

Spring 2015 Capstone Projects

Evergreen Emergency Management: Speedy Response

The purpose of our work is to collaboratively develop, taking into account our multiple disciplines/interests, a strategic plan for the development and marketing of an emergency management program at The Evergreen State College. The program will allow every member of the Evergreen learning community to proactively gain knowledge and skills making campus a safer, more resilient place.

2015 Community Christmas Outreach

Sponsored by City Gates Ministries and Catholic Community Services of Western Washington Drexel House, the MPA Capstone project *2015 Community Christmas Outreach* is an event created to meet the immediate necessities of people in need through a collaborative partnership of citizens and organizations while providing an inclusive environment in which all people feel valued and honored. The presentation will highlight the history of the event and the volunteers who make it possible. The presentation will also identify strategies to grow the event using a project management plan to increase structure, introduce sponsorship opportunities, and increase the total number of people served by fifty percent.

Social Media Practices for Non-Profits

Students researched best practices of social media and analyzed local Non-profit Level Road Runners' current social media strategies. They created a "Best Practices Guide" which will be distributed to local Non-profits in order to help them engage with volunteers and to promote public service.

Manager's Desk Reference: Lessons in Leadership & Communication

Manager's Desk Reference, at www.managersdeskreference.com is a website of curated resources to empower current or future managers and leaders to be proactive with developing their communication skills. Communication skill development is key, as it supports healthy organizational culture, promotes individual career path planning goals, and ties into some of the basic human needs outlined by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943). *Manager's Desk Reference: Lessons in Leadership & Communication* breaks down different components of communication, and shows ways they can be developed by an individual, based upon their self-assessment of where they would benefit from growth.

Building Communities that are Resilient to Climate Change Impacts

The increased frequency and intensity of disaster events related to climate change will affect communities in Washington State. Higher temperatures of our air and waters, rising sea levels, increased risk of drought, fire and flood, stronger storms, increased heat related illness and disease are all directly related to climate change. Our presentation focuses on how communities can become more resilient and highlights information from each of our six discussion papers developed to enhance their ability to become better prepared and more resilient.

Investing in the Future of Farmland

Supported by The Evergreen State College Office of Sustainability, the MPA Capstone project *Investing in the Future of Farmland* explores the question: "How can nonprofit farmland trusts leverage private sector investment tools to further their missions?" The presentation will describe the current landscape of funding for farmland preservation, and explore the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with different sources of private investment dollars. The presentation will offer several lessons for land trusts interested in working with private investments, as well as opportunities and next steps for the land trust community at large.

Tacoma's Dropout Rate and Creating a Nonprofit: An Adventure in Helping

This project is guided by the problem statement "Tacoma School District has a significantly high school dropout rate". The presentation will contain spoken word, text and visual aids to describe the dropout rate, the implications of the rate, how youth after school programs help and the Tacoma community's response to this problem. The presentation additionally explains the creation of M3, a nonprofit, youth development organization, how they can help and where the organization is now and hopes to be in the future.

Digitizing Evergreen

Currently, The Evergreen State College remains one of the last colleges in Washington State to not offer online and hybrid course options for its students. As we are developing a technologically driven society, where people are starting to demand easier access to information, could Evergreen use online or hybrid course options to increase its annual student enrollment? Using data collected from other Washington 4-year public colleges, national online education data, and other results found within the last five years, this presentation centers on if The Evergreen State College should consider providing online and/or hybrid courses for its undergraduate students.

Business plan for a nonprofit organization that provides transitional housing for people in recovery.

Our Capstone project collaboration created a business plan for a nonprofit organization called "A Place for G.R.O.W.T.H.", an agricultural and therapeutic transitional housing program for individuals leaving treatment. GROWTH is a space for people to develop strength in their recovery by learning the skills necessary to live their lives independently. This farm-based, harm reduction, restorative justice housing model builds community, dignity, and healing

Family History Preservation Workshop

The purpose of this capstone project was to design a workshop to teach the community about the preservation of historical family objects including best practices for archiving and the basics of digitization. In addition to the creation of the workshop, the student presented the workshop on three different dates throughout the community. Finally, the student created a website to promote the workshop which includes a blog that documents the student's own journey preserving her family history.

