participation in volunteering in religious and secular organizations, gender-based marketing, gender psychology, and identity development. Aside from the final report, the team created an outward-facing tool for use by Repair the World’s partners in improving gender balance in volunteerism.

Capstone Team: Richard David, Mary Farnsworth, Ian Hartman-O'Connell, Peter Nabozny, Shaina Weisbrot

Capstone Team: Alexander Bebeshko, Jessica Cavanagh-Melhado, Joy Elias, Karin Fleisch, Shawn Hegele
Advanced Projects in PNP Policy
FACULTY: CHARLES BRECHER

Citizens Union
New York City's Public-Private Partnerships

Despite their increasing prevalence in funding and guiding public policies, there has never been an attempt to thoroughly document the scope and universe of public-private partnerships in New York City. Citizens Union, a government watchdog group founded in 1897, raised concerns regarding the transparency and democratic accountability of these nonprofits. The Capstone team engaged in a three-step project. First, the team assembled a comprehensive inventory of nearly 200 public-private partnerships in New York City, including financial data over a three-year time period and information on their links to city government. Second, the team engaged in a case-study analysis of six specific public-private partnerships to gain a deeper understanding of their operations and their role in policymaking. Finally, the team made recommendations for improving the transparency and accountability of public-private partnerships, and limiting the potential for donors and political influences to create ethical conflicts.

Capstone Team: Madeline Labadie, Michael Leone, Daniel Lipsky-Karasz, Moneeza Maredia, Patrick McClellan

Community Voices Heard
Game-Changing Economic Development in Newburgh, NY

Community Voices Heard (CVH), an advocacy organization led by low-income people working to improve the lives of poor communities in Harlem, Newburgh, and Poughkeepsie, engaged the Capstone team to find game-changing economic development models that can reduce unemployment and improve affordable housing in Newburgh, NY. The team used two primary criteria in selecting prospective models. First, the models had to incorporate open, public, and participatory decision-making processes; and, the models had to directly benefit the low-income communities where CVH members reside. The team identified and investigated several viable models and strategies that were successfully implemented in other communities with the potential to be similarly applied to Newburgh. The team's final report outlined approaches such as anchor institution partnerships, renter equity systems, urban agriculture, and resident-led project development and ownership, and how they might be implemented in Newburgh, including specific action steps and funding sources to which CVH can refer.
Agora Partnerships is a nonprofit organization that works to accelerate the success of early-stage entrepreneurs in Latin America who are committed to solving social and environmental challenges. Agora’s main programming is an Impact Accelerator designed to give entrepreneurs the resources and network to become “investment ready.” As the impact investing market grows in the United States, there is demand from these entrepreneurs to access social, human, and financial capital. Having success in several countries in Latin America and domestic resources, Agora is considering bringing their Impact Accelerator model to the US market. The Capstone team was tasked to conduct an environmental scan of the US landscape with specific focus on social entrepreneurs, venture philanthropy,
entrepreneurial support entities, and funders. The research was then synthesized and analyzed to produce a report of findings and recommendations to inform Agora on growth strategy and internal capacity building necessary for entry into the US market.

Capstone Team: Christyne Angulo, David Kent, Kelli Payne, Juanjuan (Tina) Wang

**Mount St. Mary College, Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress, and the City of Newburgh, New York**

*Identifying Quality Assurance Best Practices in New York City Foster Care Provider Agencies*

In an effort to strengthen the infrastructure of the nonprofit community serving foster children in New York City, the Capstone team worked with the Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) to compare the strategic planning, quality improvement, and data management practices among a diverse set of agencies contracted by ACS to provide foster care services. The team gathered information from the agencies’ quality improvement and evaluation staff at leadership and team member levels and analyzed it in the context of a literature review of best practices in child welfare. The team summarized the practices in place and highlighted the elements that appeared to have the greatest effectiveness on performance improvement. Ultimately, the team made recommendations to ACS regarding ways the agency can foster implementation of
similar promising practices among all providers, including those with less sophisticated systems.

Capstone Team: Nicole Funderburk, Rebecca Rawlins, Elizabeth Sexton, Chantel Taylor

**New York City Human Resources Administration**

*Analyzing National Trends in Welfare Fraud Prosecutions, Evaluating Processes, and Developing a Toolkit for the Referral of Prosecutable Cases to District Attorneys*

Serving over three million New York City residents, the Human Resources Administration (HRA) is the largest social services department in the nation. Investigations, Revenue & Enforcement Administration (IREA) is the investigative arm of HRA, uncovering everything from prescription drug fraud to duplicate food stamp cases. Data shows that while the number of welfare recipients is climbing, prosecution of public benefits fraud is declining in NYC. The Capstone team was tasked with researching whether this data meant fewer recipients are committing fraud despite the increase in public assistance, or if the threshold for prosecution has become more lenient as a result of the economic downturn. Through surveys, interviews, and a literature review, the Capstone team tracked patterns in fraud prosecution across the country and compared NYC figures to national trends. The team also conducted a process evaluation of IREA’s district attorney referral system and created a resource guide to improve the quality of cases referred for prosecution.

Capstone Team: Amira El-Ghobashy, Michael Escosia, Myra Soto

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**Advanced Projects in PNP Policy and Management**

*FACULTY: ANA OLIVEIRA*

**The 52nd Street Project**

*Designing a System of Measurement and Management for a Community-Based Theater Program*

The 52nd Street Project (The Project) is a community-based arts organization that connects kids from the Hell’s Kitchen neighborhood with professional artists to create original theater productions. Facing increasing pressure from funders to demonstrate outcomes, The Project sought to track the development of the kids they serve, with a special focus on non-cognitive skills (for example, self-control and self-efficacy). The Capstone team held focus groups and interviews, and conducted an extensive literature review
to identify the appropriate metrics. The team identified a set of non-cognitive skills that are developed by The Project’s programming and also associated with long-term success, as grounded in social science research, and conducted best practice research to examine how other organizations measure the development of these skills. The team then developed valid and reliable tools for data collection, as well as an implementation plan for launching and maintaining the system of measurement.

Capstone Team: Megan Burke, Swati Kasat, Camille Lafayette

**New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence**

*Effectiveness and Comparative Analysis of New York State’s Domestic Violence Initiatives for State Employees*

The New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence was formed in 1992 in order to improve the State’s response to and prevention of domestic violence. In 2007, an Executive Order was issued by the Governor that set guidelines for Domestic Violence in the Workplace initiatives for state employees. This included training, communications materials, and protocols in place to help support state employees. Five years after the Executive Order was issued, the Capstone team implemented surveys of state employees and Domestic Violence in the Workplace liaisons in various state agencies in order to assess the efficacy of the Executive Order, as well as to make recommendations on information gathering and continued implementation of the policy. A comparative analysis of state policies across the country was conducted in order to make best practice recommendations and evaluate New York State’s policies on a national level.

Capstone Team: Zainab Ali, Steven Guy, Morgan Maclver, Alex Shapero

**Sauti Yetu Center for African Women**

*Defining and Demonstrating Purpose: Performance Measurement and Management*

Sauti Yetu (SY) is a community-based nonprofit in the South Bronx. Their Girls Empowerment and Leadership Initiative (GELI) aims to empower African immigrant girls through academic tutoring, facilitated peer connections, and holistic support. The Capstone team was asked to design a performance measurement and management system to allow SY to more effectively communicate GELI’s activities and outcomes to stakeholders. The team began by conducting secondary and primary research in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the program. With this research, the team created a logic model to serve as the foundation for GELI’s performance measurement system. Next, the team developed cultur-
ally competent indicators and measurement tools for GELI, designed a database for tracking program activities and outcomes, and provided orientation for SY staff in implementation and use of the system. Finally, the team presented SY with recommendations to strengthen their performance management system.

