



HENNEPIN-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP
Connecting Where It Counts

SMARTLINK

Status Update October 2006

HENNEPIN - UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

Connecting Where it Counts

In late 2004, Hennepin County and the University of Minnesota launched an initiative to capture value for both organizations through a more strategic collaboration—connecting the two organizations where mutual benefit can be found. This includes collaboration on important community-based research, sharing of academic and practitioner expertise, and providing students with field experience.

The vision is to make the connection between the state's premier research institution and largest county more strategic—to build from existing and historical collaborations towards a sustained and productive relationship—**connecting where it counts.**

If you have ideas for ways that Hennepin and the University could work together, contact the Hennepin-University Liaison, Kathie Doty, at:
kdoty@umn.edu
612.625.4383

COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH ON TRANSITWAY IMPACTS

A good example of the possibilities that can arise through strategic collaboration is the current plan to convene University, county and regional agencies to conduct important research on the community and economic impacts transitways such as the Hiawatha LRT line.

In early 2005, Hennepin County and the University of Minnesota began discussions about their mutual interest in learning more about how transitways such as the Hiawatha light rail line impact the surrounding community.

With Hennepin County's interest in better understanding the public policy implications of transitway developments and the University's interest in developing expertise in the area of transportation studies, enthusiasm and support quickly grew among several players, including the Hennepin County Public Works, the University's Humphrey Institute, the Center for Transportation Studies, and the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs. Strong executive support provided by both institutions oiled the collaborative gears and set an ambitious project in motion.



The Hiawatha LRT was completed in 2004, precipitating significant economic and community impacts. The University of Minnesota and Hennepin County are leading an initiative to bring together stakeholders and collaborate on measuring the impacts.

Initially, Hennepin County and the University's State and Local Policy Program worked together to review existing efforts to measure transitway impact and produce the [Inventory of Data and Research on the Economic and Community Impacts of the Hiawatha LRT](#), available by searching on the Humphrey Institute website, www.hhh.umn.edu. The findings of this report grew into a plan to coordinate the multiple regional partners involved in planning and developing major transitway projects around

academic research on transit impacts. By bringing together a variety of transit stakeholders to work in conjunction with the University of Minnesota, the potential exists to produce locally relevant and nationally-recognized academic research on how transitways impact their surrounding communities.

Stay on board for more as this important initiative moves forward!

PARTNERSHIP ON THE NORTHSIDE

The University of Minnesota and Hennepin County share an extensive history of involvement in Minneapolis' Northside. Both have established a local presence to provide a range of health and human service programs to the area's residents.

Additionally, the two organizations share a commitment to furthering their involvement on the Northside through a community-based approach. An example of this commitment is the University Northside Partnership (UNP), a collaborative effort to improve social and

economic conditions in North Minneapolis. Objectives of the UNP include improving reading skills and learning outcomes for young children, increasing adult literacy and access to higher education, helping with

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4 PERSPECTIVES:

Interested in collaborating in the area of Human Services and Public Health? Contact those profiled here to learn more about their projects and opportunities for involvement.

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-Sue Zuidema



Todd Monson

Area Director, Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health Department (HSPHD)

Contact: todd.monson@co.hennepin.mn.us

612.348.4464

Projects and Interests: As an HSPHD Area Director, Todd Monson has worked on a variety of public health projects. Among them is the SHAPE survey, a public health surveillance project involving 7,500 adults and 5,000 children that will be conducted for the third time in 2006. Since 2001, he has worked with the School of Public Health at the University to measure the health status of the county’s population and provide information to those who share the goal of improv-

ing the health of residents.

Currently, his interests include addressing the challenge of training case managers for elderly people with disabilities. Case management services that used to be provided by counties now fall to private entities that are under contract with counties, and there is no general set of standards for certification or ongoing training. “I think we in Minnesota could do a lot on the training side by

establishing an institute that would be responsible for managing a training plan that targets case management staff across the state.” If you are interested in being a part of further discussions about creating a *Case Management Institute*, please contact Todd Monson.

