

Shai Arnold

Integrating Community Health Workers into Catholic Health System Emergency Department

Abstract. Community Health Workers (CHWs) act as a liaison between community member and health care providers. CHW are a trusted and trained to provide patient education on chronic diseases, patient advocacy and referrals for patients to overcome barriers to healthcare. This research module has explored national best practices of community health worker modules and how to effectively integrate a community health worker model into Catholic Health System Emergency Department. The research design is scholarly literature on the topic and information provided by Catholic Health System. The setting this module will be conduct in is the Emergency Department of Catholic Health System. Participants will be Medicaid insured recipients who are ineligible for health home care management services, patient who receive emergency services at least once per month will be placed on a list. A patient survey provided by Catholic Health System will be administrated by CHW pre and post admission. The performance of CHWs will be measured by completed referral and decline of patient admission rates. No current data is available for the present impact of CHW's within the Catholic Health System. Industry data on the return of investment has been merged with Catholic Health 2016's Emergency Department Hospitalization rates to forecast a decrease in hospitalization due to Community Health Workers. An informative module has been established to effectively integrate Community Health Workers. Integrating Community Health Workers is important in bridging the gap between community members and health care providers.

Faculty Mentor: Professor Kathryn Regan Eskew, MS

Robbi J. Bailey

**Non-Offending Caregiver Satisfaction During Child Abuse Investigations at NYS
Child Advocacy Centers**

Abstract: Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) have built a foundation on providing a multidisciplinary team approach to child abuse investigations and have become a prominent connection for services since their rise across the nation in 1994. Research has shown that utilizing CACs for child abuse investigations results in higher satisfaction levels among non-offending caregivers with the services they are receiving in comparison to those receiving services from other investigating agencies. However, there is a lack of research comparing the quality of services between various CACs. Utilizing data collected in a satisfaction survey of non-offending caregivers receiving services from nine participating counties in New York State, this descriptive research examined the relationship between the satisfaction of respondents and the CAC from which they received services. Results showed strong differences between participating CACs and the satisfaction of the non-offending caregivers they serve.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Dana Bagwell and Dr. Brian Poliner

Janae' D. Brown

Perceptual Differences of Culture Climate at Hilbert College

Abstract: The culture climate of an institution can have a strong influence on the students. The way a student perceives the college can differ from one another due to various characteristics. The question is whether or not those characteristics influence the students' perception. Hilbert College has become a more diverse institution. With the goal of inclusiveness, it has been very essential for administration to understand how their students feel. The purpose of this research was to determine why students of different characteristics perceived the culture climate of Hilbert College differently. In addition, the study explored the relationship between the variables and the effect they have on one another. To complete this research, participants were given a survey that consisted of various questions which measured the students' perception of the college, as well as their knowledge of cultural awareness, attitude, experiences, and background demographics. The sample for this research consisted of 114 responses. The responses show that the white and non-white students perceive the college significantly different. Furthermore, the responses show no significance between perception and variables other than race. With this information, the college should focus on the individual students. It is very important to study perception and reasoning to create a culture where all feel welcome.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Kathleen Pierino and Dr. Martin Floss

Matthew Clark

Measuring Responses of Children and Adults on Firearm Access and Storage in the Home

Abstract: In the United States, there is a large number of children with fatal and nonfatal firearm injuries. This is partially due to the high rates of gun ownership, which is approximately a third of the population. Firearms are one of the leading causes of death among adolescents and a large portion of firearms that youth access and operate come from their own home. If parents are unaware of their child's familiarity with firearm storage in the home, they may leave firearms loaded and unlocked, contributing to youth firearm injuries. Studies show many parents have unrealistic expectations of their children's behavior around firearms. Using data collected in a survey of patients in local family practices, this descriptive research examined parent's perceptions of their child's knowledge and access of firearms in the home.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Martin Floss and Dr. Kathleen Pierino

Molly C. Devine

**The Effects of Service Learning on a Perception of Other Cultures and a Global Mindset
Young Adults**

Abstract: A growing trend in higher education has been the introduction of experiential learning courses. These types of course allow students the ability to experience the world around them rather than simple learning in the traditional lecture environment. These courses may include experiences such as volunteerism, civic service, internships, etc.

