

Lucie Huston

Portfolio

December 2017

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Lucie Huston

luciehuston@gmail.com • (518) 929-7894 • www.luciehuston.com

EDUCATION

New York University, New York, NY

July 2017

School of Professional Studies

Certificate in Fundraising

Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY

May 2017

Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs

Bachelor of Arts in Public Affairs and Political Science

Academic Internships (typically 120 hours per semester):

- Development Consultant, [Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation](#) Spring 2017
- Development Intern, [Syracuse's Neighborhood Development Office](#) Spring 2017
- Writer, [Syracuse University Benchmark Program](#) Spring 2017
- Membership Consultant, [Rosamond Gifford Zoo](#) Fall 2016
- Guidance Office Volunteer, [Danforth Middle School](#) Spring 2015 – Spring 2016
- Audit Intern, [Hudson City School District](#) Summer 2015

EXPERIENCE

[Urbana Parks Department](#) and [Urbana Parks Foundation](#)

Urbana, IL

Fundraising Intern (15+ hours/week)

September 2017 – Present

- Designing and producing posters, handouts, social media posts, email and direct mail materials for the first annual Giving Tuesday and Workplace Giving initiatives
- Drafting the Annual Appeal in collaboration with the development manager and the executive director
- Interviewing donors and writing press releases about major donations
- Updating the donor database regularly and producing donor lists using different variables

American Civil Liberties Union

[Champaign County Chapter](#)

Urbana, IL

Fundraising Volunteer (5+ hours/week)

September 2017 – Present

- Leading an initiative to sell locally-printed merchandise as a fundraising tool

[Professor Emeritus Abdul Alkalimat](#) and [Associate Professor Kate Williams](#)

iSchool and Department of African American Studies

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Urbana, IL

Research Assistant (20+ hours/week)

September 2017 – Present

- Doubled the size of an email list intended for faculty communication across the field of Black studies by searching 362 university websites and finding 3,842 emails
- Created a marketing list of independent bookstores in 90 college and university towns
- As a members of a book editorial team, extracted and resized 700 digital photos for print publication

Historic Hudson

Hudson, NY

Short-Term Development Assistant

May – September 2017

- Proposed and executed a silent auction of prints of 19th and early 20th century glass plate negatives, which alone brought in close to \$3,000 at the annual summer fundraising event
- Acted as the liaison between vendors, underwriters and the organization for the summer fundraising event which raised \$13,785 towards the creation of a city park
- Stepping from volunteer to paid staff, assumed responsibilities for the Executive Director during her sabbatical and became wholly responsible for the response to the Summer Appeal, including writing and mailing donor thank you letters and other communications, handling incoming contributions and updating the donor database

Planned Parenthood

Upper Hudson Chapter

Hudson, NY

Event Volunteer

July 2017

- Canvassed local businesses and raised \$1,500 through sponsorships for [Rally in the Valley](#), a week-long event benefiting the local Planned Parenthood chapter
- Served as a multi-purpose volunteer throughout the benefit, which brought in over \$11,000

The Bee's Knees Children's Boutique

Hudson, NY

Assistant Store Manager

May 2016 – June 2017

- Provided high-quality customer service to optimize sales of luxury children's products in a sophisticated retail environment during all school breaks and on weekends
- Investigated and resolved customer issues in order to encourage customer retention

Prevent Child Abuse

New York Chapter

Albany, NY

Development Intern

May – August 2016

- Created outreach materials centered around the organization's campaigns on child abuse prevention to use in donor solicitation, tabling, informational events, and the website
- Oversaw the sale of promotional merchandise such as sweatshirts, pens, and pinwheels to local businesses and individual supporters

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- Microsoft Office Suite (Word, PowerPoint, Excel)
- Analytical software (SPSS, MiniTab)
- Database (Past Perfect, IPS, Outlook)
- POS software (QuickBooks, Square)
- Quick and eager software learner!

SOCIAL SKILLS

- Writing copy for press releases, letters and promotional materials
- Layout and design
- Event planning
- Purposeful and persuasive conversations with groups and individuals

REFERENCES

- Ellen Kirsanoff, Urbana Parks (ekirsanoff@urbanaparks.org)
- Kate Williams, iSchool at University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign (katewill@illinois.edu)
- Lisa Weilbacker, Historic Hudson (lweilbacker@historichudson.org)



November 22, 2017

Urbana Parks Foundation launches Giving Tuesday Campaign in celebration of ten years

In celebration of ten years of supporting the Urbana Park District, the Urbana Parks Foundation will launch its first annual Giving Tuesday Campaign on November 28, 2017.

Giving Tuesday is a global day of giving that celebrates the collective power of individuals, communities and organizations to encourage philanthropy. Giving Tuesday is held annually on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, Black Friday, and Cyber Monday to kick off the holiday giving season and inspire people to collaborate in improving their local communities and to give back in impactful ways to the charities and causes they support.

The Urbana Parks Foundation was founded in 2007 with the mission of supporting the Urbana Park District. As the Urbana Park District grew both in size and need, there was a need to create a separate fundraising arm that could accept, hold and distribute funds in the long term interests of the Park District. These funds are stored away for long-term use or used immediately for the Park District's needs. Donations and donor-based projects are important to the success of Urbana's parks.

Examples of projects that the Foundation has assisted raising funds for include creation of The Friendship Grove Nature Playscape, which opened Earth Day of 2017, and the 2016 Douglas Creek Restoration in Meadowbrook Park. Ellen Kirsanoff, Development Manager at the Urbana Park District, said that "the projects supported by funds raised through the Urbana Parks Foundation are the kind that everyone in the community will benefit from. Anyone who visits an Urbana Park will get to see and experience places to have fun and enjoy the outdoors." She continued, "Giving Tuesday is just one of the ways that you can support all the great things the Urbana Park District has to offer."