Perspective on Partnership: “Having disagreements is healthy and can be a positive source of energy. Partnership has encouraged us to actually listen to different points of view, and as a result, we’ve solved all the problems we’ve encountered.”



Sue Zuidema

Area Director, Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health Department (HSPHD)

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612.348.4382

Projects and Interests: As an HSPHD Area Director, Sue Zuidema has worked in partnership on a variety of projects that have benefited from a collaborative approach. These include ImmuLink, an immunization registry developed with the metropolitan area health departments, efforts to improve access to preventative care for children on medical assistance, and programs to reduce teen smoking.

Her current research ideas encompass a range of challenges within the field of Public Health and Human Services. In

particular, they include researching and evaluating trends in uninsured people and those on Medical Assistance (Medicaid), racial and ethnic disparities related to health and economic conditions, and services to seriously mentally ill persons.

She sees a variety of opportunities for students and faculty at the University of Minnesota to be engaged in the design, data collection, analysis and reporting of research projects that explore these challenges, as well as designing outreach and legislative proposals. Contact

Sue Zuidema if you would like to be connected with the point person for one of the research projects mentioned here.

Perspective on Partnership: “The University, with its research competence and access to best practices is a natural partner for us—very complimentary. Together we have an enormous opportunity to make a difference to citizens needing health or human services provided through government.”

HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HEALTH



Simone French

Professor of Epidemiology & Community Health and Co-Director of the Obesity Prevention Center, University of Minnesota

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612.626.8594

Projects and Interests: The work of Professor Simone French focuses on the social and environmental influences on eating and physical activity behaviors, community-based strategies for eating behavior change, and adolescent nutrition and physical activity. She is currently involved in the *Northside Food Project* (<http://northsidefoodproject.org>), an initiative that seeks to promote an agenda of healthy food access and community empowerment in North Minneapolis. As

a part of this initiative, she helped lead a symposium in May that brought together researchers and community leaders to identify and discuss issues related to healthy food access in low-income communities. Other recent projects she has been involved in include a collaborative effort with Metro-Transit to promote healthy food choices and physical activity among bus drivers, and partnerships with Minneapolis Public Schools to improve healthy food options and with the Girl

Scouts Council of Minneapolis to promote behaviors that increase bone growth and development.

Perspective on Partnership:

“It is very helpful to work together to develop programs that will be of maximal interest and use to the target group. Communication is also enhanced when community partners are involved in a meaningful way in the program development and evaluation. Some things we have learned from our community partnerships include identifying individuals in the community early on who can give input and experience from the outset, and maintaining regular and frequent communications at all steps along the way.”



K. Charlie Lakin, Director of the Research and Training Center on Community Living, part of the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota

Contact: lakin001@umn.edu
612-624-5005

Projects and Interests: Dr. Charlie Lakin has nearly 35 years of experience providing services to individuals with disabilities as a teacher, researcher, consultant, and advocate. He has directed dozens of research and training projects and has authored more than 250 publications based on that work. The Institute on Community Integration supports the proposition that all persons with developmental and other disabilities can and should live as integrated, valued, and productive members of local communities and seeks to make this possible through improving the services and social supports

available to individuals with disabilities and their families. As a part of the Institute, the Research and Training Center (RTC) on Community Living engages in research, training, and technical assistance on community living for persons with developmental disabilities locally, across the US and abroad. The RTC maintains national databases on residential and related services, conducts national and state evaluations, provides a national internet-based training program for people providing direct support to individuals with disabilities that has more than 35,000 active learners, is a national cen-

ter of expertise on workforce development, and has long been active in research, technical assistance and training to promote choice and self-determination for individuals with disabilities and families.

Perspective on Partnership:

“Minnesota is a wonderful laboratory for our work because Minnesotans have a strong sense of justice, believe in equality and have been at the forefront of innovations in bringing people out of institutions and into real homes and valued roles in community life for many, many years. Hennepin County is a special place to live and work toward those ends. I am extremely grateful for the openness and commitment of the County to work with others to promote full citizenship, inclusion and opportunity for people with disabilities.”