This research focused on understanding the effects that an international service learning experience had on colleges students and their perception of other cultures. It analyzed if their experience helped them grow in knowledge, values, skills, and capacity for collective action. Humanitarians and researches have spent many years understanding the importance of serving the community. Hoffman, Wallach, and Sanchez stated that, “through helping others we actually improve our own chance of survival and future generations” (p. 420). Serving a diverse community gives these students the ability to not only help a community, but also to help themselves grow through meeting new people, working outside their comfort zone, and developing new skills.

Using a data college survey and short answer questions the research showed students has an overwhelmingly positive experience in regards to their development while abroad. The narrative data had students exclaiming phrases like, “eye opening,” and “one of the most rewarding trips.” They were quick to talk about the confidence and appreciation they gained as it prepared them for their future careers.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Dana Bagwell and Dr. Brian Poliner

Karen DiFlavio

A Comparative Quality of Care Review for Sub-acute Patients in For-Profit and Not For-Profit Nursing Homes

Abstract: Using a secondary data analysis by obtaining historical nursing home ownership and quality measure data from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Nursing Home Compare website data set, the purpose of this study is to extend the study of Grabowski, Feng, Hirth, Rahman, and Mor (2013), that examined the difference in quality measures in post-acute patients in for-profit and not for-profit nursing homes. Four short-term stay quality measures that include re-hospitalization, improved function, self-report of moderate to severe pain, and successful discharge to community are tested in Erie County for-profit and not for-profit nursing homes for Medicare fee-for-service patients who receive sub-acute. In the Grabowski et al. (2013) national 18-month study, researchers found that sub-acute patients in not for-profit facilities had fewer 30-day hospitalizations and greater improvement in functioning and pain. The *t*-test results of this study revealed no statistically significant differences in the average adjusted rates of the four quality measures in Erie County for-profit and not for-profit nursing homes for Medicare fee-for-service sub-acute patients.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Dana Bagwell and Dr. Walter Iwanenko

Kristen Edwards

The Importance of Ethics: An Assessment of Ethics in Public Relations

Abstract: Public relations professionals are expected by the public to practice in an honest and ethical manner. Ethical decision making plays a huge part in the everyday tasks of public relations practitioners, but many practitioners have never taken an ethics course in school, or had any type of ethical training while employed.

A survey consisting of eight ethical scenarios was administered to participating public relations practitioners. The participants read each scenario and reported if they thought the decision made was acceptable or unacceptable. Using the data collected from the participants, this research project suggests that having prior ethical education and/or training has an impact on the decisions made by public relations practitioners.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Dana Bagwell and Dr. Brian Poliner

Jesse A. Gajdosz

Tracking Juvenile Detention and Rates of Recidivism Across Erie County, New York

Abstract: In response to the rise in levels of crimes committed by youths during the 1990s, much of the public successfully advocated for strict detention guidelines and procedures for youths caught committing crimes. After years of abiding by these measures, Governor Andrew Cuomo authorized the pilot of the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) in six counties throughout the State of New York. These counties included Nassau, Orange, Albany, Onondaga, Monroe, and **Erie**. The purpose of the JDAI is to reduce the penetration of juveniles into the justice system. The purpose of this research was to determine the effectiveness of current practices with juveniles detained in Erie County by measuring rates of recidivism based on how they entered the system (Law enforcement or court admission). The researcher's analysis demonstrated a significant difference in recidivism rates between those juveniles admitted by law enforcement as compared to those admitted by the court. This study revealed that juveniles referred by the courts were significantly more likely to recidivate as compared to those referred by law enforcement.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Martin Floss and Dr. Kathleen Pierino

Kaitlyn M. Griffin

Quality of Service Received by Clients in a Non-Profit Agency, Specifically Catholic Charities of Buffalo

Abstract: This study explored how quality of experience influences social service non-profit agencies particularly in a low-income community such as Buffalo, New York. With an increase in families depending on social service agencies and government funded resources in order to meet their basic needs, it is of the utmost importance for organizations who offer these types of services to respect the lives of the individuals they serve and offer quality service. One possible contributing factor is individual experience; however, the extant literature examining client satisfaction and quality of experience is limited and inconsistent.