The Washington Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program: Implementing Outcome Measures

Low-income households in Washington can receive free home weatherization services through grant funding administered by the Washington State Department of Commerce. In partnership with the Department of Commerce, this project incorporates current best practices in outcome measures while advocating for a fair and equitable assessment of the quality of weatherization work happening across the state. Developed in collaboration with stakeholders, this project includes a set of recommended outcome measures, a new risk assessment, and an implementation plan.

Development Action Plan for Nature Nurtures Farm

Nature Nurtures Farm's new development action plan is a fundraising plan along with a marketing/communications plan. The farm will use the plan to set and follow a course of action for how to sustain and grow the farm's three programs to build empathy, teach responsibility, and inspire hope in youth ages seven to 21 in Thurston County, Washington.

Empowering Latino Learners in the South Sound area: CIELO Grant and Marketing Plan

CIELO is a nonprofit adult learning center and social service provider for Latinos in Olympia, WA. To further their mission of empowering and educating their clients, we wrote a grant application and marketing analysis. Our efforts will provide much needed funding and structure, enabling CIELO to operate at its fullest potential.

Website: "Communication and Emotional Intelligence Skills to Promote Employee Engagement"

This website is designed to introduce better communication and Emotional Intelligence skills into workplaces, therefore improving relationships and fully engaging employees. By learning to communicate more effectively, we can all directly affect our relationships at home, in the workplace, and with everyone we meet. While learning through an entertaining, yet informative way, people can acquire new communication skills, and be change agents in the world.

Juvenile Detention Reform in Washington State

Our Capstone project explores the current and perceived concepts of Juvenile Detention reform in Washington State. We investigated and examined our topic by way of reviewing prior research surrounding Juvenile Detention reform, administering a survey of current detention alternatives in use, and interviewing key professionals involved in Juvenile Detention in Washington State. Our research findings were then transposed into articles on Medium.com available to the public, sharing their stories and reconstructing perceptions of Juvenile Detention reform.

State Parks for All Washingtonians

The Master of Public Administration Capstone State Parks for All Washingtonians is a strategic data management and social marketing plan for the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission. At the core of the plan is the question, "How can State Parks identify and better serve underrepresented and underserved communities in terms of access to parks?" This strategic plan lays the groundwork for State Parks to identify the strengths and weaknesses of its ability to collect certain visitor and non-visitor data and provides a conceptual framework for how best to use available visitor data to leverage social marketing opportunities.

Envisioning Alternatives for Olympia School District

The Olympia School District strives to “create challenging opportunities for all students to be successful as they become responsible and contributing citizens and masters of the knowledge and skills essential for life-long learning in our changing and diverse world.” For my capstone project, I designed a vision document for the Olympia School District to use when planning for existing and future alternative education programs at Olympia High School. This document will assist administrators and educators consider program needs and enrollment projections while focusing on improving high school graduation rates by involving more students in alternative programs.

Breaking the Cycle: Women in Poverty in Mason County

Breaking the Cycle: Women in Poverty in Mason County is a documentary investigating the cycle of poverty for women in Mason County, Washington. Through the testimonies of local women who utilize programs that support their efforts to obtain self-sufficiency and the professionals who regularly work with women in poverty, this documentary takes a closer look at the long journey it takes to break the relentless cycle poverty.

Washington's Veterans Treatment Courts

We will be presenting our findings on the effectiveness of Washington's Veterans Treatment Courts on veterans recidivism of program participants. These courts offer specialized services addressing veterans' unique needs and treatment of combat-related illnesses as contributing factors to their incarceration. The history and needs for Veterans Treatment Courts will be discussed along with the qualifications of veterans to be eligible for program enrollment from this research. Looking at the internal operation of the program, we will explore the relationships between the program's staff and participants in an effort to understand the effectiveness of the program and the relativity of the program to the recidivism rates of participant veterans.

Access to Community Mental Health Resources for participants of the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Administration Community Protection Program.

This exploratory research builds on 2014 research of the barriers to transitioning out of the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Administration Community Protection Program and uncovers compelling evidence suggesting changes are needed to ensure greater access to community mental health resources for program participants. Through this research several factors were identified that appear to act as challenges to accessing mental health resources: need for increased cooperation and collaboration between the Regional Support Networks and the Developmental Disabilities Administration, system and policy issues related to Access to Care Standards, lack of understanding of the population, and funding challenges for mental health services.

