2007 Report

The Center for Applied Community Research and Development

Pamela A. Mischen, Co-Director
Allison Alden, Co-Director

Advisory Board:
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David Campbell, Public Administration
Sue Crowley, Human Development
Shelley Dionne, School of Management
Mark Reisinger, Geography
Hiroki Sayama, Bioengineering
Gale Spencer, Nursing
David Sloan Wilson, Biology
Diane Brown, Community Foundation for South Central New York
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Claudia Edwards, Broome County Health Department
Beth Harrington, Broome County Gang Prevention
Jennifer Lesko, Broome County Urban League
Cindy Nord, Broome County Department of Social Services
Beth Saxton, Broome County Youth Bureau
David Tanenhaus, Binghamton Housing Authority
Steven Tronovitch, Binghamton Police Department
Peggy Wozniak, Binghamton City School District

Binghamton Faculty Associated with Center
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Ralph Garruto, Anthropology
Madhu Govindaraju, Computer Science
Kristina Lambright, Public Administration
Craig Laramee, Bioengineering
Leann Lesperance, Bioengineering
Yi Lu, Public Administration
Chris Reiber, Anthropology
Nadia Rubaii-Barrett, Public Administration
Thomas A. P. Sinclair, Public Administration
William D. Spangler, SOM
David Sloan Wilson, Biology

Binghamton Graduate Students Associated with Center
Andrew Gallup, Biology
Justin Garcia, Anthropology
Marc Lichtenfeld, Anthropology
Laura Le, Public Administration
Michael Marino, Public Administration
Daniel O’Brien, Biology
I. Center for Applied Community Research and Development (CACRD)

The CACRD facilitates university-community research partnerships that are mutually beneficial in that they result in both publishable research for the academic researcher and usable information and/or action for the community partner. The CACRD is Co-Directed by Pamela Mischen and Allison Alden, has an Advisory Board that is comprised of university and community representatives that meets twice a year, employs a half-time research assistant dedicated to fostering university-community partnerships and proposal development (Stephen K. Jackson), a graduate assistant, and a volunteer grant writer, Dan McCormack. The CACRD focuses its research in four areas: civic engagement, governance and management, nonprofit capacity building, and network development.

Cross-disciplinary research is critical when engaging in community-based research. The issues of concern at a community level of analysis are complex: obesity, youth development, gang prevention, mental health services. The problems faced by communities have behavioral, social, political, economic, and biological causes that are inherently intertwined. The CACRD encourages the formation of multi-disciplinary teams to address such community issues. For example, the CACRD is currently convening an Obesity Research Group comprised of faculty from Public Administration, Bioengineering, Biology, Anthropology, the School of Management, the Broome County Health Department, and the Binghamton City School District. This group has identified several research projects and is pursuing grant funding for each. We anticipate that this Research Group will act as a model for others around different issues of concern to the community.

The goals of the CACRD are three:

1) To produce high quality, generalizable, applied community research that advances understanding in its appropriate academic discipline.

2) To have a positive impact at the community level by engaging in research that is important to community partners.

3) To promote applied community research throughout the University by facilitating research partnerships and providing technical assistance and research support for scholars.

These goals reflect the belief that research and service can not only coexist in an academic environment, but that they can inform one another resulting in research that does more than have the potential to inform action, but results in direct benefits at the community level. Service enhances the quality of the research; research improves the quality of service that is provided.

The CACRD has brought visibility to Binghamton University at the local, state and national levels in several ways. First, through our community connections (see Advisory Board list on cover) we have shown to the Greater Binghamton area that we are an integral part of this community and concerned about its welfare. Our partnership with the Binghamton Police Department was noted in the Press & Sun Bulletin; the Binghamton School District has contracted our services for an evaluation of their Ninth Grade Bridges Program; the Broome County Health Department is an integral part of our Obesity Research Group; the Center City Coordination (C3) Program has active partnerships with hundreds of organizations and local residents; the Binghamton Neighborhood Project (in conjunction with EvoS) is gaining interest among social service agencies, and six Chambers of Commerce and Regional Planning Boards co-sponsored our Shared Municipal Services Initiative (SMSI) Conference, which 51 government agency representatives from the region attended. At the State level, the SMSI Conference has garnered the attention of lawmakers and government agencies as one of nine sites chosen for this initiative. Finally, the CACRD is becoming known nationally as a leader in community based...
action research. Faculty from the Department of Public Administration (Pamela Mischen, Thomas Sinclair) conducted a Professional Development Workshop at the American Society of Public Administration Annual Conference in Washington, DC in March 2008 entitled *Action Research in Public Administration: Capitalizing on Collaboration in Research*.