Accordingly, the current research utilized client/customer questionnaires to quantify the client experience based on likelihood of recommending the organization to a family or friend and based on the overall quality of service. Study eligibility included secondary data produced by Catholic Charities of Buffalo, a local non-profit whose mission is to serve the low-income population in various ways including providing assistance with essential everyday needs. The correlation test showed there is a strong positive correlation ($r = .78$) between the likelihood of recommending service and the quality of service based on the secondary data obtained from Catholic Charities' 2015-2016 sample.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Dana Bagwell and Dr. Brian Poliner

Brian Gould

Effects of Police Presence on the Perception of Safety

Abstract: News headlines after a serious crime has taken place often include some sort of message that police patrols will be increased in the affected area. This is a common reaction by law enforcement administrations across the nation. These additional patrols come with a cost to the departments. The question is whether or not this additional cost accomplishes the desired goal. The purpose of this research was to determine if an increase in police presence makes people feel safer. Crime statistics are often quoted to prove that a police response is effective. But crime statistics may not directly equate to how safe the residents of the neighborhood feel. In fact, it may be possible that increasing the police presence might make people feel less safe.

To complete this research, participants were shown one of three photographs. The background in each photograph showed a middle class neighborhood with children of mixed races playing in a front yard. In one photograph, there were no police present, one photograph had two officers walking on foot and one photograph had two officers walking on foot and a marked patrol car conducting a car stop. After viewing the photograph, participants were asked to answer five questions to determine their perception of the safety of that neighborhood. Demographic questions were also asked of the participants. The surveys were administered in person across Western New York.

The sample for this research consisted of 231 responses. The responses show that the perception of safety of the neighborhood was not significantly affected by the level of police presence. Furthermore, this result held true across the various different socio-economic and demographic statuses of the respondents. With this information, police administrators may want to consider a more valuable use of resources if their goal is to increase the perception of safety of those they serve.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Martin Floss and Dr. Kathleen Pierino

Haley R. Hymers

Determining the Effectiveness of the New York State SAFE Act on Gun Crime Rates

Abstract: Signed into law on 16 January 2013 by New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo, the Secure Ammunitions and Firearms Enforcement Act was set forth in response to the massacre of school children and staff members of Sandy Hook Elementary in Newton, CT and a first-responder shooting in Webster, NY. This act, described by Gov. Cuomo as the “toughest” form of gun control in the United States, was enacted as a preventative measure against mass shootings as well as an exercise of control over the Second Amendment Constitutional right to bear arms. A longitudinal research design was used to test the null hypothesis. The data obtained included the number of gun menacing and gun assault arrests in Erie County from 2011 to 2014 and was collected from the Erie County Crime Analysis Center. It was analyzed through SPSS and a Chi-square test was used to test the hypothesis. Data from 2011-2012 and 2013-2014 were compared for each crime. The test determined if there was any statistical significance from prior to the enactment of the SAFE Act and after its enactment. A Chi-square test for independence was performed to test the null hypotheses that there is no difference between the number of gun menacing and gun assault arrests before and after the enactment of the SAFE Act. The Chi-square test revealed a significant difference between the number of gun menacing arrests before and after the enactment of the SAFE Act ($\chi^2=484.579$; 1df; $p.<.000$); therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. The same test for gun assault arrests also revealed a significant difference between the number of gun assault arrests before and after the enactment of the SAFE Act ($\chi^2=61.646$; 1df; $p.<.000$). This also caused the null hypothesis to be rejected. It can be concluded that after the enactment of the New York State SAFE Act, the rates of gun menacing and gun assault arrests significantly decreased. Therefore, the hypothesis that the New York State SAFE Act effectively reduced the rate of gun menacing and gun assault arrests was supported. In the simplest of terms, the SAFE Act, per the results of the study, effectively reduced gun menacing and gun assault crimes.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Martin Floss and Dr. Brian Poliner

