

Want to do a Capstone that will not only benefit the Baltimore Community, but allow you to gain hands-on experience in public health?

13 MPH Capstone Opportunities Are Available Now!

For more details and the contact person for each project, see the corresponding page! Check out SOURCE's Weekly Service Scoop sent out every Tuesday for more Capstone opportunities as they come up (to subscribe, send an email with "subscribe" in the subject line to SOURCE@jhsph.edu).

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IMPORTANT NOTES:

Approval from Faculty Capstone Advisor

This list of potential MPH Capstone projects was developed from community-identified needs, in partnership between SOURCE and the listed community-based organizations. MPH students must still receive approval from a faculty Capstone advisor to utilize these projects requests for the basis of a Capstone project.

Contacting these Organizations

When contacting any of these organizations, please let them know that you were referred by JHU SOURCE. You may want to include a copy of your resume, as well as available times that you may have to discuss the project.

SOURCE (Student Outreach Resource Center)
The Community Service and Service-Learning Center
for the JHU Schools of Medicine, Nursing, and Public Health
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1. Jewel House, Incorporated:

Little Jewel Learning Center: Help reduce barriers to health treatment for children of teen parents through case management, develop tool to assess the developmental stage of children, gather data to plan a curriculum to meet needs of their clients.

Jewel House, Incorporated is a non-profit organization that offers programs and services that empowers teen parents (male and female) with the tools necessary to build a successful future. Jewel House, Incorporated. was founded in 2004 in response to the inadequate number of programs/services/facilities available to meet the needs of pregnant and parenting teens.

Jewel House is in need of a student to:

1. Develop a tool to assess where each student is in relation to the standard level of development for children their age.
2. Provide public health case management to children (and because of their age their parents also) to ensure that there are no barriers to them receiving health treatment and related services (i.e. WIC, social services, insurance, doctor's appointments).
3. Gather data that will assist Jewel House in formulating a plan and curriculum to more appropriately meet the public health needs of the families served in this project.
4. Other tasks that may be necessary to assist in meeting the needs of their students.

Contact Person:

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2. Baltimore City Health Department

Asthma Friendly Schools in Baltimore City: Increase the number of Baltimore City Schools who are Asthma Friendly, facilitate dissemination of asthma knowledge in School Health Suites, and identify trends in school performance and asthma control.

Asthma Friendly Schools promote the health and academic success of its students by making the most of school-based asthma management opportunities, and decreasing environmental asthma triggers in the school setting. Asthma Friendly schools also support asthma education and awareness for staff, students, and parents/guardians. We are looking for a dynamic student who is comfortable communicating with multiple levels of administration, willing to work directly with the community and within a team setting.

The student will:

1. Outreach to Baltimore City Schools identified for Asthma Friendly School Participation
2. Provide technical assistance for AFS program with assistance by asthma staff
3. Assist in the development of an AFS kit.
4. Analyze school data with guidance from the asthma team.
5. Prepare initial report of results, including tables and graphs as needed for review and comment by asthma team.

Contact Person:

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3. Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning

Green and Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI): Produce case studies to help support policy changes and bring more funds to preventive green and healthy housing interventions, produce memorandums of understanding, procedures, and policies around collaborative work with GHHI partners.

The Coalition's (<http://www.lead-safe.org/index.cfm>) Green and Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI) is an innovative approach to sustainably improve resident health, quality of housing stock, and create green jobs. The participant will assist Coalition and GHHI staff in a CDC/HUD funded project to implement comprehensive and integrated home interventions addressing health, safety, and energy efficiency. The participants will also help conduct research and develop case studies to track the outcome of Green and Healthy Homes Interventions conducted in the homes of Baltimore families. They will also aid in producing memos, procedures, document, and reports around the collaborative work that the Coalition, Baltimore city housing department, and other agencies and organization do together to improve Baltimore housing. They will also research policies and strategies to capture public dollars for preventative health and utilize it to conduct housing work such as lead hazard reduction, the reduction of asthma triggers, reducing the rates of falls and injuries, and improving air quality.