Capstone Team: Catherine Ang, Jessica Mowles, Malini Trivedi, Cora Weissbourd, Allison Wood

**Times Square Alliance**

*Developing a Performance Measurement Framework*

Times Square Arts, the public art program of the Times Square Alliance, presents leading contemporary art and performances to Times Square’s 400,000 daily visitors; cultivating the creativity, energy, and edge that has made Times Square a national icon. The Capstone team was engaged to develop a performance measurement framework in order for Times Square Arts to better evaluate its successes in the short- and long-term. The Capstone team first outlined the Times Square Arts theory of change; conducted an extensive literature review; interviewed the leaders of national and international public art programs, funders of public art, and key stakeholders; and through a process evaluation, developed a narrative for past art projects. The performance measurement framework will allow Times Square Arts to collect key information about its art projects and program impact, enhance strategic decision-making, bolster support, and paint a detailed picture of how to assist in fulfilling Times Square Alliance’s mission.

Capstone Team: Jessica Flynn, Gabriel Morales, Nicole Stratton

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**Advanced Projects in PNP Policy and Management: Governing with Technology**

**FACULTY: BETH NOVECK**

**Alfred P. Sloan Foundation**


The Capstone team partnered with the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, a philanthropic nonprofit institution, to identify areas where open data systems and collaborative arrangements via technology can add public value to the regulatory job of government agencies. The team first organized a design challenge similar to the New
York City “Reinvent Payphones Design Challenge,” wherein New York City residents collaborate to redesign payphones across the city. At the event, policy students, policymakers, regulators, and technology experts collaborated and brainstormed in order to design rating and reputation tools to complement and improve the regulation of illegal apartment conversions in New York City and interstate Chinese motorcoach companies. As a result, the team compiled a detailed report of the challenge’s findings, giving regulators insight into new, non-traditional approaches to the oversight and regulatory function of their agency.

Capstone Team: Elizabeth Buck, Tanja Hamilton, Vaughn Mayers, Noah Sheroff, Tina Spaic

**Delaware Department of State Division of Corporations and UK Companies House**

*Open Corporate Registration (opencorpdata.com)*

Delaware Department of State Division of Corporations and UK Companies House imagined a comprehensive and accurate global directory of information about public and private companies that regulators, investors, civil society, the media and researchers could easily and freely access and combine with other datasets to promote corporate accountability, economic growth, and the public interest. To advance this vision, the Capstone team was engaged by two of the world's leading company registers to investigate alternative business models (considering financial, technological, and political factors) to inform their consideration of how and why they might make the information they collect about business entities more freely accessible and open. The team interviewed experts and innovators in open data, other company registries, as well as current and potential users of company registry data, and leveraged social media to generate public dialogue among stakeholders. This research informed the final analysis and recommendations to both the Delaware Secretary of State Division of Corporations and the UK Companies House.

Capstone Team: Deborah Burke, Brandon Greenberg, Alexandros Hatzakis, Michael Swigert

**World Bank**

*Peer Reviewed Procurement*

Billions of dollars are expended each year through the procurement process by which governments and multi-national lending institutions acquire the goods and services needed to complete development projects. One of the most crucial components affecting procurement is the process by which technical specifications are developed. This is particularly true in procurement of products and services in tech-
nology-intensive markets, where technical specifications require greater diversity and depth of expertise in order to obtain the best possible solution. The World Bank engaged a Capstone team to assist in accessing expert knowledge and identify ways to improve the procurement process. The team designed and developed a process and policy for an open and collaborative public procurement process to foster identification, implementation, and scaling of innovative solutions to help The Bank achieve its mission of poverty reduction.

Capstone Team: Katherine Frew, Juan Pablo Giraldo, Rika Gorn, Kevin Hansen, Daniel Saat, Alexandra Skayne

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**Advanced Projects in PNP Finance and Policy**

**FACULTY: GEORGE SWEETING**

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**Myrtle Avenue Revitalization Project**

**Myrtle Avenue Plaza Maintenance and Programming**

The Myrtle Avenue Revitalization Project (MARP) faces budgeting maintenance and designing programming challenges for their soon-to-be-constructed plaza at Myrtle Avenue Brooklyn Business Improvement District (BID). The Capstone team was engaged to draft a detailed maintenance budget and a programming manual for the 20,000-square-foot pedestrian plaza. As a result, the team developed the budget with scenario analysis by reviewing materials from the Plaza’s public design workshops, physical plans, available kiosk proposals from other BIDs, and city regulations related to concession stands. Additionally, the team gathered programming ideas through a community survey on local merchants and residents, and conducted interviews with staff from other BIDs and Plaza Program staff at the NYC Department of Transportation. The team also explored sponsorship and other revenue generating opportunities to pay for programming and maintenance.

Capstone Team: Xiaolei Guo, Brian Levinson, Jiashuang Mu, Yen Pham

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**New York City Mayor’s Office of Operations**

**Unit Cost Reporting in New York City Government**

The New York City Mayor's Office of Operations aims to enhance the cost effectiveness of City agencies, and pub-
licly reports City agency performance data in the Mayor’s Management Report. The Capstone team analyzed the current use of agency unit cost performance data and developed recommendations to link budget and performance through unit cost indicators. The Capstone team first reviewed literature pertaining to performance measurement, unit cost, and cost accounting in government. An analysis of unit cost data generated by eleven agencies for the period 2003-2012 revealed a general upward trend in unit costs. A survey of these agencies at the management and analyst levels found that unit cost data are important for making budgetary decisions and are relatively less important for public reporting. Lastly, the Capstone team engaged a select group of agencies to improve the calculation and usefulness of unit cost indicators.

Capstone Team: Mac Cloyes, Yanjia Jiao, Lucas Koehler, Brian Math, Jiaying Yu

Washington, D.C.’s Office of the State Superintendent of Education

District of Columbia Special Education: Linking Financing to Outcomes

The Division of Special Education (DSE) in Washington, D.C.’s Office of the State Superintendent (OSSE) oversees special education within the D.C. Public Schools and Public Charter Schools. In 2011, D.C. adopted the Funding for Public Schools and Public Charter Schools Amendment Act, emphasizing transparency in special education spending. Concurrently, Mayor Vincent Gray introduced a new funding incentive focused on increasing special education programming, with a requirement for schools to report more detailed expenditures than in prior years. The DSE enlisted the Capstone team to examine how the funding incentive affected expenditures and special education student performance. The team compiled and analyzed special education Maintenance of Effort reports and No Child Left Behind student-level performance data to determine if reporting requirements were met, and to explore correlations between expenditures and student performance. Additionally, the team provided recommendations on data collection and performance measurement strategies that will allow OSSE to better determine causal relationships in the future.

Capstone Team: Chavon Edwards, Brian Footer, Chris Glorioso, Kristin Maidt, Milo Sybrant
Catholic Big Sisters and Big Brothers
_Evaluating and Planning for Expansion_

Catholic Big Sisters and Big Brothers (CBSBB) is a nonprofit organization that provides mentoring services to New York City’s children regardless of religious affiliation. The unique program focuses on strengthening each child’s entire family by providing family-focused counseling, skills building workshops, and one-to-one mentoring. CBSBB requested a Capstone team to evaluate three expansion options and develop an in-depth environmental scan for the most feasible option. The team researched and appraised the impact of current CBSBB programming, examined similar organizations in target communities, performed cost analyses for each option and evaluated the compatibility of CBSBB’s intensive program among different communities and demographics. Additionally, the team assessed the specific needs for mentoring services within the expansion zone, identified potential partnership organizations and provided recommendations for implementing expansion over the short- and long-term, including any adaptations to the current program that would increase the success of the expansion model.

Capstone Team: Elizabeth Fisher, Qinxin Huang, Cyril Morel, Lindsey Rhoten, Jessenia Rios

Child Mind Institute
_Development of a “Parent Excellence” Program_

Child Mind Institute (CMI), an organization dedicated to finding effective treatments for childhood psychiatric and learning disorders, requested a Capstone team to assist in the creation of a Parent Excellence Program (PEP). The team focused on understanding and exploring opportunities for CMI to become further involved in parent engagement. The team conducted an extensive literature review, interviews with executive administrators, and multiple surveys. The information collected demonstrated that families today look very different in terms of size, proximity, and diversity, compared to families a few decades ago. Additionally, the team discovered that societal factors such as social media, the sluggish economy, and the political landscape are also distinct to this generation. The team concluded that all of these factors have the potential to put a well-funded, evidence-based organization like CMI in a unique position to become the leader in parental education, and sup-
ported the creation of a PEP that incorporates these findings as an integral first step.

