

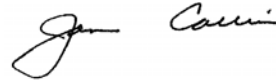
HENNEPIN-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP QUARTERLY UPDATE

From Commissioner Jan Callison's Office

Fall 2009

The Hennepin-University Partnership (HUP) is supported by the County Board and the University of Minnesota. On behalf of the County Board, I've accepted a role as the Board lead, responsible for providing guidance and monitoring the progress of this important and unique initiative. This Quarterly Update is intended to help communicate within Hennepin about HUP activities and outcomes.

For additional information, please contact me or Kathie Doty at kdoty@umn.edu.



The Latest

HHH Capstone Projects – Summer 2009

Humphrey Institute Master of Public Policy students take a "capstone" class at the end of their studies, and this class is offered in the summer of each year for the class that is about to graduate. Students form consultant teams, and choose a public policy issue from a real-world client for their capstone work. Five out of eight projects for the 2009 Humphrey Master of Public Administration capstone program focused on Hennepin County clients: Building an African Forum in MN (Client: Vinnie Kutty); Governance for a District Energy system (Client: Carl Michaud); Planning/Zoning for District Energy (Client: Carl Michaud); Governance Structure for Water Management in Hennepin County (Client: Joel Settles); Home Ownership for Persons with Disabilities (Client: Todd Monson). For copies of reports generated by Humphrey students, contact biel0032@umn.edu. Hennepin County staff who are interested in submitting project ideas for the summer of 2010 can get information on how to do this from the HUP office.

UROC About to Open on the Northside

The University of Minnesota has made a major commitment to working with communities on the Northside of Minneapolis, and this commitment is evidenced by the opening this Fall of the Urban Research, Engagement, and Outreach Center (UROC) at the corner of Penn Ave and Plymouth Ave No. The HUP will be working with the UROC Director, Irma McClaurin, to explore links with Hennepin County as the Center develops. A possibility will be collaboration with the NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center, and Dr. McClaurin and NorthPoint Director Stella Whitney-West will be conferring on possible connections.

For more information on UROC, visit: <http://www.uroc.umn.edu/>

New Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) Director, Ed Goetz, Leading Strategic Planning Effort for CURA

In June, Professor Edward Goetz from the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs became the new director of the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA). Professor Goetz replaces Tom Scott, who retired from the post of director in early 2009 and whose work with County Administration was instrumental in the development of the HUP. Professor Goetz is a former associate dean for academic affairs at the Humphrey Institute and served as director of the Masters of Urban and Regional Planning degree program. His research and teaching areas are urban studies and politics, housing policy and discrimination, neighborhood revitalization, and economic development.

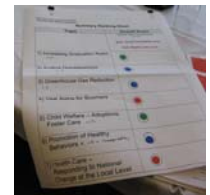


Ed Goetz

One of Professor Goetz' first actions as the director of CURA was to initiate a strategic planning process that will likely result in greater focus of CURA's energies in a few key areas that will have community impacts. Another likely goal for CURA will be to take a more active role in translating research for use by policy makers and practitioners. The strategic planning process is expected to be concluded in October 2009.

3 Focus Areas

At a planning session in late April, five Hennepin County Commissioners, County Administration, and leaders from the University of Minnesota discussed which major policy areas should be the focus for the HUP. While this was a difficult task given that the goal was to identify no more than three or four areas, the group agreed on the following policy areas:



Policy area ranking sheet

EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Increasing high school graduation rates is considered one of the most effective ways to improve the wellbeing of the community.

- **Major public policy question:** What role should the County play in increasing high school graduation rates?

- **Example research questions:** What's being done in other parts of the state/country to increase graduation rates? What predicts drop-out behaviors? Is there a link between truancy and dropping out? What specific actions can the County take to make an impact on graduation rates? How do we measure various strategies to assess their effectiveness?

- **Work to date:** A group of Hennepin and University staff and researchers have been identified and are beginning work on 1) clearly articulating the issues; 2) assembling existing research and work done on issues of educational achievement; and 3) identifying and prioritizing key research questions.