To learn more about The Urbana Parks Foundation and to make a tax-deductible donation please visit www.urbanaparksfoundation.org.

Giving Tuesday - November 28, 2017



The Urbana Parks Foundation
Great Parks Build Great Communities

The Urbana Parks Foundation supports the work of the Urbana Park District through:

- Endowment Funds
- Funding for Youth Scholarships
- Funds for Crystal Lake Park
- Funds for Reforestation

www.urbanaparksfoundation.org

Giving Tuesday - November 28, 2017

This year, and every year, we're thankful for Urbana Parks.

We're thankful for the swimming pools even on the coldest days; for long walks in Busey Woods that transport us back in time; for scream-at-the-top-of-your-lungs worthy youth sports; for that rare glimpse of deer in the prairie at Meadowbrook Park.

We're also thankful for the afterschool programs our kids can't wait to tell us all about, for the endorphin rush after a workout class at Phillips Recreation Center, and for that sense of peace, calm, and community togetherness that we feel during a really good song at a free concert on a beautiful summer night.

We have a lot to be thankful for – will you join us in giving back to the park district that made it all possible? The Urbana Parks Foundation supports the Urbana Park District.

Please donate on Giving Tuesday.

www.urbanaparksfoundation.org



October 6, 2017

Whitt gift to help purchase sculptures, enhance Meadowbrook entrance

A \$75,000 donation to the Urbana Parks Foundation from Urbana residents Dixie and Greg Whitt will be used to purchase two sculptures for the Urbana Park District's Wandell Sculpture Garden in Meadowbrook Park and to enhance the Race Street entrance to the park.

The gift will purchase the two sculptures, "Diamonds Are Forever" and "Open" by Pat McDonald, as well as provide funds to design and construct a Meadowbrook Park Gateway Interpretive Panel for the park entrance.

Dixie and Greg live next door to Meadowbrook Park in Clark-Lindsey Village and walk through the park every day. They say that the gifts were "well worth it, because the sculptures are creative and attractive. On any given day, people surround [the "Diamonds Are Forever" sculpture]... we've even seen people get engaged right there!"

The Whitts have been strong supporters of the Urbana Parks Foundation and the Urbana Park District for many years. Dixie Whitt served on UPDAC, the Urbana Park District Advisory Committee, in the late 1990s and has served on the board of the Urbana Parks Foundation since 2015.

Foundation President Fred Delcomyn observed, "This most recent gift is among the largest received by the relatively young Foundation. It will ensure that two beloved sculptures in the Wandell Sculpture Garden can be enjoyed by many generations of park visitors."

He continued, "A new interpretive element at the Race Street entrance will also allow both new and returning visitors to the park to gain an even better appreciation of what the park has to offer."

Delcomyn noted that by making the gift to the Foundation, Dixie and Greg made possible a flexible acquisition schedule over several years that was preferred by the sculptor's family. Once fully acquired by the Foundation, ownership of the sculptures will be transferred to the Urbana Park District. In the meantime, the sculptures will remain where they are for all to enjoy. "The sole mission of the Urbana Parks Foundation is to provide financial and other support to the Park District," Delcomyn said. "Setting up flexible arrangements such as was done in this case is one way we can do that."

The Urbana Park District has been planning an interpretive program at Meadowbrook Park for some time. Thousands of visitors come to Meadowbrook Park every year. Interpreting the natural landscape of the park to visitors is a goal that an earlier small gift from the Whitts helped achieve.

Tim Bartlett, Executive Director of the Urbana Park District, remarked that he is “thrilled that we are able to update the panels at the Freyfogel overlook to replace the very first interpretive elements at Meadowbrook Park. This ties into our other longer term goals at Meadowbrook Park to provide more coordinated interpretive services in that park.” He added that the Whitt’s gift demonstrates that the Urbana Park District has “come a long way from tossing prairie seeds into the soil, stamping them in with our feet to now celebrating our educational programs in our parks.”

The Wandell Sculpture Garden at Meadowbrook Park was dedicated in June 1999. The garden was named in honor of Celia and Willet Wandell, who owned a local plant nursery and established a trust to give trees to neighboring communities. The Wandells saw the Urbana Park District’s plans for a sculpture garden in Urbana as a way to both honor their parents and support art in a natural setting.

Several of the garden’s sculptures are owned by the Urbana Park District as part of the permanent collection. Most of the artwork are on a two-year loan from the artist and are available for purchase.

To learn more about The Urbana Parks Foundation and to make a tax-deductible donation please visit www.urbanaparksfoundation.org.



The Urbana Parks Foundation

November 7, 2017

Dear Friend of the Urbana Parks Foundation,

The end of 2017 is approaching, and with that the end of the first decade of the Urbana Parks Foundation. As a foundation, and as a community, we have so much to be proud of in our support of the Urbana Park District through the last 10 years, and so much to look forward to in the decades to come.

This past year in particular has been an exciting one. Two months ago, we celebrated the opening of the new Kickapoo Rail Trail. It's a 6.7 mile multi-purpose recreational trail leading from Urbana to St. Joseph, and there are plans to extend it all the way to Kickapoo State Park in Vermilion County. That's 24.5 miles, and a truly exceptional trail to have right in our backyard.

There's just one problem: the Urbana end of the KRT has no proper trailhead. As you may know, Weaver Park, the designated trailhead, is a beautiful and natural park, but is not developed enough to support the activity of the KRT. We envision so much more, and are eager to put in motion the development of Weaver Park. But we need your help.

On the top of the enclosed document, you'll see our ideas of a future Weaver Park, ideas that have been thoroughly researched and determined to be the best use of the space. This is where your support comes in. To construct a new trailhead is a high goal for our relatively young Foundation, but with your help we will be able to achieve it. Your donation to support this development will kick off a new era for the Urbana end of the KRT and allow the Weaver Park Trailhead to welcome hundreds of thousands of visitors for years to come.