Capstone Team: Anne Gilberg, Tal Kapulnik, Daiva Kazdaileviciene, Kevin Sajdak

**Housing Works Thrift Shops**  
*Informing Strategic Decision-Making Through Sales and Staffing Data Analysis*

Housing Works, a nonprofit dedicated to helping those affected by HIV/AIDS, operates Thrift Shops around the New York City area. Housing Works requested the Capstone team to analyze existing sales, staffing, and customer survey data in order to inform its most pressing strategic decisions including upcoming shop lease expiration, fluctuating staffing levels, and pressure to continue growing. The team visited and analyzed Housing Works’ Product Distribution Center, which sorts and distributes all clothing donations, and made recommendations for how it might change or improve current practices in order to increase profitability and reduce overhead cost. By incorporating research about changes in consumer preferences, the unstable economic environment, and wealth density in the Thrift Shops’ respective neighborhoods, the team worked to produce a comprehensive presentation and Executive Summary report outlining analyses and recommendations to be employed by the Thrift Shops’ senior management and Board of Directors.

Capstone Team: Valerie Boileau, Molly Goodwin, Rachel Hodes, Tiffany Tribbitt

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**Advanced Projects in Health Policy and Management**  
*FACULTY: CHARLES BRECHER AND JOHN DONNELLAN*

**Bronx Community Health Network**  
*The Emergency Department as the Front Door to Care in the Bronx*

The Bronx Community Health Network (BCHN) is a nonprofit organization and federally qualified health center that sponsors fifteen community and school-based health centers in the Bronx. The health centers are owned and operated by Montefiore Medical Center and Acacia/Promesa Systems.

At one site, Montefiore’s Weiler Hospital Emergency Department, BCHN funds a Patient Liaison who runs BCHN’s Emergency Department Diversion Program. The Patient Liaison works to prevent unnecessary readmission to the emergency department (ED) by connecting patients to primary care at BCHN health centers. The Capstone team conducted a program evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the ED Diversion program.
and to explore the drivers that continue to bring patients to the ED for non-emergent care and primary care. The team accomplished this by conducting a comprehensive literature review, interviewing key stakeholders, coordinating patient focus groups, and analyzing secondary data.

Capstone Team: Matthew Beyrouty, Michelle Gersten, Kalese House, Courtney McBride, Shaina Siegel

**Bronx Community Health Network Strategic Planning**

The Bronx Community Health Network (BCHN) is a federally qualified health center that sponsors fifteen community and school-based health centers. Since BCHN’s last strategic planning effort in 2007, the organization expanded their network of centers and adapted to significant changes in the health care environment. In response to these developments, BCHN commissioned the Capstone team to update its strategic plan to reflect the organization’s progress and evolving goals. The team conducted an in-depth literature review of health center regulations, the Affordable Care Act, and best practices in community-based medicine and outreach. The team also conducted a SWOT analysis with BCHN senior leadership and interviewed health center staff, government officials, policy experts, community-based organizations, and other key stakeholders. All research was synthesized into a final report of recommendations to help BCHN expand and strengthen their network partnerships, improve patient care, and advance the health of the Bronx community in the next five years.

Capstone Team: Arooba Alam, Noah Isaacs, Amy A. Lee, Rachel Pardoe, Todd Pinkus

**Mercy Home for Children Using Performance Measurement to Improve Sustainability**

The Capstone team worked with Mercy Home for Children, a Brooklyn nonprofit serving the developmentally disabled, to enhance their ability to sustain current and obtain new program funding sources. The team first conducted individual interviews with organization program staff to determine current practices in performance measurement; identified current best practices and metrics through an extensive literature review; and created program logic models with indicators for comprehensive metrics. In addition, the team identified key recommendations to improve Mercy Home’s internal capacity to manage performance measurement of their current and future programs. A key recommendation included the investment and adoption of performance measurement software to create reports and dashboards specific to funders and stakeholders. These results will be used to aid Mercy Home in developing specific strategies to
strengthen their approach to proving successful program performance history and impact.

Capstone Team: Scott Donohue, Jennifer Karr, Candy Magana, Katie Magoon

New York Civil Liberties Union

Impact of a Medicaid Managed Care Model on Vulnerable Populations in NY State

The New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) is one of the nation's leading defenders of civil liberties and civil rights. The NYCLU requested a Capstone team to help analyze and evaluate the New York State's new model for the delivery of Medicaid services to persons with disabilities. The research began with an analysis of existing models in New York State for the delivery of services to vulnerable populations, systems and procedures of oversight and accountability regarding quality of care; identification of significant challenges and risks posed by New York State's managed care initiatives through a series of interviews with stakeholders; and identification of best practices to promote favorable outcomes. These analyses provided a basis for recommendations to the NYCLU on policies and practices for delivering care to the focus populations, as well as oversight and accountability measures that promote favorable outcomes.

NYU-HHC Clinical and Translational Science Institute

Evaluation and Strategic Planning

The Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) was created as a joint five-year collaboration between New York University (NYU) and the Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) to “provide an integrated home for the advancement of collaborative translational science for the benefit of our patients, our community and the population at large.” The Capstone team's goal was to evaluate the effectiveness of the NYU-HHC CTSI in propelling translational research forward, with the ultimate goal of successful federal funding renewal from the NIH. The team evaluated the eight existing CTSI programs by first defining measures for success, followed by interviews with key program stakeholders, an analysis of existing data, and evaluation of other program-specific projects. The team synthesized these findings into a comprehensive summary report that will assist the CTSI in its efforts to further its mission to foster innovative research and discovery.

Capstone Team: Vitaly Chibisov, Andrew Felder, Lana Chung Lim, Alexandra Meis, Katie Schliessman

Capstone Team: Alexander Habib, Karah Newton, Clara Park, Molly Beth Somberg
United States Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
*Physician Organization Concerns Regarding the 2010 Affordable Care Act*

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency within the United States Department of Health and Human Services, expressed interest in understanding the controversy among physician opinion and perception regarding the recently passed Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA). CMS recruited the Capstone team to complete a thorough analysis of opinions from select physician organizations within CMS Region II. The team first conducted an online investigation of physician organization position statements and published quotes from organization officials, and also took part in CMS-led provider calls and educational sessions. The team then prepared a written analysis focused on research of key issues of the ACA and the correlating, dissenting, or lacking physician organization opinions. Finally, the team presented a concise document that outlined the top concerns of the physician organizations, as well as recommendations on physician organization education.

Capstone Team: Alexandra Cohen, Jessica Goldman, Polina Miklush, Christopher Nolan, Gunjan Srivastava

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Advanced Projects in Health Services Management and Finance
**FACULTY: AMY GOLDMAN AND ROGER KROPF**

**FEGS**
*Improving Data Collection Methods at FEGS to Optimize Efficiency*

Founded in 1934, FEGS is one of the largest and most diverse nonprofit health and human services organizations in the US. FEGS Behavioral Health Division, responsible for tracking and submitting financial and statistical information to outside funding agencies, engaged a Capstone team to assist with its data management. The team was tasked with automating the data collection system for one of the programs that used manual record keeping, and performing an analysis of the Division’s staffing models. The team recommended an improved data collection system, defined the proposed process and changes in user roles, and developed proper training for all users focusing specifically on FEGS’ LINK program. The tool created aimed to be user-friendly, streamline communications, meet organizational expectations, and create accountability. Additionally, after analyzing the current staffing model and service delivery infrastructure, the team made recommen-
Maimonides Medical Center
Policies for the Public Communication Department

Maimonides Medical Center is one of the largest teaching hospitals in the US, ranked in the top five percent nationwide for clinical performance. The employees of the Public Communication Department are typically the first point of contact for patients and visitors. The department leadership sought to ensure a consistent level of high-quality customer service by codifying a set of policies and procedures to manage all incoming public communications, while setting clear expectations and accountability for the staff. The Capstone team observed two hospital front desks and the telephone operator station in order to capture the types of issues that arise and establish best practices for managing them. The team analyzed their findings against hospital-wide policies to establish a practical set of departmental policies. The team created an employee handbook and electronic version for ease of use. These policies will be used to improve performance and accountability within the Department of Public Communication.