Keshia M. Jacobs

Causes of Workplace Dysfunction in Primary Care and Its Effect on Employee Morale

Abstract. The contributors to workplace dysfunction create a toxic work environment where exceptional employees may lose motivation and the lack of desire to perform for an organization that may not be supporting their individualistic needs. Many studies have been conducted on workplace dysfunction and morale, but only a few in the primary care setting. Confidential surveys and short answer questions were administered to the sample of a pediatric primary care practice in Western New York. The collection of data reflects effects on employee satisfaction, perceived organizational culture, organizational commitment, employee morale, workplace stress, and work function capability.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Dana Bagwell and Dr. Brian Poliner

Christopher Jock

Exploring the Effects of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI): The Impact of Gender and Term of Stay for Juvenile Delinquents

My Capstone project is based off of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative. The use of effective programs and interventions to reduce juvenile recidivism is a national priority. Previous research indicates putting large numbers of juveniles behind bars does not reduce future criminal behavior, provides little benefit to public safety, and exposes young criminals to violence and abuse in correctional facilities. The juvenile justice system has changed dramatically throughout the United States history. Traditionally, the United States juvenile justice system has enforced two approaches: the retributive model and the rehabilitation model.

In 1993, the Annie E. Casey Foundation launched the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI), an innovative multi-year, multi-site project undertaken to demonstrate that jurisdictions can reduce reliance on secure detention without sacrificing public safety. The initiative had four basic objectives: 1) to eliminate the inappropriate or unnecessary use of secure detention; 2) to minimize failures to appear and the incidence of delinquent behavior; 3) to redirect public finances from building new facility capacity to responsible alternative strategies; and 4) to improve conditions in secure detention facilities.

Erie County is one of six jurisdictions engaged in utilizing the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative in the State of New York. The county was awarded an 18-month grant to focus on detention reform.

There is extensive research on the type of individual and how certain personality traits and circumstances effect recidivism. Gender and term of stay within a detention center tend to be an indicator of whether or not a juvenile delinquent will recidivate. This project focused on data provided by Erie County and the JDAI. Using SPSS, we researched the relationship between gender and the term of stay of juvenile delinquents over four separate quarters. The first two quarters were not statistically significant, although males tended to have a longer term of stay. Quarters three and four were unable to be tested because of missing data.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Martin Floss and Professor John Culhane, JD

Sponsored by: Al Dirschberger, Commissioner, John Ryan - MSW

Ashley A. Kurucz

Foot Patrols Effect on Community Fear of Crime in Western New York

Abstract: Community policing in the form of foot patrols is a broadened area of research. The research has demonstrated that crime rates are not significantly affected by the use of foot patrol. Although, a relatively new area of research inquires whether foot patrols reduce the fear of crime in the neighborhoods or communities patrolled. Cheektowaga Police Department runs a foot patrol program every year. A quasi-experimental design was used to test the fear of crime in these areas. Surveys were administered to residents who live in the area that the officers patrol on foot, bike, and motorcycle. The same survey was also administered to residents of Cheektowaga and Amherst who live in similar demographic areas that did not receive the foot patrol program. Overall, it was reported that even though many residents from the foot patrolled areas felt safer, there was not a significant difference between non patrolled areas and the areas that received patrol.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Martin Floss and Dr. Kathleen Pierino

Sponsored by: Chief David Zack Cheektowaga Police Department

Ambrielle LaBardo

Examining the Effectiveness of Using the Federal RPI as a Method of Selecting Experimental and Control Groups

Abstract: Upwards of 700,000 offenders are released every year from state, local, and federal prisons. For released offenders, reintegration back into the community is not an easy task, as they are faced with a number of social and economic challenges. To promote successful reintegration back into their communities, federal and state reentry programs have been created. Over the past five years Hilbert College Graduate students have conducted research to evaluate the effectiveness of the Federal Reentry Court Program in the Western District of New York. The purpose of the previous studies has been to examine whether offenders graduating from reentry programs had lower recidivism rates than those of a matched control group. Each year, research has shown that there was no significant decrease in recidivism. Therefore, the lack of effectiveness of the reentry court program may be a result of selection bias between the two groups.