Please, help us today to build a better Urbana by contributing to this project.

If you have questions or would like more information about the project and giving opportunities, please feel free to contact Ellen Kirsanoff at 217-367-1536 or by email at erkirsanoff@urbanaparks.org.

Sincerely,

Fred Delcomyn
President
Urbana Parks Foundation

Tim Bartlett
Executive Director
Urbana Park District

OFFICERS

Fred Delcomyn
President

Steve Rugg
Vice President

Tom Brown
Treasurer

Helen Grandone
Secretary

TRUSTEES

Tom Berns

Tim Bartlett

Gary Jackson

Dixie Whitt

Carolyn Trimble

Lashaunda Cunningham

Jake Wolf

Megan Puzey

Jed Bunyan

Libby Tyler

Have you heard of the
Kickapoo Rail Trail?

It's an awesome multi-purpose recreational trail leading from Urbana to St. Joseph, and there are plans to extend it all the way to Kickapoo State park. That's 24.5 miles, and a truly exceptional trail to have right in our backyard.

The problem? There's no proper trailhead.

But the Urbana Parks Foundation wants to help build one.

We are working to develop Urbana's Weaver Park into a proper trailhead that can welcome cyclists, runners, walkers, and nature appreciators to the Kickapoo Rail Trail for decades to come.

Will you help us?

For more information on how to support this project through the Urbana Parks Foundation, please visit us at www.urbanaparksfoundation.org



The Urbana Parks Foundation

**303 W. University Ave
Urbana, IL
217-367-1536**



The Urbana Parks Foundation

Great Parks Build
Great Communities

Have you ever thought about how the **Anita Purves Nature Center** maintains such safe and fun facilities for your kids?

Or how the **Phillips Recreation Center** has really awesome instructors for their classes?

Or how peaceful you feel when you're at **Meadowbrook Park**, surrounded by tall grass, butterflies, and beautiful sculptures?

That's all Urbana Parks.

Consider choosing us to be a recipient of your workplace giving through United Way.

Supporting the Urbana Parks Foundation directly shapes the future of Urbana's parks.



The Urbana Parks Foundation

**303 W. University Ave
Urbana, IL
217-367-1536**

www.urbanaparksfoundation.org

Support the Champaign County ACLU



Tote bag - \$20



Fair Trade T-Shirt - \$20

Great to give or keep!

Our online store: <https://stores.inksoft.com/aclu>

Online store closes Sunday November 12 at Midnight

Pick up items (and grab a slice!) at Pizza M in Urbana on Monday November 20 from 3-6 PM

Perfect to pair with an ACLU Illinois Gift Membership for a Holiday gift!

Membership form: www.aclu-il.org/en/give-gift-membership

Visit us at www.aclu-cu.org & www.facebook.com/ChampaignCountyACLU





Community Link Program

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MATILDA JOSLYN GAGE FOUNDATION DONOR REPORT

A Study Conducted for the Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation
By Lucie Huston
April 2017

**Donor Report
Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation
Lucie Huston
April 2017**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction: This report describes the analysis of data regarding donations to the Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation. This report will be used to understand donor trends and to allow the foundation to more effectively organize fundraising efforts.

Methods: The data were collected from Past Perfect, which is a museum donation database. Between January 2004 and December 2015 3,253 donations were recorded.

Findings:

1. On average, the highest-grossing month was December (\$17,969). (N=3,253)
2. The highest-grossing year was 2009 (\$215,818). (N=3,253)
3. The highest-grossing donation category was “Capital Campaign” (\$349,256). (N=3,253)
4. The most common donation category was “General Unrestricted Donations” (40.6%). (N=3,253)
5. The highest-grossing donor was Poulin, Pamela (\$200,373). (N=3,253)

INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of analysis of donations to the Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation. The information collected will be used to help increase donor funding which is vital to the Foundation's continuity and future success. Assessing donation trends will allow the Foundation to develop new ways to incentivize donations.

METHODS

How Data Were Collected

Instrumental Design: Staff of the Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation input donations into the Past Perfect database system as they received them.

Data Collection Method: The Foundation put together yearly reports of donations using the data stored in Past Perfect. The start date of this system was January 1, 1998, and data for this report were collected until December 31, 2015. Data collected between 1998 and 2004 were not formatted in the same way as data collected between 2004 and 2015 and therefore were omitted from the analysis used in this report.

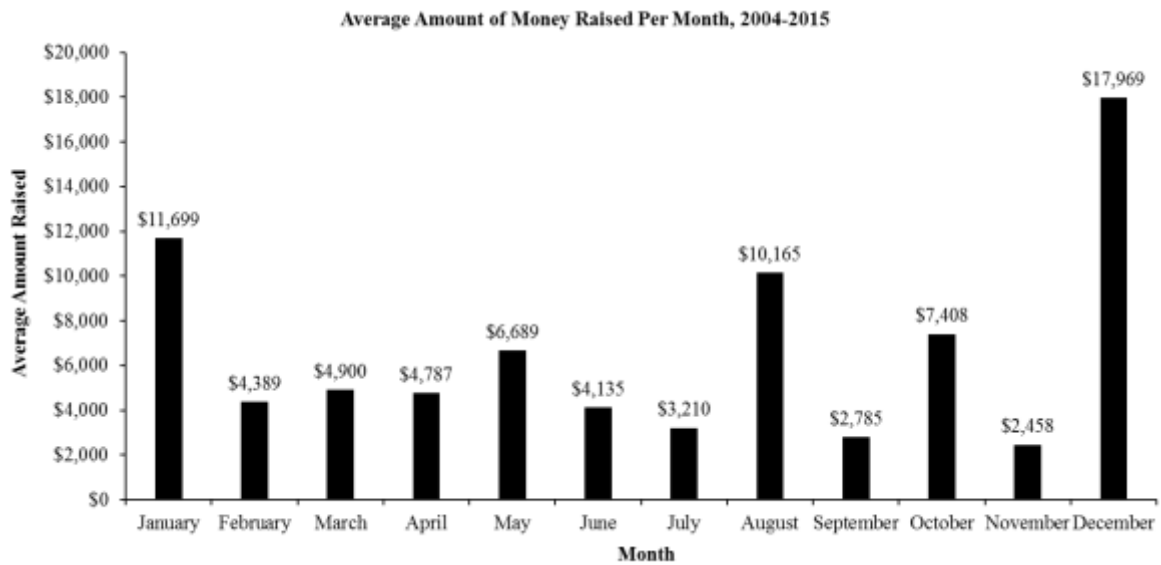
Quality of Data

Representativeness: There is no issue with representativeness in this report because each donation was recorded and therefore completely representative of the population.