NYCRx
The impact of 340B in NY

The nonprofit organization NYCRx assists entities that are eligible for the 340B Federal Discount Drug Program in implementing and managing the 340B programs in New York. As part of recent NY Medicaid redesign, NY State has allowed 340B entities to optionally carve Medicaid managed care prescription coverage into 340B. The goal of the Capstone team was to provide NYCRx with recommendations for how stakeholders can best leverage the benefits of the program. The Capstone team completed a literature review, conducted a questionnaire which assesses the benefits of 340B to member clinics, and used pharmacy data provided by NYCRx to model various cost sharing structures. The results can be used to aid NYCRx in its communication with 340B entities and to inform policy stakeholders of the impact of the carve-in on the entities involved. Being the first study of its kind, the findings have the potential to influence health policy decisions nationally.

Capstone Team: Mihai Mielnik, Benjamin Yockey, Michael Hsieh, Cheryl Jordan, Megan Kelly, Amanda Magli, Lucia Sarita
Palladia

Medicaid Redesign and Palladia’s Value Proposition

Palladia is a large multi-service agency nationally recognized for innovative service delivery in the fields of substance abuse, homelessness, HIV/AIDS, mental illness, trauma, domestic violence, criminal justice, and family services. The Capstone team worked with Palladia to identify their unique value proposition as they negotiate business agreements with the major behavioral healthcare insurance companies covering Medicaid Managed Care enrollees in Harlem and the South Bronx. In the changing healthcare environment, all Medicaid members will be covered with a Medicaid Managed Care plan provided by private healthcare insurance companies contracted through the state. The Capstone team was charged with analyzing current quantitative and qualitative data that Palladia collects about its services’ efficacy in order to provide Palladia, and ultimately their healthcare insurance colleagues, with a clear sense of Palladia’s superior, cost-effective services. The team interviewed payors, providers, and consultants to ascertain the priorities in this area of service provision.

Capstone Team: Daniel Bunger, Deirdre Byrne, Jamie Herskovits, Ebony Wiresinger, Hui Zhang

Transitional Services for New York

Preparing Fiscal Operations for Growth

The Capstone team worked with leadership and staff of Transitional Services for New York (TSINY), a nonprofit providing community based services to individuals with mental disabilities, to conduct a complete overview of the organization’s fiscal department. With the information gathered, the team created an excel-based labor analytics tool, which will allow management to understand the needs of the department, given varying levels of expected growth over the next several years. In order to gather the appropriate information, the team first conducted several site visits and interviewed employees at all levels of the organization. Additionally, the team distributed a survey to TSINY’s peer organizations in the NY-Metro area to understand their level of staffing and resource utilization. Lastly, the team conducted a survey of staff level employees at TSINY and analyzed volume and payroll data. Based on this information, the team will help senior leadership fully understand the current state of the fiscal department, including the appropriateness of its current staffing and needs, in light of anticipated growth.

Capstone Team: Gregory Bennett, David Brody, Alice Ka Man Cheng, Akriti Mehta, Maureen Namawejje
William F. Ryan Community Health Center

*Patient Portal Roll-Out at the William F. Ryan Community Health Center: How to Improve Usage*

The William F. Ryan Community Health Center (Ryan Center) is a Federally Qualified Health Center providing care to low-income and underserved patients throughout Manhattan. The Ryan Center recently added a portal for patients to access health records electronically, and is evaluating ways to improve patient activation and engagement. The Capstone team’s project was to evaluate contributing factors to patient portal participation, and make recommendations for portal functions and rollout. The team first assembled patient focus groups to discuss portal accessibility, features, and suggestions for improvement. The results of these focus groups led to the development of survey questions distributed to a wider patient population. Similar survey questions were asked to physicians and providers at the Ryan Center. As a result of this project, the Ryan Center will be able to improve portal features; develop a strategy to increase usage, patient adherence, and the average acuity of in-person health visits; and be closer to meeting federal “meaningful use” standards.

Capstone Team: Natalie Barragan, Errol Pierre, Chetan Prabhudesai, Lesley Slade, Lisa Tran

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Advanced Projects in Urban Planning

FACULTY: KEI HAYASHI AND STEVEN JACOBS

**Enterprise Community Partners**

*Healthy Food Access Project*

Enterprise Community Partners is a national nonprofit organization that provides expertise and financing for affordable housing development for low and moderate income families. Enterprise recently developed the Green Communities Criteria, a points-based system that provides a framework and resources to build environmentally friendly, affordable homes. In New York City, all HPD-funded housing development projects are required to comply with the Criteria. The Access to Fresh, Local Food option of the Criteria allows developers to earn points for implementing a food access model into a residential development, which includes: community gardens or urban farms, farmers’ markets, and community supported agriculture. The Capstone team created a toolkit to guide developers through the decision making process of each food access model and tested the toolkit in a
real-life simulation with a Community Development Corporation. The toolkit identifies the benefits and challenges of each food access model and provides resources to connect developers with experts in the field.

Capstone Team: Sarah Gastelum, Joshua Langham, Katie Lyon, Dani Rosen

**Made in Lower East Side**

*Business Development for Social Enterprise*

Made in Lower East Side (miLES) is an emerging social enterprise that seeks to connect New York City creatives to short-term rentals in the Lower East Side (LES) neighborhood of Manhattan. Taking advantage of the vast amount of empty storefront space in the area, miLES offers landlords the possibility of filling their vacant space with exciting activities in spaces that would otherwise be unoccupied. The Capstone team was charged with assisting in the primary stages of business development. First, the team conducted a benchmarking examination of organizations with structures similar to miLES’, inventoried vacant storefronts in the LES, identified potential landlords for the organization to reach out to, and ultimately developed a series of pitch books for miLES to use when reaching out to landlords.

**McCormack Baron Salazar**

*Developing Affordable Housing with EB-5*

The Capstone team worked with McCormack Baron Salazar (MBS), a leading national developer of low- and mixed-income housing, to ascertain the viability of securing funding from the EB-5 immigrant investor program to urban residential development. The EB-5 program, administered by the United States Customs and Immigration Service, awards permanent residence visas to immigrants and their families in exchange for qualifying investments in job-creating enterprises. A number of real-estate projects have begun to use the program in recent years, but the job creation requirements – 10 jobs per $500,000 investment – have inhibited widespread adoption by developers of residential properties. The team performed extensive research into the legal and regulatory context of the EB-5 program, investigating compatibility with MBS’ business model through a series of interviews with developers and intermediaries. Project results included recommendations on how MBS can administer, structure, and attract EB-5 financing for specific upcoming development projects.

Capstone Team: Tony Berkel, Peter Donohue, Ben Hagen, Anish Patel, Ryan White
South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation
Brownfield Opportunity Area Grant

The South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (SoBRO) is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the South Bronx through social and economic revitalization strategies targeted at low-income communities. In an effort to redevelop 48-acres of underutilized and contaminated parcels of land in the Soundview section of the Bronx, SoBRO tasked the Capstone team with preparing a pre-nomination report for New York State’s Brownfield Opportunity Area community visioning planning grant. The grant will allow SoBRO to better understand the opportunities and challenges of redeveloping this post-industrial section of the Bronx. The Capstone team conducted extensive data collection, site analyses, and stakeholder outreach to produce an existing conditions report with recommendations for the highest and best use of vacant land in the study area. Based on the findings, the Capstone team also created a preliminary site design of the area.