Contact Person:

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4. Public Justice Center

The Workplace Justice Project's Paid Sick Leave Initiative: Literature research on the impact of paid sick leave to develop a public policy campaign.

The Public Justice Center (<http://www.publicjusticecenter.org/about-us/index.cfm>) advocates primarily on behalf of low-wage workers, the vast majority of whom lack employer-provided health care or paid sick leave. Rather, these workers are often forced to choose between being fired or taking a day off to care for themselves or a close family member. Moreover, pressured to work while sick, these vulnerable workers often spread illness in the workplace, costing the employer lost productivity and further putting themselves at risk. The PJC's Workplace Justice Project hopes to expand workers' rights by investigating the potential impact that the provision of paid sick leave would have on workers, employers and the public health. This is a health policy-oriented project.

The goal of the project will be to research public health and other literature on the impact of paid sick leave, consider what other states and localities have done on this issue, and ultimately create a position paper for Maryland on the advantages of paid sick leave on the health and productivity of workers. The paper will ultimately be used to develop a campaign around why work place paid leave is good public policy.

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5. Gilchrist Hospice Care

Enhancement of Bereavement Services Offered by Gilchrist Hospice Care: Further the ongoing evaluation and enhancement of the services provided by Gilchrist Hospice Care to optimize the emotional health of grieving individuals and families.

Gilchrist Hospice Care (<http://gilchristhospice.org/page.aspx?pid=401>) has a well developed program of Bereavement Services for hospice and community clients who have lost a loved one due to death. Gilchrist offers individual counseling, support groups, workshops, and other events for the public. Their vision is to foster hope, healing and respect through an unwavering commitment to what they do, through the education of their patients, families and the community, and through their interdisciplinary teamwork.

Gilchrist needs a student to:

1. Gather information about available community services for grieving individuals and families in Gilchrist Hospice Care's catchment area (Howard County, Baltimore County and City, Harford County).
2. Prepare a report/data base of resources available to assist our bereaved clients.
3. Conduct program planning to reflect the findings from the assessment, to include recommendations for types of services and locations of services to be offered by Gilchrist Hospice Care to enhance services already provided.
4. Participate in community outreach efforts, which may include facilitating health fairs and/or public speaking.
5. Develop a fee-for-service charge structure for providing counseling services to community members who did not participate in hospice services.

Contact Person:

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6. Baltimore Medical System, Project 1

OB Quality and Patient Satisfaction-Informing our Practice to Improve Results:
Analyze data for risk factors that contribute to low birth weight outcomes,
recommend programmatic changes.

Baltimore Medical System (BMS) has for a period of years had birth outcomes for patients receiving prenatal care through BMS that have shown a significantly lower percentage of Low Birth Weight babies in comparison with Baltimore City as a whole. The first six months of 2011, however, have shown an increase in the number of low weight births and we wish to analyze the reasons behind these outcomes to see if outcomes could be improved by programmatic change. This information for this process will be used solely for internal process improvement and will not be available for publication in any form.

BMS needs a student to:

1. Perform chart reviews of the patients having low birth weight babies in the period 1/11-6/11 (student will be expected to sign all pertinent confidentiality agreements).
2. Analyze any risk factors in patient's history that may have contributed to outcomes.
3. Report any systemic factors, or risk factors not addressed through prenatal care that may have affected outcomes.
4. Report findings along with recommendations for quality improvement. No identifiable data shall be included in any report.

Contact Person:

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7. Baltimore Medical System, Project 2

Simple and to the point: Health Literacy and the Development of Materials to Assist Refugee Families in Navigating the Health Care System.