Accuracy: The sample may have inaccuracies due to human error in data entry at any point in the process between entering the donation record into Past Perfect and replicating it for this report.

FINDINGS

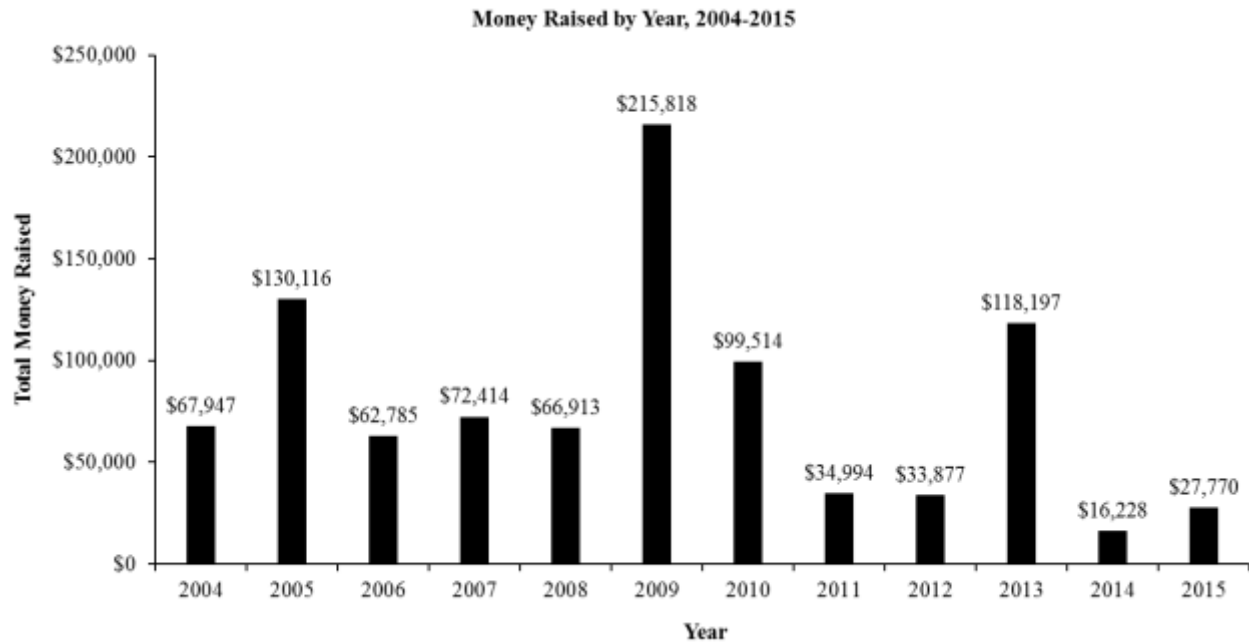
1. On average, the highest-grossing month was December (\$17,969). (N=3,253)



Source: Data collected for the Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation by Staff, 2004-2015

Comment: Data have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

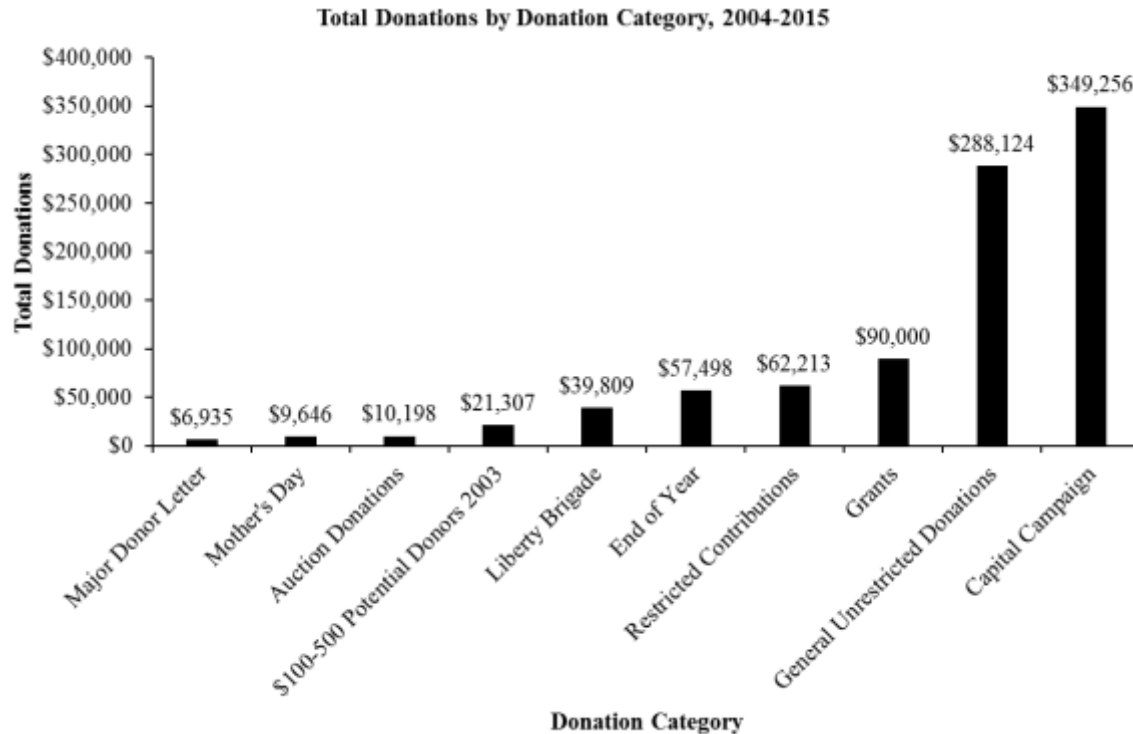
2. The highest-grossing year was 2009 (\$215,818). (N=3,253)