- **Next steps:** Continue work to identify and prioritize research questions with the goal of developing a plan for conducting research to address major policy questions.

CHILD WELL-BEING

Programs for children whose parents cannot take care of them too frequently do not achieve the goal of providing a stable and secure place where such children can thrive. In particular, adoptions often "fail," and children placed in foster care do not develop a healthy attachment to an adult caregiver.

- **Major public policy question:** How can the County increase successful outcomes for children placed in foster care?

- **Example research questions:** What are the needs of children who must be removed from the home, or for whom no home exists and how do these needs vary depending on a child's age? How does the length of time in foster care affect outcomes for children? Are there programs that have shown better outcomes than we experience in Hennepin County? Can these be replicated here?

- **Work to date:** A group of Hennepin and University staff and researchers have been identified and are 1) assessing research questions in light of existing University research and capacity; 2) sharing existing research.

- **Research about to begin:** It is increasingly important to have a multi-faceted and more complete understanding of how youth fare in young adulthood as they exit foster care. To date, much of the research on this population has been based on sample groups and qualitative data. Anita Larson from the U's Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare, and former Hennepin County staff person, is launching a new study on the status of youth who age out of foster care in Minnesota. Three different studies of this population are planned: a statewide descriptive study; a Hennepin County-specific study, and a study of the outcomes of disabled youth who age out of care to support a dissertation research project. The long-range goal is to follow these youth as they become adults, up until age 21. This work will fill gaps in knowledge about this important population as well as help address important policy questions.

IMPACTS OF THE BOOMER BULGE

The demographics of our county, state, and country are changing with regard to age as the "baby boomers" grow older and create a significant population of older adults—many of whom will be active and relatively healthy for years to come.

- **Major public policy question:** Should the County change the way it delivers services to recognize the growing and perhaps special needs of the baby boomer generation? And the same for the University?

- **Example research questions:** What are the anticipated non-medical needs of aging baby boomers? (Housing, transportation, adult education, recreation and other active pursuits). Are baby boomers different from other generations in ways that matter?

- **Work to date:** a group of Hennepin, Carver, Dakota County staff, along with state agency staff will be meeting this month to review and prioritize policy questions that need research. They have identified Carver and Dakota Counties as leaders in the area of aging plans and will be discussing a list of issues involving the baby boomer bulge—everything from transportation to volunteering and employment.

For more about the April planning session, visit: <http://www1.umn.edu/hup/Planning.html>. For meeting notes and research materials collected to date, visit: <http://hennepin-university.ning.com/groups>.

Ongoing Work

Several initiatives and programs have been launched or sponsored through the HUP, and work continues in these areas:

Transitway Impacts Research Program

This multi-stakeholder and multi-year research program was launched in 2006 and has generated five research projects looking at how the construction of a major transitway such as the Hiawatha Light Rail line impacts the surrounding community. One of the first research projects looked at impacts on residential property values and found that areas around stations in the "neighborhood" portion of the route saw higher increases in property value than similar properties in other areas.



Research on Homelessness

Hennepin staff person, Lisa Thornquist, is responsible for initiating and managing research on the Heading Home Hennepin plan. To date, Ms. Thornquist has successfully engaged several U researchers and students in a range of research activities to better understand causes of homelessness and effectiveness of various intervention activities. For example, she's worked with HHH Professor Maria Hanratty, School of Social Work Professor David Hollister, and Department of Sociology's Arturo Baiocchi.

The work done to date includes an evaluation of the "Housing First" program, part of a recent nationwide policy trend that places frequent users of county shelters into stable housing. Research findings showed that this program reduced shelter stays, increased health care coverage, and reduced police contact for both those with histories as crime perpetrators and crime victims. Ms. Thornquist is presently exploring follow up on research done to date, and also reaching out to other University researchers and students to further expand the range of research projects around homelessness. For more information about this important work, contact her at 612-879-3656.