Capstone Team: Alexandra Derian, Erik Howard George, Alan Lightfeldt, Sumaila Palla, Abigail Pick

Advanced Projects in Urban Planning
FACULTY: MICHAEL KEANE AND CLAIRE WEISZ

Institute for Rational Urban Mobility
The Reactivation of Queensway

The Institute for Rational Urban Mobility (IRUM) was seeking to reactivate four-miles of railroad track running through central Queens. The plan called for a track reactivation design solution and the creation of a direct connection from the Midtown Manhattan Central Business District to JFK International Airport. IRUM requested a Capstone team to conduct extensive research on reactivating the line and to produce several recommendations for a plan that incorporated both a restored railway and greenway for active recreational use. The plan analyzed airport traffic, subway and train use, construction and operating costs, and economic and environmental impacts of the project. If implemented, the final plan will keep New York City competitive with cities such as London, Hong Kong, and San Francisco, while providing a beautiful public amenity to the residents and visitors to Queens.

Capstone Team: Scott Hobbs, Hang Huynh, Gabriel Kleinfeld, Daniel Simoes
New York City Department of Transportation
Assessment of Freight Consolidation Methodologies in Midtown Manhattan

New York City Department of Transportation’s (NYCDOT) Office of Freight Mobility works to improve the efficiency and sustainability of freight movement throughout the City. A Capstone team was engaged to identify how consolidation centers can benefit the city’s freight system by accepting large truck deliveries and then distributing goods via smaller, more efficient and sustainable vehicles for the “last mile” of travel. The team examined the existing state of the practice by identifying the challenges/barriers for consolidation in NYC, specifically in Midtown and Downtown. Additionally, the team analyzed effective models in other cities to provide examples of success and failures. Focusing on the area within the Grand Central Partnership as a potential pilot, the final report included data collected through surveys, interviews, and onsite observations about freight operations. Finally, the team used these findings to make specifically tailored policy recommendations for accommodating freight consolidation within Midtown and Downtown Manhattan.

Capstone Team: Alejandra Rangel Smith, Daniel Suraci, Chris Whong

Rockaway Waterfront Alliance
Planning for a Resilient Rockaways

The Rockaway Waterfront Alliance (RWA) partners with local residents and youth to revitalize and protect the Rockaway waterfront. The Capstone team worked with RWA to develop a comprehensive plan for the area between Beach 32nd Street and Beach 54th Street. The majority of this area has remained vacant and blighted for decades, and represents one of the last large areas of undeveloped land in New York City. The arrival of Superstorm Sandy in the fall of 2012 illustrated the region’s vulnerability to extreme natural events, and the need to reexamine traditional models of coastal development. By conducting fieldwork research, examining case studies, interviewing stakeholders, and holding a community planning charrette, the team created a plan focused on strengthening the environmental, economic, and social resilience of the eastern end of the Rockaway Peninsula. The plan provides RWA and the site developer with a framework of community-based and locally sensitive recommendations.

Capstone Team: Alda Chan, Sa Liu, Jonathan McGrath, Rossana Tudo, Kathleen Walczak
Vision Long Island

Analysis of Proposed Downtown Hicksville Rezoning

Vision Long Island (VLI) is a nonprofit organization that works with Long Island communities to promote more livable, economically sustainable, and environmentally responsible growth. The organization has been working closely with local stakeholders in Hicksville, NY for the past three years to develop a vision plan to revitalize its downtown through zoning changes and public investments that would promote development. The goal of the plan is to rezone the area around Hicksville’s transit hub, creating pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, a mix of housing types, and an attractive downtown retail and office center. VLI requested a Capstone team to conduct an economic analysis to assess the implications of the plan if it were to be implemented. The Capstone team’s retail market analysis and fiscal impact analysis findings assessed whether a market for retail expansion existed within the downtown area, and whether tax revenues generated from such development outweighed expenditures.

Capstone Team: Patrick Cammack, Carson Qing, Jeremy Safran, Evan Tousey

Advanced International Projects

FACULTY: PAUL SMOKE

Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

Decentralization, Housing Provision, and Spatial Form in Cape Town

The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy is a leading resource for key issues concerning the use, regulation, and taxation of land. The Institute engaged the Capstone team to build on a previously conducted overview assessment of metropolitan governance, finance, and service delivery in Cape Town, South Africa. The team first conducted field research in Cape Town, focusing on how city institutions respond to the challenges of rapid urbanization, particularly in the provision and spatial configuration of housing and related services. The team used field interviews and secondary research to document current patterns and mechanisms for service delivery to identify key constraints being encountered, and to review priorities and options for improving the present situation. Adding to a growing body of Lincoln Institute work on the challenges of metropolitan government, the final report will be made available as a resource for scholars and practitioners interested in local public governance and finance.
Capstone Team: Juan Nicolas Galarza, Ronnie Hutchinson, Patrick Lamson-Hall, Prachee Mishra

Municipal Development Partnership for Eastern and Southern Africa
Assessment of Public-Private Partnerships in Wakiso, Uganda

Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) are a relatively new means of service delivery in Uganda and have mostly occurred in the form of large, national-level projects. Recently, local governments have explored the potential of partnerships in order to provide better services to their residents. To help facilitate local governments in developing these partnerships, the Municipal Development Partnership for Eastern and Southern Africa (MDP-ESA) requested a Capstone team to conduct a baseline study of Wakiso Town in Uganda and to assess needs and capacity issues specific to the town. The team interviewed several key stakeholders to identify issues, opportunities, and problems, and prepared recommendations to MDP-ESA and the Wakiso town council by outlining ways to increase capacity for more effective use of PPPs in the future.

Capstone Team: James Dreiling, Mmakgantsi Mafojane, Brett Mons

The proposed Sub-National Investment Facility (SNIF) is a project-based financing facility to be made available to sub-national administrations at the provincial, district, and commune levels to support sustainable investments in local infrastructure and economic development. Working with the National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development (NCDD), the Capstone team produced a comparative case study analysis of the existing sub-national infrastructure finance mechanisms in five developing countries; conducted field research with staff from various central government ministries and international development institutions to identify political, legal, and capacity considerations important for designing and implementing the SNIF; and developed a set of policy options and recommendations regarding the legal status, governance structure, financing models, and project criteria for the NCDD to consider in moving forward with defining and establishing the SNIF.

Capstone Team: Olajumoke Ayandele, Matthew Tschabold, Nary Ung

National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development
Options for Designing a Sub-National Investment Facility for Cambodia

United Cities and Local Governments
Governing and Managing the Delivery of Local Basic Services in Africa

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) is an international organization that represents and defends the interests of local governments on the world stage. The Global Observatory on Local
Democracy and Decentralization (GOLD) was launched by UCLG in 2006 as part of its objective to become a main source of information on local self-government, local authorities, governance, local democracy, and the exchange of know-how. The Capstone team supported UCLG’s Africa Section on the third GOLD report (GOLD III), providing an analysis of service delivery and local governance in various cities of Africa, with particular focus on Accra, Ghana and Kampala, Uganda. The team collected data and conducted interviews with local government officials in Accra and Kampala. The GOLD III report will offer policy recommendations on strengthening local governments’ ability to meet their responsibilities for providing basic services: water, sanitation, solid waste management, public transport, and electricity.

Capstone Team: Daniel Boyer, Maria del Carmen Garcia Maldonado, Justin Kreamer, Jonathan Wang

United Nations Capital Development Fund
Supporting the Local Development Academy

United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the UN’s capital investment agency for the world’s least developed countries, supports the development of finance institutions for poor households and small business, as well as local government finance mechanisms for capital investments that decrease poverty. In an effort to make information on local development more easily and widely accessible, UNCDF requested a Capstone team to assist with the development of its new initiative, the Local Development Academy (LDA), a web-based “knowledge-center” for local governments, individuals, and institutions involved in local development. UNCDF asked the team to help generate a conceptual review of the LDA and to assist with content research. The team organized a workshop with leading local development academics and assembled information on academic and professional literature on a wide range of topics relevant for local development. The team presented findings and recommendations to UNCDF on the LDA conceptual design, content, and user-friendliness.