Source: Data collected for the Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation by Staff, 2004-2015

Comment: Data have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

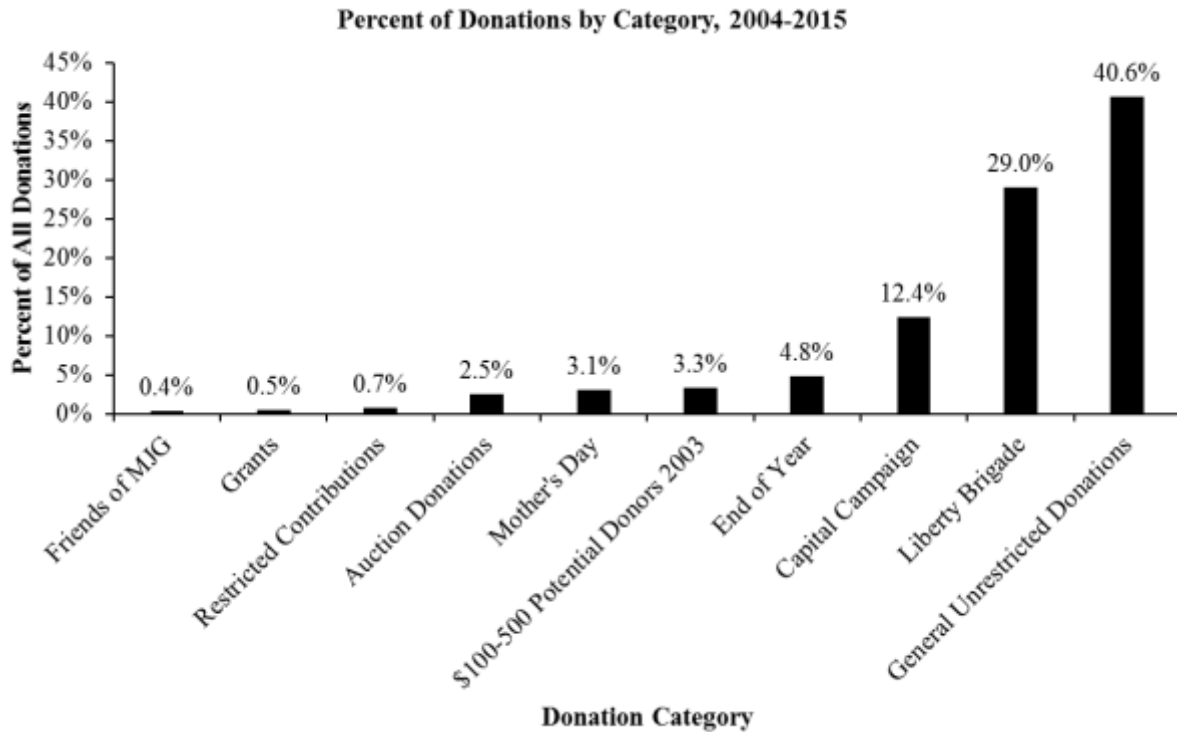
3. The highest-grossing donation category was “Capital Campaign” (\$349,256). (N=3,253)



Source: Data collected for the Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation by Staff, 2004-2015

Comment: “Mother’s Day Donation 2004” (\$2,295) and “Mother’s Day Contribution” (\$7,350) were combined to become “Mother’s Day” (\$9,645). “2004 End of Year” (\$600), “End of Year Mailing” (\$5,640) and “Year End” (\$51,258) were combined to become “End of Year” (\$57,498). Three donation categories were omitted due to a very small amount of money raised through them: “Friends of MJG” (\$761), “Girl Ambassadors for Human Rights” (\$1,375) and “\$2,500 Club” (\$2,500). Also omitted were data where it was not specified which category the donation was given under (\$6,786). Data have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