The purpose of this study is to determine whether the control and experimental groups that have been used in previous studies are truly equivalent, allowing for a fair comparison to examine the effectiveness of the reentry court program at reducing recidivism.

This study will use a quasi-experimental design to obtain the results. Data will be extracted and collected on both the experimental and control group through the Probation and Pretrial Services Automated Case Tracking System (PACTS). Each group has been matched on an exact RPI score (Risk Prediction Index). The experimental group ($n_1=87$) and the matched control group ($n_2=87$) that have been used in previous studies, will be tested for equivalence based on variables that contribute to the RPI score. The elements to be studied are the variables that contribute to the RPI, such as an offender's demographics, mental health, level of education, drug and substance abuse history and criminal history.

The results of this study have yet to be obtained, however if the results find that the RPI score is an inadequate and unreliable indicator of potential recidivism then it would provide a logical explanation as to why previous studies have found that the reentry court is not effective, when in reality it truly is and help to correct the selection bias in order to better choose more equivalent groups for comparison when doing research.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Yvonne Downes and Dr. Martin Floss

Megan Mahoney

Priority Policing in the Reduction of Fatal Injury and Traffic Accidents

Abstract: Police patrol is the most basic function of policing. Law enforcement agencies can conduct traffic enforcement details based on crash data of their patrol area with the goal of impacting motorist's behavior, and improving traffic safety within their jurisdiction. This Research study was designed to help provide Hamburg Police Department with information to determine if High Priority policing helped reduce traffic accidents in comparison to regular patrol. The Hamburg Police Department formulated and composited data to compute and compare ten "hot spot" areas where auto and personal injury crashes have occurred, to show the expected outcome of traffic accidents during the year 2011. After the ten hot spots were identified information was then compiled again for the following four years (2012-2015) to examine if high priority policing reduced traffic accidents. The ten hotspots zones 1-10 were split into 5 experimental areas and 5 control areas. A chi-square test was used to show the findings if there is a significant difference in the use of high priority policing in comparison to regular patrol. The data formulated with in this study did not show a statistical significance in the use of high priority policing ($\chi^2=1.284$; 1df; $p.<.257$); however the data does show the expected outcome of a reduction in the amount of accidents with in Hamburg police department's jurisdiction.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Martin Floss and Dr. Brian Poliner

Timothy M. McKeever

The Effects of Mentoring on the Personal and Professional Health of the Pastor

Abstract: Mentoring has the ability to play a dramatic role in the personal and professional development of an employee. From health care to education, every industry relies its expert employees to pass on the knowledge they have gained over the years to those following in their footsteps. Pastors are no exception. This study looked at the personal and professional health of the pastor, and how those in informal mentoring relationships had their health affected. Furthermore, the research looked at how burnout played a factor with those that are in a mentoring relationship, and those who were not. Lastly, this project will determine whether or not the Genesis Conference of the Free Methodist Church (sample) should look into developing a formal mentoring system.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Dana Bagwell, Dr. Brian Poliner, Professor Pat Heraty, MBA

Ekua Mends-Aidoo

The Economic Impact of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus on the adjacent Fruit Belt Neighborhood

Abstract: The Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC) is made up of nine member institutions that serve as a core for public and private investments surrounding life sciences and medical initiatives. One of the core principles of the BNMC is to engage the surrounding neighborhoods to promote and enhance diversity, inclusion, and community revitalization as well as creates and seeks collaborations and community solutions (Gamble Associates, 2003). With the continued development of the medical campus, the question remains as to whether growth will spin off the success of its continued progression to impact the neighborhoods that surround it positively. This retrospective, longitudinal study will examine baseline economic community indicators at the beginning of BNMC development up to its growth and existence today to determine if there is for sure a benefit to the historic Fruit Belt neighborhood that lies adjacent to the BNMC.