Capstone Team: Sekou M. Sheriff, Mariah Yan Zhao

World Bank
Promoting Sustainable Urban Land Use, Governance, and Service Provision in Ho Chi Minh City

The Capstone team was engaged to identify best practice examples in East and South Asia, and develop in-depth case studies to address metropolitan and regional strategic planning in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC), Vietnam. The team reviewed academic and professional literature and participated in the discussion on the
World Bank Integrated Strategy Note on Urban Planning, Infrastructure and Municipal Finance prepared for the HCMC government. The team then wrote a background memo on metropolitan planning and management for HCMC with a focus on three topics: governance and planning, service provision (transportation, water, and sanitation), and municipal finance. In order to further address metropolitan and regional strategic planning in HCMC, the team assisted in a collaboration between the Regional Plan Association in New York, which included preparing briefing notes and participating in the RPA Annual meeting in New York City.

Capstone Team: Emily Olson, Christina Seybolt

World Bank and National Council for Education Development

Involving Municipalities in the Delivery of Education Programs in Mexico. GEMUN: An Experiment in Education Delegation

CONAFE, a federal institution created in 1971, seeks to generate greater education-access and increase retention/achievements in marginalized localities in Mexico. In order to advance the cooperative federalism approach to public service delivery, CONAFE designed GEMUN to involve municipalities in planning and implementing programs through the experimentation with contractual delegation arrangements. The Capstone team conducted interviews with key stakeholders involved in the administration of GEMUN at the national, state, and municipal levels to understand their perceptions of the nature and scope of the experiment. After compiling the interview data, the team drafted a report documenting the perceptions of the different stakeholders, the extent to which GEMUN is achieving institutional and sectoral development results, and the gap between the original concept and its actual implementation on the ground. The report was jointly commissioned by CONAFE and the World Bank as part of efforts to evaluate and revise the program’s design.

Capstone Team: Marisa Casellas, Kathryn Charlie Frisbie, Johanna Paine
Advanced International Projects
FACULTY: CHARLES BAILEY AND DAVID WINDER

Academy of Responsible Management
Assessment of Corporate Social Responsibility in the Philippines

The Philippines has a history of philanthropic giving, particularly from large privately owned Filipino organizations. Today, many organizations have evolved from simple philanthropy to embedding Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) into their business models. However, there is room for improvement and gaps remain where needs exist. Although many Filipino organizations include multiple and diverse CSR programs, CSR training is necessary, specifically to induce systemic impacts within the triple bottom line: social, environmental, and financial outcomes. The Academy of Responsible Management (ARM) based in Malaysia engaged the Capstone team to research the existing CSR climate, programs, and training gaps in CSR, specific to Filipino organizations, in order to identify present and future CSR program and training needs. Through desk research, in-country interviews, and a current conditions profile, the team created a gap analysis and conducted a needs assessment to aid ARM in identifying training capacity in the Philippines.

Capstone Team: Moazah Ahmed, Cara Lacey, Bing Luo, Katie Sagan, Melanie Ziu

East Meets West Foundation
Assessing Fund Use and Tutoring in the SPELL Program: A Case Study of Three Provinces

East Meets West (EMW) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to transforming the health, education, and communities of disadvantaged people in Asia by building partnerships, developing opportunities, and creating sustainable solutions. In central Vietnam, more than 900 students are enrolled in EMW’s Scholarship Program to Enhance Literacy and Learning (SPELL), which provides underprivileged students with funding for general school expenses, room and board, bikes, and supplemental tutoring. Currently, the program no longer accepts new students at the high school level; EMW is concerned with declining student achievement and program implementation. The Capstone team traveled to Vietnam to administer surveys and conduct focus groups and interviews with local partners, school administrators, parents, and nearly 500 students in 22 schools across three provinces. After compiling the data, the team recommended improvements to the program implementation structure and funding process, and highlighted the importance of tutoring funds in relation to students’ academic success.
Foundation Rwanda
Identifying Holistic Needs of Children Born of Genocidal Rape in Rwanda

Founded in 2008, Foundation Rwanda (FR) is a nonprofit organization that supports children born from rape committed during the 1994 genocide. While FR originally focused on financing education, the organization currently seeks to expand its work by providing more holistic support to these children and their caregivers. The Capstone team conducted qualitative research to identify the needs of FR’s beneficiaries and identified services that will enhance the target population’s academic achievement and enrich their daily lives. The team’s final report includes projected costs for holistic service packages and a strategy for offering FR’s beneficiaries greater access to economic empowerment opportunities as well as physical and psychological care.

Capstone Team: Priscilla Addison, Eras Chong, Laura Roberts, Alyson Wise, Shalane Yuen

Global Goods Partners
Strengthening Fair Trade Monitoring and Evaluation Approaches

Global Goods Partners (GGP) is a nonprofit organization and certified fair trade retailer whose mission is to improve the social and economic well-being of women artisans around the world. Working with 30 community-based organizations in 18 countries, GGP helps generate income and provides capacity building grants to strengthen partners’ businesses and support sustainable community development. The Capstone team worked with GGP to revise its annual partner survey and enhance its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework. By revising the survey, GGP would obtain a clearer sense of partners’ needs and progress, better allocate resources, strengthen partner relationships, and improve marketing strategies. The team began by visiting GGP partner organizations in Cambodia and India to interview artisans and staff. In addition, the team conducted domestic interviews with organizations and experts in the fields of M&E and fair trade. A final report was compiled documenting research findings and recommendations for GGP’s M&E framework.

Capstone Team: Yaz Abellard, Leela Bhashyam, Megan Johnston, Gabriella Lewin, Daphne Philip
Local Government Unit of Libon, Albay Province, Philippines
Effectively Targeting Public Health Intervention

The Local Government Unit of Libon (LGU) recently incorporated an electronic medical records system to better serve its constituents. The Capstone team was requested to provide recommendations for using this system to guide public health policy at the municipal level. The team designed a multi-stakeholder interview process to assess community health perceptions and used municipal public health data to identify areas of focus. After studying international best practices, case studies of similar contexts, and international public health targets, the team constructed a guide outlining high-value strategies to target and enact public health policies. The completed guide consists of recommendations that will help the LGU effectively use its limited public health budget to best meet the needs of its constituents in light of the real-time data stream provided by the new electronic medical records system and existing regional and national health priorities.

Capstone Team: Sean Brooks, Vivek Jayaraman, Clayton Maring, Victoria Rodriguez

World Connect
Refining World Connect’s Strategic Approach to Grant-Making

World Connect is a nonprofit that gives micro-grants to empower grassroots community organizations to improve health, environment, and employment opportunities for women and youth. World Connect is at a critical juncture in its development, seeking funds from larger institutional donors to scale impact. The organization requested a Capstone team to evaluate their current grant-making process and priorities. First, field visits to Costa Rica and Peru were conducted to gain a better understanding of World Connect’s partnership with the Peace Corps and local community partners. Staff, Peace Corps Volunteers, local project leaders, community leaders, and project beneficiaries were then interviewed to form a clearer picture of World Connect’s current strategy. This information was compared to industry leaders within different sub-sets of the international development market, resulting in various recommended paths World Connect could take as it shifts current fundraising and communications strategies to target a wider range of donors.

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FACULTY: KATHERINE BOURNE AND STEVEN SCHALL

Amend
*Human Resources Development*

Amend is a US-based international non-profit organization dedicated to reducing the epidemic of road traffic injuries in Africa. In order to achieve its mission, Amend’s current services include primary school road safety education programs, advocacy campaigns, and scientific research. Now at a critical point in their organizational expansion, Amend requested a Capstone team to create guidance to improve Amend’s ability to recruit and manage current and future staff. The Capstone team reviewed literature on human resource norms and best practices; conducted interviews and focus group discussions with Amend’s management and staff in Tanzania; and interviewed Tanzanian peer organizations. The team then synthesized the information and produced a Human Resources Manual as well as a guide for its implementation.