This project is meant to examine existing health education and informational materials available to Refugee populations during the initial health screening process and adapt them, or design new ones that are both culturally appropriate and at a health literacy level accessible to the target population. Intern will report directly to David Mbeya, BMS Program Manager for International Services. Consultations will also be held with Kathleen Dragovich, Director of Patient Centered Services for BMS who is spearheading a company-wide initiative on health literacy.

Examples of primary responsibilities include:

1. Research materials used with refugee populations being re-settled throughout the United States
2. Evaluate and adapt draft materials currently being piloted to assure cultural appropriateness and an accessible level of health literacy
3. Consult with the Health Team at the International Rescue Committee -Pilot materials developed
4. Evaluate effectiveness of materials developed
5. Prepare a final report on the evaluation of the materials

Contact Person:

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8. Baltimore City Department of Social Services

Family Investment Through Health Education: Reduce health-related disparities among public assistance populations through planning, outreach, and education.

The Baltimore City Department of Social Services (BCDSS) provides economic, medical and food assistance to residents who qualify for public assistance program services. Our programs promote the well-being of low income families, children, people with disabilities and the elderly by providing medical, nutritional, financial and case management services. Programs include: Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) designed to provide monthly cash assistance and promote economic self-sufficiency for families with children. Temporary Disability Assistance Program (TDAP) helps low-income, disabled residents with no other resources, to obtain cash, medical, and housing assistance. This program assists individuals without dependent children. Energy assistance helps low-income families and individuals pay and manage their utility bills not only during the winter heating season but throughout the year. Food Supplement Program (FSP) (formerly known as food stamps) helps low-income families and individuals purchase food while they work to regain financial independence. These benefits are provided to supplement the household's existing food budget. Emergency assistance programs and services help families and individuals in immediate crisis. Services vary and may include avoiding interruption of utility services, emergency grants to avoid evictions, grants to assist with burial costs for an eligible family member, food and other emergency services. While BCDSS has nine Family Investment Centers, the Clifton Johnston Square facility serves more than 555 Baltimore City residents daily, many of whom are vulnerable to health-related disparities.

This project would entail exploring opportunities to provide health and nutrition education onsite at Clifton Johnston Square, i.e. sharing of literature, community resources, conduct health screenings, etc. for a captive audience. The goal of the project is to develop a plan of action to ensure that BCDSS public assistance clientele receive health-related information and opportunities to address nutrition and health issues; increase awareness of the value in exercising preventive healthcare; and educate clientele in an effort to reduce health-related disparities among public assistance populations.

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9. AIRS/ City Steps

Restoration Gardens-- Program Evaluation--The First 2 Years: Literature research for best practices with the young adult homeless population, data entry and analysis of aggregate data, summary report of findings

Restoration Gardens is a NEW 43 unit apartment building in Southern Park Heights that provides housing and support services to its residents--all formerly homeless or coming out of foster care, ages 18-24. Support Services as articulated in the Program Logic Model center on young adult personal development, education, social skills and income growth planning. Support services are available and will be marketed to residents, but not absolutely mandatory. After obtaining baseline assessments in these areas at Intake, personal growth will be measured every 6 months thereafter. We will be assessing the effects of case management/ coaching, workforce development services, life skills education, and housing only, with a final write-up that will recommend the most effective services for client success with self-sufficiency goals.

AIRS/ City Steps needs a student to be part of a mixed staff and consultant Team, with primarily responsibilities to do a literature search for best practices with the young adult homeless population, followed by ensuring as many residents as possible complete all assessments and follow up. Incentives will be provided. They will also be responsible for data entry and some analysis of the aggregate data. They will finish with a write up of their findings at the end of the year.

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10. Incentive Mentoring Program, Project 1

Database Creation for Program Outcomes Evaluation.