The Fruit Belt Neighborhood is defined as U.S. Census Tract 31. When comparing educational attainment in US Census Tract 31 in the year 2000 (BNMC inception) 63.2% of the population 25 and older was a high school graduate compared to 24.2% of the population in years 2009-2014. When comparing median gross rent, in the year 2000 rent was \$415 in U.S. Census Tract 31 compared to \$643 in years 2009-2014. (Social Explorer Tables (SE), Census 2000, 2009-2014, U.S. Census Bureau and Social Explorer).

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Dana Bagwell and Steve Wischmann, MA

Brianna O'Connor

Measuring Perceptions of Police Use of Force and the Use of Force Continuum in the Town of Cheektowaga

Extensive research has been conducted on law enforcement agencies relating to the highly scrutinized topic of use of force, but little has been collected from citizens in the community. A sample of the police officers of the Town of Cheektowaga ($N_1=129$) and a sample of the citizens of the Town of Cheektowaga ($N_2=71,774$) were surveyed regarding their perceptions on police use of force scenarios. The survey contained eight use-of-force scenarios and questions regarding the appropriateness of the amount of force used, if the force used is regarded as a violation of the local agency's use of force policy, if the use of force is thought to be excessive when considering the use of force continuum, and what discipline, if any, the respondent believed should and would follow. Police and citizen responses to the scenarios were then compared to measure if perceptions differ between the two groups. Chi-square tests were used to determine if there were significant differences between the police officer ($n_1=88$) and the citizen ($n_2=184$) groups. For seven out of eight scenarios, there was a statistically significant difference ($p < .000$) between police and citizen responses with regards to the appropriateness of force used in each scenario. The results from this study suggest that residents and police officers in the Town of Cheektowaga perceive use of force differently.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Martin Floss and Dr. Mark Paoni

Kylie Reinholz

The Relationship Between General Health, Disciplinary Infractions and Grades at Sweet Home High School 2016-2017

Abstract: Despite the fact that it is a widely believed concept that diet influences behavior, the idea of controlling for nutrition and diet to improve behavior is a narrowly researched topic. Lead researcher Bernard Gesch conducted a study in which he administered a diet supplemented with vitamins, minerals and some fatty acids to one group and a placebo to another. The group receiving the active supplement committed an average of 26.3% fewer offenses and had the greatest reduction of the most violent offenses (Robinson, 2002). The issue is that adolescents often do not get the proper nutrition for a number of factors including food advertising, social influence, poverty, environment and dietary routines. The purpose of this research is to study the impact of students' diet, nutrition and exercise, (based on a self-administered survey taken in a school setting) on school behavior, as well as grade point average (GPA). The survey was conducted at Sweet Home High School, SHHS, in Health Education classes throughout a 2-day period, via Survey Monkey, an online survey distributor. After data collection, each student was given an overall health score, based on a formula created from weighted answers to questions about personal healthy and unhealthy habits. Overall health scores were then correlated with number of disciplinary actions a student has received since the beginning of the academic school year. A Pearson's Matrix indicated statistically significant results at the $p < .05$ level for a 2-tailed test. These results showed the hypothesis to be true; as healthy score went up, the times a student got in trouble went down. However, the chi-square test indicated that while the trends supported the hypothesis, the differences were not great enough to achieve statistical significance. When comparing overall health and GPA, a Chi-Square Test indicated that there is a significant difference in GPA while controlling for the student's Overall Health Score. The social importance of this study is that general health, in the form of diet, exercise and nutrition, is expected to improve both GPA's and how students behave in school.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Carol Nowak and Dr. Martin Floss

Emily Robertson

Current Housing Barriers for People with Disabilities: Implications on Quality of Life

Abstract: In America today, 56.7 million people are living with a disability (Peacock, Iezzoni, & Harkin, 2015). Institutions are no longer used, but the barriers to long term care and housing for people with disabilities remains a serious problem. With the growth in population, it is crucial that services are more effective and can adequately be accessed (Williamson & Perkins, 2014). The research objective of this study is to examine the current barriers within housing for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. This is done to further understand the implications on their quality of life. The study was conducted by surveying human service professionals within the Western New York area. They were surveyed on their perception of the current housing supports for people with disabilities, and asked how they believed the supports have affected the quality of life of the individuals served.