Capstone Team: Omoruyi Aigbe, Jordan M. Calhoun, Ozge Gunay, Michael M. Kuir

Counterpart International
*Evaluation of Ethiopian Sustainable Tourism Alliance*

Counterpart International is a nonprofit organization focused on building sustainable communities around the globe. In 2008, Counterpart International began implementation of the Ethiopian Sustainable Tourism Alliance (ESTA), enhancing regional biodiversity conservation and economic development through the development of sustainable tourism products and activities. Counterpart International engaged the Capstone team in order to help the organization better articulate the ways in which the program has been successful in meeting its intended goals. The team first evaluated literature on ESTA activities, outputs, and relevant indicators in order to identify remaining questions about the impact of the program, potentially scalable aspects, and any overlap with similar programs worldwide. The team then traveled to Ethiopia to interview key stakeholders, program beneficiaries, and NGO partners; consequently, producing a report evaluating the ESTA intervention. The report highlighted successful outcomes of program activities, offered recommendations on compelling programmatic themes, and
pinpointed scalable aspects for future eco-
tourism interventions.

Capstone Team: Alisa Cordesius, Elizabeth
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Planned Parenthood Global
Program Evaluation for Planned
Parenthood Global's Youth Peer Provider
Model

Since the early 1990s, Planned Parenthood
Global (PP Global) has developed the
Youth Peer Provider (YPP) model to train
young people to provide contraceptives as
well as sexual and reproductive health
information to their peers. PP Global
requested the support of a Capstone team
to carry out an evaluation of its YPP pro-
gram, implemented by the Luisa Amanda
Espinoza Association of Nicaraguan
Women. The team designed an evaluation
plan, created relevant tools, collected
data, and analyzed evaluation data from
the field in Nicaragua. Data collected by
the team and program staff included self-
reported knowledge and behavior among
program participants and non-partici-
pants, program records, and program
implementation information. The team
analyzed both quantitative and qualitative
data collected from the sites in Nicaragua
through interviews, record review, and
surveys. The team delivered a formal
research report, a presentation, and
memo of additional findings to PP Global.

Capstone Team: Brian Lutz, Maha Mahmoud,
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Scholars at Risk Network
Where Are They Now? SAR Program
Analysis & Evaluation

Scholars at Risk (SAR) is an international
network of institutions and individuals work-
ing to promote academic freedom and to
defend the human rights of scholars world-
wide. Founded in 2001, SAR is now at an
inflection point in both its scale and services.
The Capstone team executed an online sur-
vey with more than 200 scholars participat-
ing, and conducted in-depth interviews with
selected self-identified scholars. The gath-
ered data was used to evaluate the impact
and satisfaction level of services rendered
over the past 12 years and will be used to
refine services and selection criteria, as well
as to develop targeted candidate profiles.
The project examined the experiences and
outcomes associated with scholars who
received different levels of service and pro-
duced results that will serve as a primary
supportive tool in facilitating additional pro-
gram partnerships and will enable SAR to
significantly increase capacity and the num-
ber of scholars served by 2017.

Capstone Team: Katherine Bleich, Claudia
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United Methodist Committee on Relief
Assessment of Hospital Sustainability and Donor Relations

United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) provides community-based health programs, operating within the infrastructure of United Methodist hospitals and clinics across 80 countries. Currently, one main challenge for United Methodist Church (UMC) leadership, governance, board, and staff is to track and assess financial and operational activities of hospitals and clinics. The Capstone team developed and implemented a framework to assess the financial and operational viability of four health facilities in Sierra Leone. This framework informed various recommendations for internal sustainability of these health facilities within the UMC network. The Capstone team also produced policies and guidelines for new donors, dedicated donors, mission coordinator volunteers, and UMC Health Boards to prioritize hospital funding allocations. While the project focused on the context of UMC facilities in post-conflict Sierra Leone, the assessment framework and recommendations are adaptable for use by the greater UMCOR health network in order to promote greater sustainability.

Capstone Team: Alisa Ahmadian, Heather Chadwick, Hilda Engilbertsdottir, Christine Hunt, Lily Rossow-Greenberg

United Nations Development Programme
The Global State of Non-Communicable Diseases Planning and Implementation

In 2008, the World Health Organization estimated that 63% of global deaths were due to Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs), mainly cancers, chronic respiratory or cardiovascular diseases, and diabetes. In response, the United Nations General Assembly Special Session adopted the Political Declaration on the Prevention and Control of NCDs, which the United Nations Development Programme is responsible for assisting member states fulfill. A Capstone team was requested to research successful approaches and develop a summary report of current NCDs plans. The team first established an analytical framework to review common NCDs risk factors as well as high-value and cost-effective interventions from around the world. Next, the team traveled to Tanzania to research and prepare a case study on the country’s current NCDs planning, looking at multi-sectoral approaches and the flow of information and knowledge. Finally, drawing on both the framework and the case study, the team developed a report outlining current planning processes and providing recommendations for implementation.

Capstone Team: Jade Camp, Aniqa Islam, Patricia Szafranski, Michele Tall, Zach Worthen
World Bank

*Migration and the Politics of Making Skills Visible*

When people migrate across national borders, they often encounter challenges in having their skills recognized and valued in the labor markets they enter. Migrants with skills that place them in-between the categories of highly skilled knowledge workers and unskilled workers face obstacles that are particularly daunting: their skills often remain unrecognized and unrewarded in new labor markets, and migrants who once filled positions as nurses, skilled construction workers, chefs, mechanics, and other professions often find themselves pushed into low-wage jobs for unskilled workers after they migrate. The Capstone team partnered with the World Bank to explore policy tools designed to address the challenges faced by mid-skilled migrants. Through qualitative research, including extensive interviewing and on-site ethnographic observation, the team analyzed several programs crafted to support migrants from the Philippines, the Pacific Island region, and Mexico; the programs examined helped migrants develop skills and equipped them with the institutional tools—such as certification and agreements negotiated among countries about which skills were required for which profession—to make their skills visible across labor markets. In its analysis of these programs, the team explored possible obstacles to effective implementation such as sources of financing, the negation of institutional partnerships, and reaching agreements about the specific skills required for any given job. Using findings from this first round of research, the team investigated the institutional changes required to create a program for the skill development and skill recognition of nurses and home health care workers between France and North Africa.

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### Hospital for Special Surgery

*Clinical Nurse Ladder*

Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS), a Magnet Designated and number one nationally ranked orthopedic hospital, sought to provide additional opportunities for nursing growth and advancement. The Capstone team was charged with incorporating evidenced-based practices into HSS’s Clinical Nurse Ladder (CNL) in order to improve the robustness of the system. The team conducted interviews with nurse leaders, carried out surveys to gain perspective from current nurses, evaluated each rung’s (or ladder) job description and remuneration, studied the CNL application process, and examined three other CNLs: New York Presbyterian-Columbia Hospital, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Hospital, and the University of Colorado Hospital. As a result, the team identified the elements of the current and an alternative ladder that were effective/ineffective, and recommended generic but characteristically distinguishable job descriptions for each rung. The team also advised on the role of managers, professional development, and learning in advancing nurses.

Capstone Team: Inga Dawe, Tyrone Francis, Lauren Morgan-Schatz, Ling Wang

### New York-Presbyterian Hospital

*Intervening Pre-Admission for Elective Bariatric Surgery*

New York-Presbyterian (NYP) strives to ensure that patients are discharged in the safest and timeliest manner possible. When a hospital fails to effectively coordinate discharges, negative outcomes can occur including increases in the length of stay (LOS), costly readmissions, and unsatisfactory patient experiences. The Capstone team’s objective was to identify an elective procedure at NYP with unwarranted variation in LOS between NYP’s campuses and then propose changes to the pre-admission process that could safely decrease LOS. The team conducted a data review and identified significant variation in LOS for elective bariatric surgeries between two campuses of NYP. To determine possible factors for this variation, the team examined the pre-admission processes by conducting site interviews and surveys. As a result, the team identified practices that could be shared to improve the performance of both campuses and recommended using this internal benchmarking process to identify and reduce variations in LOS for other elective procedures at NYP.