II. Source of Support

In addition to the funding received from the Research Foundation, the CACRD receives general operating support from the Department of Public Administration in terms of a course reduction for the Center Director (Allison Alden, spring 2007: Pamela Mischen, fall 2007) and funding for a half-time research assistant (Stephen Jackson). This support made possible community collaborations for two grant applications [Communities Empowering Youth, Administration for Children and Families ($750,000) & Weed & Seed Initiative, Department of Justice ($45,634)]; a successful grant from the Binghamton City School District ($6,000); and a currently unfunded (but seeking outside support) collaboration with the Binghamton Police Department. Although the Communities Empowering Youth grant was denied, we received positive feedback from the Administration for Children and Families and have continued to work with the community groups with whom we collaborated and plan to resubmit in 2008. In all, eight grants were submitted through the CACRD for a total request of $2,738,599. Of these three were funded for a total of $66,634. Additionally, the CACRD received $3,000 from the New York Department of State for the SMSI Conference.

III. New Budget Request and Justification

Current funds are used to support operational costs of the CACRD including phones and office supplies, travel to conferences, meeting costs, computer software and publications. Our initial balance was $6,146.90 due to carry over from the previous fiscal year. Our expenses through December 31, 2007 and anticipated expenses through the end of the fiscal year are provided in the following table. Three researchers (Allison Alden, Stephen Jackson, Thomas Sinclair) will be representing the CACRD by presenting papers at the Community Development Society Conference in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan in June 2008. The CACRD will also be investing in publications to assist researchers from other disciplines not accustomed to community based research.

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<th>2007-08 Budget</th>
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<tr>
<td>Category</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
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<td>Campus Recharges (phone)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference and Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (software and publications)</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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To reduce the reliance on internal support, the CACRD is writing administrative support into grants as well as academic year effort for faculty engaging in research. Our civic engagement initiative has the potential to secure funding that would act as base funding for the CACRD. Additionally, the IFR funds resulting from College of Community and Public Affairs faculty academic year effort will be split between the CACRD, Department of Public Administration and
the College. Our goal is to become self-sustaining through these mechanisms by the end of 2009 to cover a half-time administrative assistant, a full-time research assistant/project coordinator, and operating costs.

At the same time however, without the support of the Research Foundation and the Department of Public Administration, our plans to become self-sustaining would not be possible. Having a Center designation shows to funding agencies that we have institutional support for multi-/inter-disciplinary community based research. For many foundations and federal agencies, this designation will help us secure the funding necessary to achieve our long-term goals. Additionally, community collaborations take time to foster and federal grants often require more than one submission before they are successful.

While the Department of Public Administration has agreed to fund a half-time research assistant through May 30, 2008, this type of research support will be critical to developing the funding streams which will allow us to become self-sustaining (please see the next section for more information). Our budget request for the 2008-09 fiscal year reflects this plan and requests that the Research Foundation continue this funding line for the next fiscal year.

### 2008-09 Budget Request

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$34,162.50</strong></td>
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### IV. Future Directions

The long-range plan of the CACRD is to become a nationally recognized center for applied community research. To that end, CACRD has launched a bold new initiative to enhance civic engagement using both traditional and virtual means. **CoNECT: Community Networks Engaging Citizens with Technology** brings together people, issues and technology in creative ways. This initiative will not only harness the civic spirit of the community, but will also bring national attention to the City of Binghamton as a model for the next generation of civic engagement in small to mid-sized cities across the country. We are currently seeking several sources of funding for this intitiative including: a federal earmark ($1,200,000), National Science Foundation funding ($400,000), and local funding from private foundations ($70,000). These projects will bring people together around issues of concern to the community and give rise to more collaborations such as the Obesity Research Group. The Obesity Research Group is currently pursuing funding for four separate projects through the National Institutes of Health and private foundations. Because NIH experts researchers to “work their way up” through their funding mechanisms, we will begin with submitting R03 grants (max. $50,000/yr. for 2 years), then R21 grants (max. $275,000), and finally R01 grants (~$1 mil.). Similarly, we will cultivate relationships with large national foundations to increase our chances of receiving funding. We believe that through this model of grant seeking we will be able to be self-sustaining by the end of 2009. However, developing these relationships and funding streams requires a great deal of time and effort. Support from the Research Foundation will be critical if we are to achieve our goals.
V. Center Productivity Over Past 12 Months

a. Publications


b. Presentations


c. Symposia and meetings

Shared Municipal Services Workshop, October 16, 2007. One of nine regional workshops held statewide.

d. Other activities


Hattery, M. *Chemung County: Improving Inter-municipal Sharing in Highway Services*. February, 2007. (Case study report prepared for the Government Law Center’s SMSI Technical Assistance Project, an activity of the NYS Department of State Shared Municipal Services Incentive Program).