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-K. Charlie Lakin

PARTNERSHIP ON THE NORTH SIDE

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job training and business opportunities, addressing depression, child abuse and violence, and meeting other needs as identified by the community. University vice president Dr. Robert Jones, who has been at the forefront of promoting the initiative, recently stated that a large research university such as the University of Minnesota needs "to be working really closely with the communities we're a part of, to address real world, contemporary issues."

A major element of the UNP is the proposed Child and Family Center, a mental health center that will be directed by Dr. Dante Cicchetti of the University of Minnesota. As a developmental psychopathologist, Dr. Cicchetti has a long record of conducting ground-breaking research and providing high effective services to children and

adults from diverse backgrounds. The Center will serve people from birth to adulthood through a model that combines research and clinical services.

Hennepin County, led by the Board of Commissioners, supports the UNP through their Northpoint Health and Wellness Center, multiple other programs serving the Northside, and through their broader connection to the University - the Hennepin-University Partnership. The overarching vision is to leverage the resources of both the County and the University, working side-by-side with the Northside community, to build existing strengths and improve community assets. According to Gary Cunningham, CEO of NorthPoint Health & Wellness Center, "The Northside Partnership offers us a chance to do things differently. We can't do it alone, so let's do it together."



From left to right: Dante Cicchetti, Gary Cunningham, and local artist Christopher Harrison. Harrison's painting, in the background, was presented as a gift to Dr. Cicchetti at a NorthPoint community event in July.

Upcoming Events:

Challenges of Interorganizational Integration for Poverty Alleviation

When: November 9, 2006, 3:30 – 6 p.m.

Where: Wilkins Room, Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs

Sponsored by: The Center for Integrative Leadership

Cost and Registration: Free, RSVP to sradjjenovic@umn.edu

More Information: Contact Barbara Crosby at 612.626.7223

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The Relationship of Science and Politics in Environmental Policy Making: Can This Marriage Be Saved?

When: November 14, 2006, 12:15 - 1:30 p.m.

Where: Coffman Memorial Union Theater

Sponsored by: University of Minnesota's Consortium on Law and Values in Health, Environment & the Life Sciences and Joint Degree Program in Law, Health & the Life Sciences

Cost and Registration: Free, R.S.V.P. to lawvalue@umn.edu

NOTES FROM THE LIAISON: UNIVERSITY EXPERTISE



Kathie Doty, Hennepin-University Liaison
For more information, email kdoty@umn.edu

Finding expertise of any sort at the University can be challenging, but finding expertise on social issues, such as teen pregnancy or early childhood education, can be especially tricky since experts may exist in several University departments. Some of the areas to look to on issues of interest to the Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health

Department (HSPHD) include: School of Social Work, Department of Family Social Science, Institute of Child Development, Educational Psychology, Department of Sociology, Humphrey Institute of Public Policy, School of Public Health, and the School of Nursing (and there are others!).

Given this amazing array of places to seek expertise, it is of great value that there exist staff at the University of Minnesota who work across "silos" to find and connect with experts with relevant knowledge. At the outset of the Hennepin-University Partnership (H-UP), **Dr. Catherine Jordan** introduced herself to the Partnership and a very valuable source of information was discovered. Dr. Jordan, a Pediatric Neuropsychologist by training, is Executive Director of the Children, Youth, and Family Consortium (CYFC). For those trying to find the expert needle in the University haystack, Dr. Jordan and staff at the CYFC make it their mission to help. Among the resources CYFC makes available is an [Experts Database](#) designed to assist outsiders in finding qualified faculty and staff of the University of Minnesota with expertise on children, youth, and families. Experts are listed from all schools at the University in areas such as adoption, culture, race and ethnicity, and program evaluation. In the case that one is unable to find an expert in a given area of interest, Dr. Jordan makes herself available as a resource and offers suggestions from among her network of colleagues across the University.



Dr. Catherine Jordan, Executive Director of the Children, Youth, and Family Consortium, is also an expert on community-based research that contributes to social and political change.

For those interested in learning more about the Children, Youth and Families Consortium or using the [Experts Database](#), visit the CYFC website at www.cyfc.umn.edu.