



Community Action Partnership for Madison County's Proposal for the 2019 Upstate Institute Summer Field School

Research Project: Assessing the impact of CAP's Supportive Services Program
Organization: Community Action Partnership for Madison County (CAP)
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Introduction:

Community Action Program for Madison County, Inc. (CAP) is a community based not-for-profit that has been serving low income and vulnerable families in Madison County for 35 years. Every year we serve over 3,000 clients through our programs. Our mission is: "we partner with individuals, families and children to address the challenges of today and build hope for the future".

One of the programs we are best known for is our Supportive Services Program that helps clients achieve their desired outcomes by connecting them to resources and services in Madison County, including other CAP programs. Our Supportive Services Facilitators listen to clients and build on their strengths by helping them figure out next steps to reach their goals, helping with a variety of needs, including budgeting, housing, heat, transportation, and referrals.

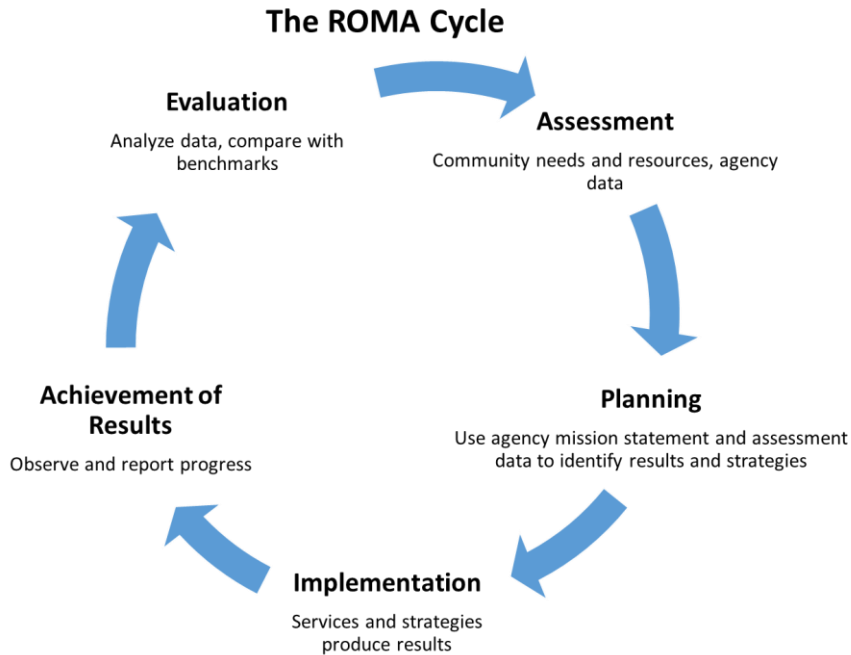
Project Description

Through the summer research internship we would like to better understand in what ways have the resources and information CAP provided improved the lives of our clients? Results of the study will inform future program design, monitoring and planning.

With the support of CAP's Community Services Director, the Field School Fellow will:

- Develop tools to measure outcomes of the Supportive Services Program
- Implement these tools to understand client's perceived benefits of the Supportive Services Program
- Measure outcomes or changes in client's lives that resulted from the supportive services provided
- Prepare an impact evaluation report as a result of the assessment of the program

The project is a part of CAP's efforts to continuously improve and enhance its ability to measure the outcomes and impact of its activities as part of its application of a Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) framework. ROMA is a performance-based initiative designed to preserve the anti-poverty focus of Community Action and to promote greater effectiveness among state and local agencies receiving CSBG funds. CAP is one of the many Community Action Agencies nationwide that are funded through the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). ROMA is a complete management and accountability process that is focused on the results achieved as a result of an agency's activities. The following activities are what is known as the ROMA Cycle:



Source: NPtP ROMA Training Project; J.Jakopic and B.Mooney, Community Action Association of PA, 2006.

Statement

CAP reaches many families in Madison County through its different programs, the Supportive Services Program is one of the main referral sources for many struggling families. Every year, CAP's Supportive Services program responds to over 2,000 calls, performs 750 intakes and provides financial support to 300 households, benefitting over 900 individuals.

The Field School Fellow will be able to contribute to this meaningful work that will be shared with other agencies and community partners including Madison County DSS, Department of State, etc. The result of the internship would provide CAP with a useful tool to inform the design and delivery of the supportive services program and help CAP establish a new mechanism that will continue to be applied in future years to track the effectiveness of one of CAP's most well-known and long-standing programs.

Results of the assessment will be included in funding and grant proposals to benefit Madison County residents, which will allow us to serve more families. It will allow us to determine areas for which assistance is needed that may not currently be covered by our grants (e.g. job related expenses such as uniforms).

Logistical Considerations

The Field School Fellow would be required to work part-time on this project, most of the work will be required to be done at Community Action Partnership's Canastota Offices. The student must have a vehicle or access to reliable transportation that would allow him/her to come to our offices.

The person supervising the Field School Fellow will be the Community Services Director who has several years of experience in monitoring and evaluation. The Executive Director will also provide input to the process in key moments of its progress.

Training & Skills:

Through this experience, the Field School Fellow will have developed active interviewing skills, data analysis and evaluation skills and an applied knowledge of the Results Oriented Management and Assessment framework that is applied by Community Action Agencies nationwide.

In order to complete this work, the Field School Fellow would need to have good computer literacy skills, including knowledge of Microsoft Excel. In order to perform well in this project, the Field School Fellow must have good analytical and writing skills. Prior non-profit exposure and some background or interest in program monitoring, evaluation and data analytics is preferred.

The Field School Fellow must have strong interpersonal skills and be comfortable talking on the phone with clients. He/She will need to learn how to use our database and will need to sign a confidentiality agreement and pass a background check.