Capstone Team: Bryce Clark, Kristen Fanti, Joyce Philip, Mara Sproul
New York-Presbyterian Hospital
Dialysis/Apheresis Operational Excellence Task Force

New York-Presbyterian Hospital (NYP) works to deliver excellent and cost-effective care, while simultaneously facing numerous challenges due to increasingly strict reimbursement criteria, multiple state and federal regulations, as well as stiff market competition within an unstable economic climate. The Capstone team was engaged to develop recommendations to maximize operational efficiency in the NYP Weill Cornell Hemodialysis and Apheresis Unit. The unit faced operational challenges such as shared staff among locations, limited space, staffing mix, variable acuity/census, and inter-dependency upon several hospital departments. The team performed workflow analyses, comparable site visits, staff surveys, reviews of metrics, and consultations with experts and determined that the unit’s treatment turnover time was excessive and above industry benchmarks. This often resulted in increased utilization of overtime and on call. The team made recommendations centered on balanced workflow and efficient utilization of resources in order to reduce treatment turnover time and subsequently generate increased revenue and decreased expenditures.

Capstone Team: Bernadette Abaya, Richard Cratty, Janet Elliott-Perkins, Uvannie Enriquez, Angela King

Applied Research in Public Finance and Policy
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Drug Abuse and Enforcement: Impact of Regulatory Controls on Prescription Drug Abuse

In recent decades, prescription drug abuse has risen dramatically in the United States due to changes in medical attitudes and practices. This shift has resulted not only in a wider distribution of opioids for the treatment of chronic and non-chronic pain, but also to increases in non-medical opioid abuse, dependence, and accidental death. States have responded to this growing crisis with a variety of enforcement and monitoring policies, including Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMPs). PDMPs are statewide patient prescription history databases made accessible to physicians, pharmacies, law enforcement agencies, and other stakeholders in an effort to enhance surveillance of individual medication consumption patterns. If effective, PDMPs can be a tool to prevent “doctor shopping” and
diversion, consequently leading to lower rates of addiction and accidental overdose. This study analyzes the extent to which PDMPs and their specific characteristics reduce these outcomes in individual states.

Capstone Team: Eunice Blehmadoo, Thomas Boman, Jeremy Cherson, Jennifer Reres

**The Effect of New Immigrant High Schools on Immigrant Students’ Academic and Social Performance: Causal Evidence from New York City Public High Schools**

Over the past fifteen years, English Language Learners (ELLs) have comprised between 12 and 17 percent of the New York City student population. Since these students face different educational challenges than their native-born and English proficient counterparts, the New York City Department of Education uses a variety of English language instruction methods to help students succeed socially and academically. This study evaluates the effectiveness of newcomer and immigrant secondary education programs in New York City. Additionally, by using a rich administrative data set, as well as student-level surveys, this study examines the effect of newcomer/international high schools on academic outcomes and students’ attitude about their learning environment.

Capstone Team: Yana Kusayeva, Alejandro Ortiz, Tina Park

**An Evaluation of New York City’s Stop, Question, and Frisk Policy**

New York City’s stop, question, and frisk (SQF) policy has been the topic of much debate and controversy, related to both the perception of race-based disparities in implementation, as well as the effectiveness of the policy in reducing crime. Using SQF data, and Compstat crime statistics, the Capstone team aimed to answer the question of whether the level of crime is a significant predictor of the intensity of SQF activity. Using regression models and controlling for other influencers of crime rates (e.g. weather), the team examined how accurately historical crime rates can predict future levels of crime, and then focused on the relationship of the SQF variable to crime on a precinct-by-precinct basis in order to identify whether SQF results in a reduction in crime.

Capstone Team: Jeff Meyer, Jesse Navarrette, Jessica Reid, Andrea Spender
Federal Student Aid and Loan Default Rates at Postsecondary Institutions

Tuition costs at colleges and universities have risen dramatically in recent years, due in part to state and federal higher education funding cuts. As a result, students are taking on heavy debt burdens to fund the high cost of a college degree, amounting to roughly $1 trillion in outstanding federal student loans with over $120 billion of those loans currently in default. Previously, postsecondary institutions with 2-year default rates above 25% could lose eligibility for federal aid. After Congress demanded more disclosure, a new measure will take effect in 2014 that requires institutions to be held to a 3-year default rate standard. This study explores the recently released data by the Department of Education on 2- and 3-year federal student loan default rates, and the strategic behavior on the part of postsecondary institutions to extend default rates in order to continue receiving federal loans.

Capstone Team: Leslie Cook, Sharon Fuchs, Nick Klagge, Derek Rury, Vasundhara Vats

The Influence of Micro Food-Environments on Food Consumption and BMI Outcomes

The rise in obesity rates has increased interest around the “food environment,” or the availability of healthy and unhealthy foods in a community. While there is considerable focus on the influence of food environments, studies that attempt to link “micro” food-environments to eating and weight outcomes are limited in scope. The study attempts to model “micro” food-environments defined as food sources available in close proximity to an individual’s residence. The Capstone team first validated and expanded upon existing national commercial data on food retail and restaurant outlets in two Bronx, NY communities, and then developed a health index to characterize each outlet. Combining food environment characteristics with detailed consumption data for 2,500 Bronx residents, the team assessed to what degree proximity to food sources predicts an individual’s eating patterns and BMI. The results of this study can help shape policy interventions focused on overcoming the obesity epidemic.

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INDEX

Capstone Client Organizations

Academy of Responsible Management, 31
Agora Partnerships, 8
Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, 12
Amend, 34
Break Away: The Alternative Break Connection, 2
Bridge Street Development Corporation, Quincy Senior Residence, 1
Bronx Community Health Network, 17, 18
Bronx Council on the Arts, 4
Career Gear, 4
Catholic Big Sisters and Big Brothers, 16
Child Mind Institute, 16
Citizens Union, 7
Community Voices Heard, 7
Counterpart International, 34
Delaware Department of State Division of Corporations and UK Companies House, 13
East Meets West Foundation, 31
Enterprise Community Partners, 23
FEGS, 20
The 52nd Street Project, 10
Footsteps, 5
Foundation Rwanda, 32
Global Goods Partners, 32
Hospital for Special Surgery, 38
Housing Works Thrift Shops, 17
Institute for Rational Urban Mobility, 25
Jewish Communal Fund, 3
LatinoJustice PRLDEF, 5
Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 27
Literacy Assistance Center, 8
Local Government Unit of Libon, Albay Province, Philippines, 33
Made in Lower East Side, 24
Maimonides Medical Center, 21
McCormack Baron Salazar, 24
Mercy Home for Children, 18
Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty, 6
Mississippi Center for Justice, 1
Mount St. Mary College, Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress, and the City of Newburgh, New York, 9
Municipal Development Partnership for Eastern and Southern Africa, 28
Myrtle Avenue Revitalization Project, 14
National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development, 28
New York City Administration for Children’s Services, 9
New York City Department of Transportation, 26
New York City Human Resources Administration, 10
New York City Mayor’s Office of Operations, 14
New York Civil Liberties Union, 19
New York-Presbyterian Hospital, 38, 39
New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, 11
NYCRx, 21
NYU-HHC Clinical and Translational Science Institute, 19
Opening Act, 3
Palladia, 22
Planned Parenthood Global, 35
Repair the World, 6
Rockaway Waterfront Alliance, 26
Sauti Yetu Center for African Women, 11
Scholars at Risk Network, 35
South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, 25
Sunnyside Community Services, 2
Times Square Alliance, 12
Transitional Services for New York, 22
United Cities and Local Governments, 28
United Methodist Committee on Relief, 36
United Nations Capital Development Fund, 29
United Nations Development Programme, 36
United States Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 20
Vision Long Island, 27
Washington, D.C.’s Office of the State Superintendent of Education, 15
William F. Ryan Community Health Center, 23
World Bank - Procurement, 13
World Bank - East Asia and Pacific, 29
World Bank - Labour Mobility, 37
World Bank and National Council for Education Development, 30
World Connect, 33

Applied Research Projects

Drug Abuse and Enforcement: Impact of Regulatory Controls on Prescription Drug Abuse, 39
The Effect of New Immigrant High Schools on Immigrant Students’ Academic and Social Performance: Causal Evidence from New York City Public High Schools, 40
An Evaluation of New York City’s Stop, Question, and Frisk Policy, 40
Federal Student Aid and Loan Default Rates at Postsecondary Institutions, 41
The Influence of Micro Food-Environments on Food Consumption and BMI Outcomes, 41
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