Incentive Mentoring Program (IMP) (<http://incentivementoringprogram.org/>) is a community of students and volunteers working together towards mutual growth. Students from the Academy for College and Career Exploration and Paul Laurence Dunbar High School are selected during their freshman year based on poor academic performance and the existence of psychosocial challenges. IMP matches high school students with hundreds of Johns Hopkins University undergraduate and graduate volunteers, as well as dedicated individuals from the Baltimore community, who come together to provide stability for IMP students. However, IMP creates a family of support for everyone, not just the students. We never give up on anyone in the IMP Family, whether it is a student or a volunteer.

This project would focus on creating an expandable database for managing program participant data for use in program outcomes and evaluations. Currently, IMP manages all participant data through paper, and independent electronic and online spreadsheets. We are seeking to consolidate these in a centralized database so participant records can be more easily accessed and analyzed for evaluations.

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11. Incentive Mentoring Program, Project 2

Design of anti-discrimination, tolerance promoting curricula for at-risk high school students, with a focus on homophobia.

Incentive Mentoring Program (IMP) (<http://incentivementoringprogram.org/>) is a volunteer organization composed of students/ fellows and employees of Johns Hopkins whose mission is to turn around at-risk youth on the verge of failing out of school. Our mission is to mentor these students in all aspects of their lives. Currently we are in need of a strategy to address widespread homosexual discrimination exhibited by our kids. Thus far we have taken the approach of discussing this behavior with each student as the need arises. This strategy has not proved sufficient as the students face constant peer pressure from their friends and their behavior is often validated by a cultural norm. We aim to take a more holistic approach to this issue by developing a curricula that will challenge the students to question these norms and become ambassadors of tolerance. To do this we must take advantage of existing resources within the Baltimore community and farther afield. Existing programs should be evaluated and pertinent components adapted to our students. Furthermore, partnerships with Baltimore community organizations should be developed and cultivated to more fully address tolerance. This curricula has the potential to be employed not only to the students in IMP, but to the other members of their respective schools as well.

The student will be a driving force in the development, implementation and initial evaluation of this curricula. They will be responsible for researching existing outreach programs and determine which if any are relevant to our demographic. Additionally, the student will be expected to develop and propose a novel outreach program of their own. Ideally, he or she will reach out to community organizations to take advantage of their resources, knowledge, and experience. The student will assist in training volunteers to implement the proposed curricula. An evaluation mechanism should be included as a component of both training and implementation to allow revision and improvements. Most importantly we aim to effect change in the IMP students to decrease the rate of discriminatory actions and language.

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12. CASA de Maryland

Community Health Education and Orientation of Latino day laborers and contingent workers.

CASA's (<http://www.casademaryland.org/>) primary mission is to work with the community to improve the quality of life and fight for equal treatment and full access to resources and opportunities for low-income Latinos and their families. CASA also works with other low-income immigrant communities and organizations, makes its programs and activities available to them, and advocates for social, political, and economic justice for all low-income communities.

The Community Health Education and Orientation project is a complementary component of CASA's comprehensive service deliver model provided through CASA's Baltimore Welcome Center. The primary target population is Latino day laborers and contingent workers (both men and women) who take advantage of the services and education while waiting for an employment placement in the welcome center. Other components of the comprehensive model include vocational and ESL training, financial counseling and tax preparation, leadership development, and legal counseling.

CASA needs a student to:

1. Coordinate with partner organizations (Baltimore City Health Dept, Adelante Familia, Baltimore Medical Systems, etc) and student groups (Bienvenidos) to schedule and conduct health and mental health workshops of interest to workers in the Baltimore Welcome center. Provide interpretation if necessary, collect and record attendance at workshops, follow up with presenters. (average 2 workshops/month)
2. Provide regular (at least weekly) "office hours" to assist individual members in locating relevant health and mental health resources, negotiating with hospitals r.e. bills and charity care, and with applications for financial assistance and for medical insurance.
3. Based on needs identified through above activities, develop and strengthen relationships with Baltimore City Health Department, Bienvenidos, and other agencies to identify areas for further service provision on-site at CASA, including but not limited to HIV and TB testing and flu shot administration

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