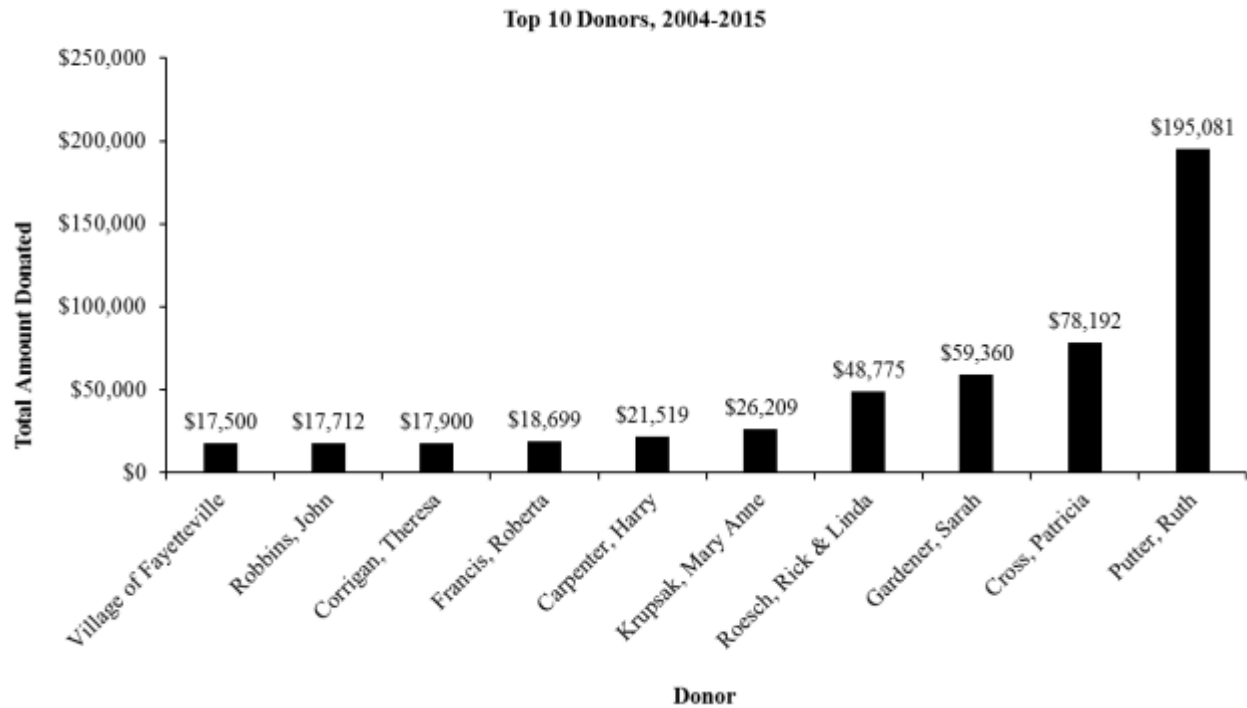
4. The most common donation category was “General Unrestricted Donations” (40.6%). (N=3,253)



Source: Data collected for the Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation by Staff, 2004-2015

Comment: “Mother’s Day Donation 2004” (0.2%) and “Mother’s Day Contribution” (2.9%) were combined to become “Mother’s Day” (3.1%). “2004 End of Year” (<0.1), “End of Year Mailing” (0.3%) and “Year End” (4.5%) were combined to become “End of Year” (4.8%). Three donation categories were omitted due to a very small amount of money raised through them: “\$2,500 Club” (<0.1%), “Girl Ambassadors for Human Rights” (0.2%) and “Major Donor Letter” (0.3%). Also omitted were data where it was not specified which category the donation was given under (1.9%). All data adds up to 100%. Data have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

5. The highest-grossing donor was Putter, Ruth (\$195,081). (N=3,253)



Source: Data collected for the Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation by Staff, 2004-2015

Comment: Data have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



Community Link Program

Public Affairs Program • Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs • Syracuse University

ROSAMOND GIFFORD ZOO LAPSED MEMBERSHIP REPORT

**A Study Conducted for the Rosamond Gifford Zoo
By Lucie Huston
November 2016**

**Lapsed Membership Report
Rosamond Gifford Zoo
Lucie Huston
November 2016**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction: This study describes the results of a survey taken of previous membership holders of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo. The study will be presented in a report to the board of the Zoo. This report will be used to develop ways to incentivize membership renewal.

Methods: The data were collected from a Constant Contact survey of previous membership holders (2,190) who declined to renew their membership with the Zoo between January 2014 and December 2015. 71 responses were collected (3%).

Findings:

1. The most frequently selected reason for purchasing the annual zoo membership was “it was a better value than single-admission tickets” (70%). (n=70)
2. The most frequently selected reason for not renewing membership was “I did not visit the Rosamond Gifford Zoo enough to warrant renewing” (46%). (n=69)
3. The most frequently selected benefit respondents said they used during their membership was the “free member t-shirt” (74%). (n=70)
4. 90% of respondents said “Yes” or “Maybe” when asked whether they would consider renewing their memberships. (n=70)
5. 86% of respondents said “No” or “Maybe” when asked whether respondents would purchase membership as a gift. (n=70)

INTRODUCTION

This study describes the results of a survey taken of previous membership holders of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo. The information collected will be used to help the zoo maintain members who are very important to its continuity. Assessing the reasons behind the lapses of membership will allow the Zoo to develop ways to increase membership renewal.

METHODS

How Data Were Collected

Instrumental Design: Staff of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo designed a survey to record membership information from lapsed members of the Zoo.

Data Collection Method: The Zoo put together a list from their membership records of the emails of members who did not renew their membership between January 2014 and December 2015. The Zoo sent out the Constant Contact survey via email to those on the lapsed membership list on August 19, 2016. Surveys were collected until September 15, 2016.

Target Population and Sample: The email with the Constant Contact survey was sent to 2,190 lapsed members who ended their membership between January 2014 and December 2015. 71 responses were collected via the Constant Contact survey platform (3%). One completed survey was discarded because the respondent had not lapsed their membership and did not belong in the target population.

Quality of Data

Representativeness: Percentages of the different membership types in the survey responses were generally equal to those who were contacted, showing that the sample represents the target population (See Figure 1). However, the sample of 3% (70) suggests that the data may not be representative of the target population (2,190), and is a threat to the representativeness of the report.

