



# Hennepin-University Partnership Update

From the Office of Commissioner Jan Callison

The Hennepin-University Partnership (HUP) is supported by the Hennepin County Board and the University of Minnesota. On behalf of the County Board, I serve as the Board lead, responsible for providing guidance and monitoring the progress of this important initiative. This update is intended to communicate within Hennepin County government about HUP activities and outcomes. For additional information, please contact Kathie Doty at [kdoty@umn.edu](mailto:kdoty@umn.edu) or me at [jan.callison@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:jan.callison@co.hennepin.mn.us).



## Current Research Collaborations

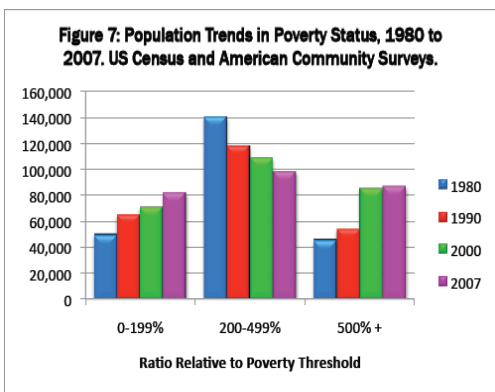
### Trends and Projections in the Population of Hennepin County

A recent report published by University Professor Ross Macmillan and graduate student Alain Vandormael, entitled "Trends and Projections in the Population of Hennepin County as Related to the Client-base for Child Protective Services" uncovers

current challenges faced by children in Hennepin County. Professor Macmillan worked with Hennepin County staff, Lynn Lewis, Jim Baxter, and Donald Sabre, to analyze demographic information and to identify trends impacting at-risk children in our communities. Key findings included evidence of increased disadvantage for young mothers who are more likely to be members of racial and ethnic minorities, not live with their child's biological father and live near or below the

poverty threshold.

This analysis led to Hennepin receiving a grant from the Center for Personalized Prevention Research to



conduct a pilot investigation intended to advance the long-range goals of reducing incidence rates of child abuse and preventing abuse-related adverse mental health outcomes in children. These aims will be accomplished by developing a parenting-focused preventive intervention for a high-risk population of young mothers of preschoolers who are

involved with Child Protection. For more information, contact Lynn at [Lynn.K.Lewis@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:Lynn.K.Lewis@co.hennepin.mn.us).

### Aging Research

"Baby boomers" currently make up nearly 27% of Hennepin County's population. By 2035, all of the Boomers will be 70 or older. Hennepin County is researching how changes associated with aging baby boomers will impact County services and operations. To understand this critical policy issue, county researchers are partnering with the University of Minnesota and others to review the latest research studies, conduct focus groups with boomers, and examine county service data. The research initiative is being lead by Connie Osterbaan, Research, Planning and Development Department, and Todd Monson, Human Services and Public Health Department.



plex topic involving a range of issues including health, housing, transportation and mobility, workforce, social services and financial security. County Administrator Richard Johnson says it's time to get the whole organization thinking about this issue. The County is looking to research to identify when and where the impacts of larger numbers of older adults will begin to be felt. Also of interest is how the county can best position itself to support successful aging and leverage the sizeable resources inherent in the boomer generation. One of the first topics being examined is housing preferences of the boomers. For more information, contact Connie at [Connie.Osterbaan@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:Connie.Osterbaan@co.hennepin.mn.us).

The changing age structure of the population is a com-

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**Cohort Background and Purpose**

In late 2010, the HUP conducted a review of the Partnership program through interviews and focus groups. Ideas were solicited for ways to increase productive connections between Hennepin and the University. One suggestion was that County departments develop liaisons within their departments to work with the HUP to increase knowledge of and access to resources at the University.

With that in mind, the ‘Hennepin County Cohort’ was formed in May to increase the level of productive partnerships between

Hennepin County and The University of Minnesota. **Members of the Cohort are liaisons between their departments and the University, and work to catalyze greater levels of connection in areas that benefit both Hennepin County and the University.** Specifically, Cohort members provide information about how to access University resources to their colleagues, help develop mechanisms to facilitate greater access, act as the key point of contact with the HUP office, and support efforts to measure and communicate about results of Hennepin-University collaborations.