Hiring of Disabled Individuals

A position paper bringing to light the problems with using Schedule A hiring authority within the US Forest Service. Schedule A is a hiring authority that is designed to decrease barriers for disabled people to become employed in the federal government. Additionally, a proposed Washington State bill was designed that would create a similar hiring authority for Washington State agencies; including solutions to the problems of the federal, Schedule A hiring authority.

Community Health Workers In Washington State

Decision makers across Washington State are currently working to achieve the triple aim of health reform, better care, better health outcomes, and lower cost. Changing reimbursement for medical care as a singular strategy will not be enough to drive change. Employing community health workers to serve vulnerable populations is an evidence based strategy that could work well in Washington State. This project is a policy information video created from interviews with community health workers and their allies which outlines how community health workers support the triple aim of health reform and key policy considerations for their implementation in our state.

Determining Disproportionality: Re-creation of Appleseed's study on race and school discipline.

Appleseed claimed that students of color were disproportionately more disciplined more than white student within 9 Washington State school districts. Critical values were established in order to determine statistical significance of disproportionality. After running a difference in disproportionality test; of the 38 race categories that Appleseed reported disproportionate discipline, only 30 were statistically significant.

Meta-analysis of reading interventions for African American children in grades K-6.

In the face of severe consequences for low reading scores, this project seeks to determine if reading interventions are effective at improving reading for African American children. Meta-analysis is a statistical technique used for combining the outcome results of research studies. The purpose of meta-analysis is to determine the combined overall effect of treatments versus a control group.

Tacoma Streateries – 2016 Pilot Program

Supported by the City of Tacoma Public Works Department, the MPA Capstone project *Tacoma Streateries, 2016 Pilot Program*, takes a look at creating a local policy, guided from various examples from around the country, for the City regarding this relatively new policy concept. The final product includes a policy brief, a pilot program guide and a resource binder.

Investigative Report into Leadership

Investigation into purposeful human interactions and relationships, the common thread in leadership. All interactions and relationships begin inside of us. Purposeful relationships are the key to leadership.

Informing Parents about Federal Program

Supported by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, the MPA Capstone project *Informing Parents about Federal Program – Infographics for Title I, Part A, Title I, Part C, and Bilingual Education in Washington Schools*. This presentation takes you through what I learned while creating three infographics for parents: the starting process, data, assumptions, content, and finally the lessons learned from creating infographics for parents. The goal of the infographics is for parents to read and react to the information, learn the school role of each program, and the importance of parent involvement for them to become better advocates in their child's education.

Leadership Principals of George Tanbara, MD

This video will highlight the contribution of Dr. George Tanbara, a physician in Tacoma, WA for over 42 years, who was instrumental with the beginning stages and continued growth of Community Health Care, a private non-profit that has grown from a single volunteer clinic to 5 fully staffed clinics across Pierce County. Within the context of Community Health Care, leadership principals of Dr. Tanbara's are shared through interviews with people who have been instrumental in the development and sustainability of Community Health Care as well as from family and Dr. George Tanbara himself. The goal is to share Dr. Tanbara's leadership principals with the community and inspire other to take community action.

Undergraduate Exploratory Leadership Curriculum

For this project, we designed a leadership-focused, quarter-long curriculum for undergraduate students, particularly first generation college students. In this course, students will participate through media, interactive activities and responsive readings to discover their unique strengths and develop their knowledge about effective leadership. This course is designed to assist undergraduates in a strategic pursuit of academic and vocational goals.

Olympia's Action Plan: Sustainable Community Engagement Strategies

The Action Plan is an effort by the City of Olympia to coordinate their short-term (1-6 years) actions with the community's priorities, and to ensure alignment with the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan's long-term (20 year) goals for the city. The task that Olympia's city staff and council now face is to engage with the community in a meaningful and sustainable way to reach these desired outcomes. With this capstone project, I have investigated how Olympia can create a successful and sustainable engagement strategy and I offer a series of recommendations for effective community engagement.

Potential Barriers for At-risk Students in Seattle Public School Options Elementary Schools

We assessed the admission process and student demographics of two of the elementary options schools in the Seattle Public School District, South Shore and Thornton Creek. According to the Report OSPI Report Card, both schools have fewer at risk-students (poverty level and students of color) than the nearest non-options neighborhood schools. We identified some potential barriers to admission in options programs for at-risk children.