The following project proposal was created by a community partner of the Upstate Institute to describe the way they would like to engage with a Colgate student this summer. The research project proposed will be a full-time research project conducted by a Field School Fellow this summer. Below, the partner describes their organization and the research project, as well as a statement of benefit derived by the community for this project. The proposal also mentions logistical considerations and required skills for a student interested in doing this work.

Madison County Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Inc. dba BRiDGES, 112 Farrier Ave, Suite 314, Oneida, NY 13421 www.bridgescouncil.org

Our mission is to improve the quality of life by providing advocacy and services to our community, the workplace, families and individuals affected by addiction and the abuse of alcohol, tobacco and other substances.

Our organization has been incorporated as a private, not-for-profit organization since 1987. Our organization was founded by a group of private citizens who wanted to establish an organization in Madison County dedicated to advocacy and prevention/education about alcohol and other drug issues. The organization has expanded its focus to include tobacco, suicide prevention, problem gambling prevention, and LGBTQIA services in the past ten years.

The individual, family, workplace and community benefit from the actions and activities of our organization. Our programs are designed to effect change on the individual as well as on the system. Our programs are targeted to all Madison County residents. Our Tobacco Control Program and Central Region Addiction Resource Center programs serve individuals, families, and providers in a multi-county region.

For youth and adults our prevention strategies are designed to create environmental or community level change that will support making healthy choices. For adults or youth with an alcohol, tobacco, gambling or drug problem, the goal is to provide the individual or family member with information about resources that are available to help with their specific problem. For adults who come to us through the Employee Assistance Program, or EAP, the goal is to help the employee or family member resolve personal problems that may be impacting job performance and productivity.

**Project Description**

BRiDGES would welcome a Colgate Fellow to work on assisting us in answering the following questions:

1) How are systems working to keep people from developing opioid addictions?

Some of the underlying questions will also be: What are pharmacies doing to prepare for the mandate to allow patients to return their unused medications to them for safe
disposal? (Do the pharmacies know of the mandate; are they prepared; if so, what is their plan? How will they educate the public?). Additionally, some research questions going into the overall questions, will include are the local hospitals providing Narcan kits to people seen in the ER for overdoses? Are primary care offices and chronic pain providers educating their patients on alternatives to opioids? Is or should Narcan be given to all long-term/chronic pain opioid patients?

2) How can the Central Region Addiction Resource Center (housed at BRiDGES and serving a 5-county area) reach the community at large with information on access to Substance Use Disorder services? (This will involve looking at the APP developed by the CRARC; promotion of the APP, and utilization by the general public).

These two questions will be answered by the Fellow through working closely with the Coordinator of the Central Region Addiction Resource Center, who is housed at BRiDGES and serves Madison, Onondaga, Cayuga, Cortland and Oswego counties. The Fellow would develop surveys targeted at pharmacies, primary care and chronic pain providers, hospital ER managers and the community at large to be conducted over the phone and/or when reasonable via face to face visits to sites throughout the county.

Additionally, the Fellow may work with staff to conduct focus groups and key informant interviews to assist in data collection for answering each question.

The Fellow would collect, collate, compile and present the data through a research report for BRiDGES. Findings would be presented at a BRiDGES staff meeting and potentially other meetings where the data could be utilized to drive policy and practice changes.

**Statement of Impact**

BRiDGES and the Central Region Addiction Resource Center are committed to making sustainable change in the community wherever and whenever possible. The work that this Fellow will do will not only benefit Madison County, but will also be a regional approach to looking at these issues. The data is intended to lead to conclusions which will in turn be utilized to promote and encourage providers, pharmacies, ERs and CRARC staff to make changes to their programs and practices that will directly impact the lives of community members in Madison County and the Central Region. The Fellow will have the opportunity to work with healthcare systems change, thus creating lasting community change to drive better health outcomes.

**Logistics**

The Fellow ideally would work for us full-time and from our office space in Oneida. However, BRiDGES also has an office space in Hamilton as well, so working from Hamilton 1 day a week or so would also be fine when being in Oneida is not required. This would be worked out with their supervisor, Maureen Campanie, Associate Director as well as with the Coordinator of the CRARC, Lauren Davie.
Skills & Training

The project would require a person with strong intra-personal skills as they would have to work with community partners to ensure data is captured in a meaningful way. Also, the Fellow would need to be someone who can work effectively and efficiently independently on a project but seek guidance when stuck or needing help to move forward. The Fellow would ideally be interested in public health, the impact of addictions on communities, and how to make lasting, sustainable change through their efforts. Skills in data collection, writing reports, and critical thinking will be a benefit to this project.

Finally, the Fellow would attend meetings with BRiDGES staff, including the CRARC Coordinator, to gain knowledge of how the systems fit, how a regional approach differs from a county approach, etc. There are many meetings the student would be invited to and have the opportunity to be part of, all making for an impactful experience for not only BRiDGES, but also for the student.