**Work of the Cohort**

In May, Cohort members attended “University 101: Session A” where they learned the basics of how the University functions, discussed the Master Cooperative Agreement and were familiarized with existing projects between Hennepin County and the University. “University 101: Session B” convened in June as a tour of the Minneapolis campus which included a visit to the McNamara Alumni Center, the Minnesota Traffic Observatory, the Walter Digital Technology Center and the College of Design. University leaders met the group at each stop and talked about their work and how the Hennepin-University Partnership acted

as an important resource in helping them connect with the County. In July, August and September, the Cohort met as a working group: they agreed upon a purpose statement, began work on an evaluative survey of County-University projects conducted over the past two years, and became more knowledgeable about the many ways to work with students—undergraduate and graduate students, paid and volunteer students, and individual vs. classroom student projects. For more information on the results of the evaluative surveys, see page 3.



**Cohort Members**

**Cohort members include the following representatives from the corresponding Hennepin County Departments:**

- Budget and Finance -Katherine Kardell
- Community Corrections-Nancy Skilling
- County Attorney-Jodie Wierimaa
- Environmental Services-Jeremy Jones & Amy Roering
- Examiner of Titles-Rebecca Gorski & Alison Schubring
- Housing, Community Works and Transit- Melissa Illies, Ron White, Michael Noonan, Adele Hall
- Human Resources-Leanne Rajtar
- Human Services and Public Health-Jodell O’Connell, Vanessa Bailey, Barb Johnson

- Information Technology-Bob Kelly
- Internal Audit-Ray Ideen
- Library-Amy Luedtke, Ali Turner
- Northpoint Health and Wellness Center-Julie Nielsen
- Property Services-Michael Tupy
- Public Affairs-Carolyn Marinar
- Public Defender-Bob Sorenson
- Public Works Management Support-Greg Gilseth
- Research, Planning and Development-Connie Osterbaan
- Taxpayer Services-Rachel Smith & Paul Buschmann
- Transportation-John Witt

## HUP Cohort Survey Results

In August 2011, members of the HUP Hennepin County Cohort conducted interviews with their colleagues to learn more about recent experiences of County staff working with University faculty, staff, and students. **60 collaborations were reported in the period from 2009 to mid-2011.** The results are in and speak volumes about the important partnerships that have been formed.

### **Project Highlights:**

The following are highlights of three projects that were reported as “more than expected” and “very worthwhile experiences” according to the interviewees:

Housing, Community Works & Transit worked with interns from the University of Minnesota, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, on a project titled, “American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Impact on Hennepin County.” This short-term research project provided the Hennepin County Board with an objective summary to publish research about the macroeconomic effects of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The Human Services and Public Health Department initiated a project titled, “Extension: Adults with Intellectual and Develop-

mental Disabilities (IDD)” through an existing contract with the University. This specific project was initiated by Public Health Promotion. The purpose of the project was to develop a training video for community-based staff that provides services to adults with IDD. The University helped to develop the video and one of the University members also “starred” in the film.

Hennepin County Libraries initiated an evaluation of the longstanding program titled, “Homework Hub” with students from the University of Minnesota School of Social Work to collect data on how homework tutoring was being conducted at two different libraries. The information was used to redesign the tutoring system and integrate the best practices from each program into a new program, once the two systems merged.



The University of Minnesota



Hennepin County Cohort members discussing partnership ideas

### **Lessons Learned:**

- Project planning and communication are key to the success of projects
- Project expectations must be clear and measurable
- When multiple departments at the County are involved, there needs to be strong alignment with internal county stakeholders

## **Recent HUP Events**

**Learning Dreams Event:** On September 23rd, Southeast Minneapolis Council on Learning (SEMCOL) and the University’s Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) co-sponsored a Learning Dreams event showcasing the results of a recent report.



Jerome Stein

Jerome Stein, PhD Learning Dreams Director and Founder, presented compelling data which demonstrated that education and learning are deeply and broadly spread throughout our community, and therefore, policies that embody a concept of education

broader than schooling are necessary to support learning and make progress against the achievement gap. Commissioner Peter McLaughlin and Hennepin Library Director Lois Thompson participated on a panel that reacted to the report and provided insights on how the Learning Dreams work is important to achieving Hennepin County objectives.

Learning Dreams works towards closing the achievement gap by motivating parents to pursue their learning dreams and thereby creating a culture of learning within families. To find out more about Learning Dreams, visit [www.learningdreams.org](http://www.learningdreams.org).

