

FLINT COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

Leveraging assets for Flint's future



2019 SUMMER COHORT



School of Social Work
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF
SOCIAL SCIENCE



OUR SCIENCE **TRANSFORMS THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE**
AND INSPIRES LEADERS



WHO WE ARE

The MSU School of Social Work and the College of Social Science have formed a partnership with Flint community leaders to develop a new program: the Flint Community Initiative. The program combines service learning and internships, and is open to undergraduate and graduate students from every major and college at MSU.

This innovative program identifies the assets already present in Flint's communities and amplifies their impact.

COMMUNITY IMPACT



BEN HENDRICKSON & MUNZER ELSIR

Ben Hendrickson, an International Relations senior, and Munzer Elsir, a Computer Science junior, were paired with the Asbury Community Development Corporation to work on the Flint Eastside Connecting Neighbors Project. They created and implemented surveys in both English and Spanish to identify the gifts and talents of Eastside neighborhood residents. They also developed a prototype database so that the community can have a resource that highlights assets.



MADELINE “MADDIE” ELLIOT

Social Science Scholar and Social Work junior Madeline “Maddie” Elliot worked with the Neighborhood Engagement Hub to create an accessible, immersive directory of Flint’s community groups and neighborhood associations. By better outlining the boundaries and highlighting the strengths of each group, Elliot hopes the directory will foster more effective collaboration between these organizations.



SHELBY BREJNAK

Shelby Brejnak, an Interdisciplinary Studies senior, worked with two divisions of the city of Flint: Planning & Zoning and Blight Elimination. Brejnak’s project developed a resource guide that will assist neighborhood groups, agencies, and residents with accessing government services in order to address community infrastructure concerns such as street lighting, sidewalks, and blight.

COMMUNITY IMPACT



MADISON "MADDIE" KUHN & FRANCESCA DEL MONTE

Seniors Madison "Maddie" Kuhn, a Human Development and Family Studies major, and Francesca Del Monte, a Social Relations and Policy major, interned with the Ruth Mott Foundation's "Share Your Story" project. Kuhn and Del Monte collected oral testimonies from Flint residents and individuals with ties to the Flint community about their experiences in Flint as well as with the CS Mott and Ruth Mott Foundations and Applewood Estate. In the future, the Ruth Mott Foundation plans to turn these stories into a free, mobile exhibition that will travel around the city for the community to experience.



ADRIYONNA FIELDS & ALEXIS "LEXIE" SMITH

Junior Adriyonna Fields, a Kinesiology major, and senior Alexis "Lexie" Smith, who studies Comparative Cultures and Politics and Political Science/Pre-Law, completed their project with Keep Genesee County Beautiful. The students developed a resource guide of local talent to assist Flint Park Adopters with creating programming in the parks. They also created a survey instrument for monitoring park usage. Together they completed 96 park observations and drafted a report of their findings. A highlight for both was helping to build two playgrounds.





SCHOLARS SHOWCASE

At the end of the 10-week program, students presented their summer projects at a Scholars Showcase hosted by the Applewood Estate to an audience of program leaders, community organizers, university partners and their fellow students. Students produced engaging, impactful final projects and reflected positively on their internships and their time in Flint. In partnership with MSU's Community Engagement Scholars Program, each intern also was designated a Community Engagement Scholar in recognition of their work.



COMMUNITY PARTNERS



APPLEWOOD ESTATE



ASBURY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



CITY OF FLINT BLIGHT ELIMINATION DIVISION



CITY OF FLINT PLANNING AND ZONING DIVISION



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF GREATER FLINT



FLINT NEIGHBORHOODS UNITED



GENESSEE COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION/KEEP GENESSEE COUNTY BEAUTIFUL



NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGEMENT HUB



RUTH MOTT FOUNDATION

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS



FRANCESCA DEL MONTE

“Throughout my internship in Flint, there were a variety of people I was able to meet that changed my perception of the community and taught me how to approach leadership. Additionally, I was able to develop certain skills throughout my internship that I will confidently use throughout the remainder of my undergraduate career and professional experience.”

BEN HENDRICKSON

“After this project, I realized the importance of community strength. Focusing on existing assets and allowing residents to lead community development is much more effective than outside help. While outside organizations may provide some help, the community takes pride in their existing gifts. With the right opportunities, community members can lead the way.”



CONTACT US SOCIAL WORK

Students and Flint community organizers interested in getting involved with the program are encouraged to learn more by visiting socialwork.msu.edu or contact:

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