Title: Digitizing an Assessment of Teen Behaviors in Madison County

Community Partner: Madison County Department of Social Services

A student will research two existing survey instruments, and combine them in a digital format, then work with surrounding school districts on an implementation and assessment plan.

Project Description:
Every four years, schools in Madison County administer the “Teen Assessment Project” to measure youth concerns, perceptions attitudes and behaviors. This is currently administered with a printed book and Scantron format. The county would like a Field School Fellow to digitize this process, and offer a web-based survey this fall. This format would allow individual school districts to access data on their students, and would give the county aggregated data for local government and community based organizations. Both would benefit from more customized reports of analyzed data so they could more carefully consider factors such as grade levels, age ranges, and income when examining specific behaviors.

A digital version of the TAP survey would allow the county to collect data from students more frequently, and would allow agencies requesting funding to use survey results in a more easily customizable format. The new version would also be more cost-effective, in that it would not require transportation of survey booklets and Scantron forms to each district, and would allow students to respond to the survey in less time. This version would also allow for more thorough analysis of current trends and historical data, in comparison to previous surveys.

The Fellow will be able to advance their skill set in a variety of areas and be involved in the process of the project from beginning to end, from developing the online survey and introducing the survey to school districts to addressing historical data and current trends through an aggregate report. In addition, the Fellow will be working closely with many of the school administrators in the county to determine how their school can best administer the survey and guard their data.

The 2014 TAP survey report is available here: https://www.madisoncounty.ny.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/72

About the Community Partner:
The mission of the Madison County Youth Bureau is to promote and encourage the development of a comprehensive system of services to meet the needs of Madison County’s young people.

Required Skills:
The Fellow will create the survey instrument as well as tools to analyze the data, so should have experience in survey design and data analysis. The student will need to report progress to the Youth Bureau Director regularly, and will need introduce the new format to school administration and answer questions that may come up during the process. The student would have consistent interaction with the Youth Bureau Director, Madison County school district administration and staff and community based organizations. The Fellow should have excellent verbal, written and computer skills and have excellent time management skills. This project could possibly continue into the fall semester.

Logistics:
This is a full-time paid research position (35 hours per week) to last approximately 10 weeks, conducted under the joint supervision of the Upstate Institute and the Madison County Youth Bureau, a division of
Social Services. Some of this work will take place at the county complex in Wampsville, with supervision from director Tina Louis.

Field School Fellows receive a research stipend of $4500 plus reimbursement for any costs associated with transportation for this project. A car is not required for this project, but may be helpful. A Fellow will need a U.S. drivers’ license to complete this work.