**Co-Parent Court Brown Bag:** The HUP hosted a Brown Bag event on August 25, 2011 around the Co-Parent Court Initiative. This event highlighted joint work of Hennepin County and the University of Minnesota that resulted in a problem solving court for unmarried parents. Co-Parent Court helps never married parents overcome barriers to being effective and involved parents. Key aspects of the holistic support program include co-parenting

education, employment services, domestic violence education and services, and mediation. Presenters included Judge Bruce Peterson, 4th Judicial District, Karen Shirer, Associate Dean of Extension Center for Family Development, Mary Marczak, Extension Evaluation and Research Specialist and Rose Allen, Extension Educator and Professor. For more information visit: <http://co-parentcourt.org>.



## Extension of Citizen Professional Initiative

The University of Minnesota's Citizen Professional Center is a leading player in an emerging trend to change the way government professionals approach citizen engagement. In 2010 they implemented a pilot project entitled 'Hennepin County Citizen Professional project' to train professionals who want to go beyond traditional service delivery and develop skills of democratic citizen engagement to solve problems identified by communities. The pilot effort revealed strong interest in learning and applying this approach, and as a result, the Center is proposing a second phase to continue to support projects developed in Phase 1, double the number of projects, add training for supervisors of employees working on Citizen Professional projects, and support organizational change to improve the County's effectiveness at engaging with communities. Lois Langer Thompson, Hennepin County Library Director, is the lead sponsor for this proposed next phase of Citizen Professional work.

For more information about the Citizen Professional model, go to [www.cehd.umn.edu/cpc](http://www.cehd.umn.edu/cpc).

## Homelessness Data Center

The Office to End Homelessness and the University of Minnesota have partnered on several research projects related to homelessness in order to inform public policy and evaluate programs. Through the HUP, the two entities have been able to merge large county and state data sets on people experiencing homelessness. This effort is part of a national movement to connect data across

## Fall Capstones in collaboration with Hennepin County

Three fall capstone projects were selected from Hennepin County proposals solicited by Humphrey School Professor Jeannie Fox for the Political Advocacy in the Public Interest Capstone Course:

- From Group Home to My Home II: This Time it's Practical (Human Services and Public Health Department, Elana Gravitz)
- Environmental Response Fund – Securing Legislative Renewal of a Critical Tool for Urban Development (Environmental Services Department, Rosemary Lavin)
- Public Awareness and Perceived Value of Hennepin County Government (Public Affairs Department, Carolyn Marinan)

Capstones are a great opportunity to work with graduate students and put their skills/knowledge to practice on important, real-world projects. Thanks to the Hennepin County Cohort for helping to get the word out about the capstone opportunity! If you have an idea for a capstone project, contact your cohort member or the HUP for more information.

systems for better public policy. The research projects to date show the potential of merging data sets to inform public policy and evaluate programs; for example, evaluation of the Housing First model to end homelessness for single adults experiencing long term homelessness. Leading this work is Lisa Thornquist, Heading Home Hennepin program evaluator.

## New HUP Staff

The HUP office recently brought on two new Graduate Assistants, Kristen Gibbs and Brittany Kellerman, to assist in carrying out the work of the Partnership. Kristen is a Master's of Public Health candidate who is interested in worksite wellness and food access issues. Brittany is a Master's of Social Work candidate whose interest areas include child welfare and immigrant and refugee issues. Kristen and Brittany will be working on a variety of projects, including assisting with the coordination of a HUP winter forum, encouraging and supporting Hennepin-University partnerships, organizing Brown Bag events at Hennepin County, etc. Please feel free to contact Kristen or Brittany with any collaboration ideas at [gibb0183@umn.edu](mailto:gibb0183@umn.edu) or [kelle410@umn.edu](mailto:kelle410@umn.edu).



Kristen Gibbs and Brittany Kellerman



Laura Bloomberg

## U of M Faculty Profile

Laura Bloomberg, PhD is the Executive Director of the Center for Integrative Leadership and a member of the Graduate Faculty at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs where she teaches courses on Leadership, Management, and Program Evaluation. Bloomberg's most recent research and policy work has focused on community leadership, youth development, cross-cultural dialogue and educational policy. She has done extensive work with public-private partnerships to design leadership models that support healthy community development.

Bloomberg sees Hennepin County as an invaluable partner and would like to establish new collaborations over the next year. Bloomberg is interested in partnering with Hennepin County in planning and implementing research/practitioner exploration of how multiple sectors (public, private, nonprofit, media, higher education, etc.) add public value. Also, she would like to regularly include a Hennepin County evaluation project as one of the "clients" in her program evaluation classes. Interested in collaborating? Contact Bloomberg at [bloom004@umn.edu](mailto:bloom004@umn.edu).