Using data collected within the survey, the descriptive research examined the biggest barriers within housing, and offered one idea from each participant for improving service. The results will be used to improve delivery of service, and inform future decisions regarding housing supports for people with disabilities within the Western New York Community.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Dana Bagwell and Dr. Brian Poliner

Tara Schultz, M.A., MHC

Employee Motivation in Non-Profit and Public Sector Employment

Abstract: Employers as a whole are tasked with recruiting and retaining quality employees that further the organization's mission and values. Turnover and the ensuing hiring, training cycle can prove to be a costly expense to an organization. Examining the motivating factors that recruit and retain employees could assist organizations in keeping this costly cycle down and increasing their employees' satisfaction, productivity, and retention rates. This can all be achieved by examining and identifying the extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors and ensuring that the organization is meeting those needs of the employee. The sample is comparing employees from a local non-profit organization to employees from a local public sector organization. Both organizations work with children, families, and individuals identified as in need of services. Quantitative data was collected via a traditional satisfaction survey that offered limited response choices to assess employee satisfaction and the motivators that retain employees. This is a quantitative, non-experimental, descriptive observational study.

Using data collected in this survey, this research examined the extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors with the impact on satisfaction.

Faculty Mentors: Heather Gresham, J.D. and Dr. Dana Bagwell

Kathleen Trask

Examining the Key Components of a Successful Nonprofit Collaboration

Abstract: Collaborations are important for stakeholders and organizations of all shapes and sizes; however, forming a collaborative is not an easy task. The examination of key components in nonprofit collaborations will likely advance the process of transparency, openness of methods, and inclusiveness of participants. Most importantly, collaboration within nonprofits and their partners illustrate a positive and progressive step towards the greater good. In today's competitive funding environment even the smallest funders want detailed reports, data, and statistics. To consider teaming up with a competitor requires a whole new way of thinking and behaving. This project examines the key components of a successful collaboration by distributing two surveys to two different samples of participants that are currently engaged in an active collaboration. Likert scale format questions were distributed to the *members* of the Afterschool Network of Western New York (ASNWNY) and a separate survey was distributed to the *partners* of the ASNWNY. Individual group responses and a comparison of group responses were analyzed to gain an in depth view of successful key components.

A focus group responding to the findings of the study was conducted to enhance the overall integrity of the project. Focus group participants were specifically chosen for their area of expertise and are considered top leaders in collaborative efforts. Rich open ended responses added a comprehensive in-depth dimension to the research. New and significant successes and barriers were discussed outside of the original data set. Focus group transcript available for review.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Dana Bagwell and Dr. Brian Poliner

Daniel Walczak

Does Gun Control Reduce Crime: The Efficacy of the New York State SAFE Act

This study examines what effects, if any, the New York State Secure Ammunition and Firearms Enforcement (SAFE) Act had on the rate of violent gun crime within Erie County, New York. There is a perceived notion that hindering access to firearms will create a reduction in crime and this reaction will then have an even greater impact on violent crime. The objective of this study is to prove that the enhanced gun control legislation provided by the SAFE Act has not affected the homicide rate within Erie County.

Numerous studies have attempted to validate the success or failure of prominent gun control legislation within the United States. The majority of these studies were conducted at a macro level and covered large or heavily populated areas. The purpose of this study is to examine whether the New York State SAFE Act, has decreased the rate of violent gun crime within Erie County.

To conduct this study longitudinal design was utilized to evaluate the data, that consisted of gun homicide and gun robbery arrests. This data set was collected from the Erie County Crime Analysis Center. It covers the time periods two years prior to the enactment of the New York State SAFE Act (2011 and 2012) and two years following its enactment (2013 and 2014).

It was concluded that the enhanced gun control policy provided by the New York State SAFE Act does not correlate to a reduction in violent gun crime. Since the homicide rate increased during this study it can be demonstrated that this legislation has been ineffective at reducing the occurrence of gun homicide within the County of Erie.

Faculty Mentors: Dr. Martin Floss and Prof. John Culhane, JD