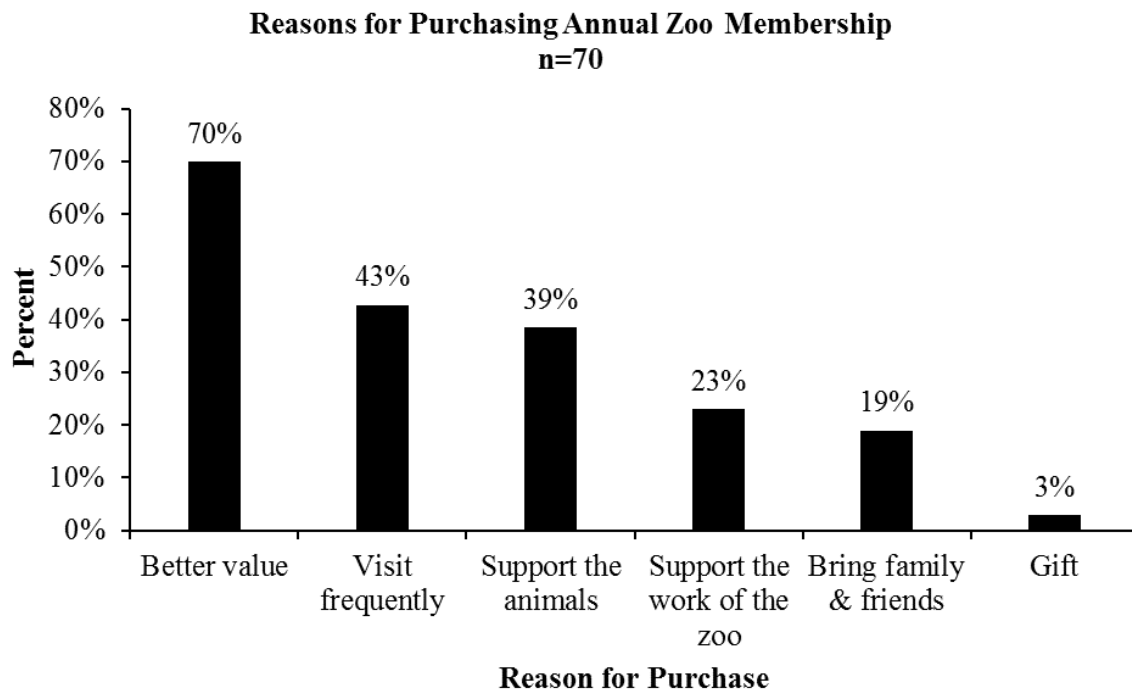
Figure 1. Membership Types

Membership Type	Family	Family +1	Grandparent	Dual	Patron +1	Senior Dual	Total
Target Population	44%	27%	7%	18%	2%	2%	100%
Sample	48%	32%	4%	14%	1%	1%	100%

Accuracy: The sample may have inaccuracies due to respondents misunderstanding that a majority of the questions were “Choose all that apply”. This misunderstanding may have caused respondents to only choose one answer where more may have applied. Some respondents put comments or “other” responses under questions that were unrelated to that question or related to a different question.

FINDINGS

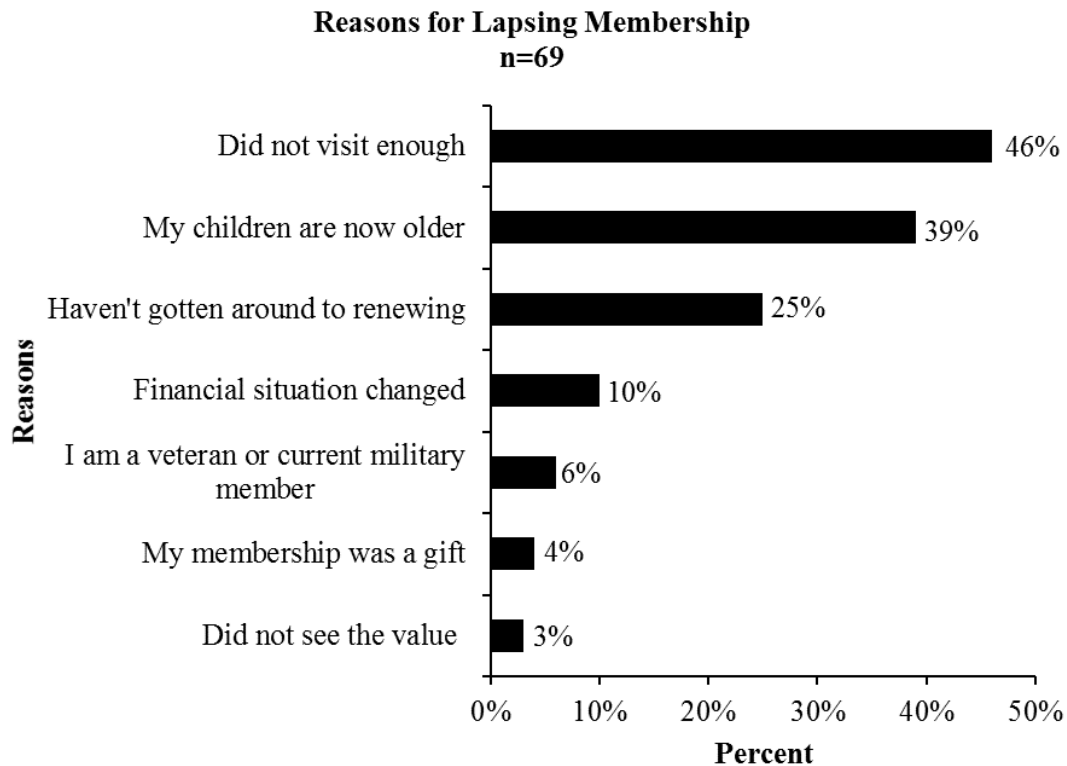
1. The most frequently selected reason for purchasing the annual zoo membership was “it was a better value than single-admission tickets” (70%).



Source: Data collected for the Rosamond Gifford Zoo by Lucie Huston, Community Link Project, Syracuse University, November 2016

Comment: The graph adds up to more than 100% because respondents were allowed to select all applicable responses. Nine respondents chose “Other” and wrote in responses. Three “Other” responses were included in the “Bring family & friends” category in the graph. Other responses included “Goes well with homeschooling” (n=1), “Gave us discounts at other zoos” (n=1), “Can no longer afford membership” (n=1), “We do not visit the zoo as much and expense was not worth the discount received at reciprocals” (n=1), “No grandchildren were able to visit this year” (n=1), and “Children grew up” (n=1). See Appendix III for full responses.