SHAPE

The HUP has been working with School of Public Health faculty member Michael Oakes to access SHAPE data to research how health relates to micro-neighborhood conditions over time. 2006 SHAPE data continues to be available to University faculty and students, and the 2010 SHAPE survey will begin soon.

In the Concept Phase

Citizen Professional Project

The HUP is working with Professor Bill Doherty from the U's Family Social Science department and Kristine Martin to develop a project that will test a model for building a cohort of "citizen professionals" with involvement from county staff. The model strives to foster shared responsibility between communities and government to address important issues — government staff working with the public, not simply for the public. The county staff would be trained in how to apply this model and would receive coaching as they launch projects with community members that address issues of importance to both the community and the county. For more on the Citizen Professional model, see the HUP website: http://www1.umn.edu/hup/collaborate/lunch_series.html.

Research on Somali Youth

The University's Office of Equity and Diversity was approached by representatives of the Somali community with a request that the University help find ways to conduct research on issues facing Somali youth. The HUP and CURA, as well as the Hennepin County Department of Research, Planning and Development are working with the Office of Equity and Diversity to develop a plan to respond to this request.

Rethinking the Solid Waste Program

As part of the effort to transform the county's solid waste system, the county will review its current waste reduction, recycling, and composting goals to recommend new, increased targets. The county will be developing strategies to increase recycling of materials and composting of organic waste by residents and business. One of the strategies to be evaluated is managing organic waste through anaerobic digestion to produce a fuel and soil amendment. The county will also review the current fee structure to recommend changes that will support the new waste reduction, recycling, and composting goals.



Get to Know a Part of the University

It's a big and complex institution-- each quarter we'll highlight a center, department or researcher doing work that relates to a public policy concern

The Institute of Child Development—Department of Child Psychology

The Institute has long been a premier center of scholarship, teaching, and outreach devoted to the understanding and fostering of child development. Coursework and research activities focus primarily on the central cognitive, social, emotional, and psychological processes that underlie the development of infants, children, and youth. One of the oldest centers for the study of children's development in the United States, the Institute was organized in 1925 with the aid of funds from the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial in New York. Founded in the belief that the scientific study of child development was essential to the promotion of child welfare, the unit was established as an integral part of the University of Minnesota.

Current Director: Nikki Crick, Distinguished McKnight University Professor, Emma Birkmaier Educational Leadership Professor (2005-08) Ph.D., 1992, Vanderbilt University



Nikki Crick

Dr. Crick and her research team have recently focused on the study of relational aggression (e.g., using social exclusion or rumor spreading as a form of retaliation), a form of aggression that has been shown to be more characteristic of girls than are the physical, overt forms of aggression that traditionally have been studied in the past. To date, studies have shown that:

- 1) Relationally aggressive children are at risk for both concurrent and future social-psychological maladjustment (e.g., peer rejection, problematic friendships),
- 2) Children who engage in gender non-normative forms of aggression (relationally aggressive boys and overtly aggressive girls) may be at heightened risk for maladjustment, and
- 3) Social information-processing factors may play a role in the generation of relationally aggressive behaviors.

They are currently conducting a five-year longitudinal study of the antecedents (e.g., parent and sibling socialization factors), correlates (e.g., friendship qualities), and consequences (e.g., depression, delinquency) of relational and overt aggression in which they are following children from their third to their sixth years of school.

For more on her research see "[Sugar and spice—NOT!: Aggression in girls](#)"

Other Faculty affiliated with the Institute:

- **Dante Cicchetti**, McKnight Presidential Chair and Professor, Institute of Child Development and Department of Psychiatry; Ph.D., 1977, University of Minnesota
- **Byron Egeland**, Irving B. Harris Professor; Ph.D., 1966, University of Iowa
- **Ann S. Masten**, Distinguished McKnight University Professor; Ph.D., 1982, University of Minnesota

For more information, check out their website: <http://www.cehd.umn.edu/icd/>