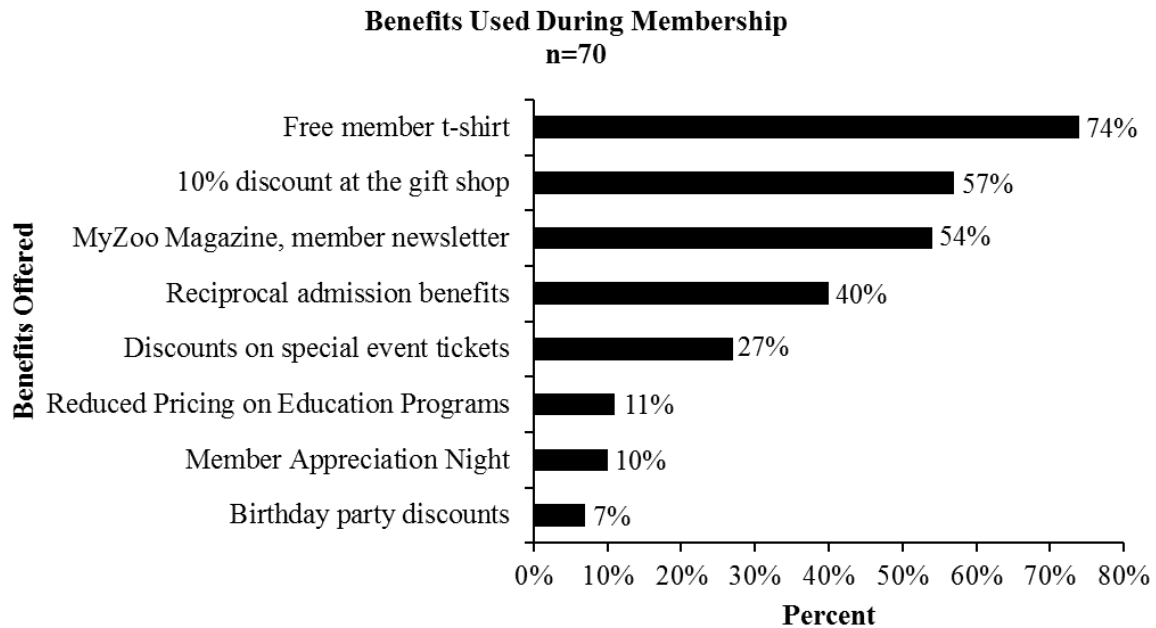
2. The most frequently selected reason for not renewing membership was “I did not visit the Rosamond Gifford Zoo enough to warrant renewing” (46%).



Source: Data collected for the Rosamond Gifford Zoo by Lucie Huston, Community Link Project, Syracuse University, November 2016

Comment: The graph adds up to more than 100% because respondents were allowed to select all applicable responses. One respondent did not answer the question. 21 respondents selected “Other” and wrote in responses. One response was aggregated into the category “I am a veteran or current military member”. Seven of these respondents said they lapsed membership for financial reasons, so these responses were recorded in a new category called “Financial situation changed”. Other responses included “Do not live in the area” (n=4), “Injury/Sickness” (n=3), “Membership plans no longer fit” (n=2) “Times are not convenient” (n=2), “We do not visit the zoo as much and expense was not worth the discount received at reciprocals” (n=1) and “The heat this year made viewing animals difficult” (n=1). See Appendix III for full responses.

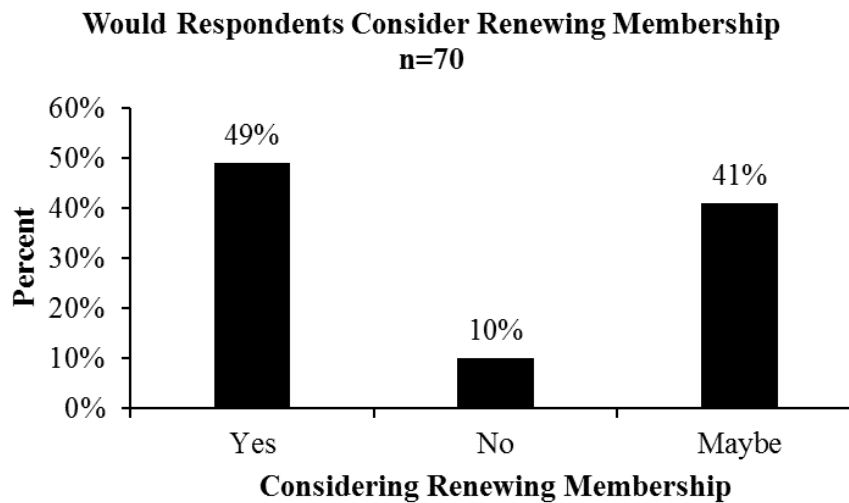
3. The most frequently selected benefit respondents said they used during their membership was the “free member t-shirt” (74%).



Source: Data collected for the Rosamond Gifford Zoo by Lucie Huston, Community Link Project, Syracuse University, November 2016

Comment: The graph adds up to more than 100% because respondents were allowed to select all applicable responses. In another question, the survey asked respondents “Are there additional benefits that you would like to see added to an annual membership?” and 9 respondents answered. Respondents said “Special hours” (n=2), “Food discount” (n=2), “More activities for younger children” (n=1), “More opportunity to interact with animals” (n=1), “Free guest passes for friends” (n=1), “Reduced admission to Brew at the Zoo” (n=1) and “Discount on food items” (n=1). See Appendix III for full responses.

4. 90% of respondents said “Yes” or “Maybe” when asked whether they would consider renewing their memberships.



Source: Data collected for the Rosamond Gifford Zoo by Lucie Huston, Community Link Project, Syracuse University, November 2016

Comment: Ten respondents wrote comments. Respondents said “No, too busy” (n=5), “No, financial issues” (n=2), “If there was a plan that worked for us” (n=1), “Moved away” (n=1) and “No need because my husband and I are both veterans” (n=1). See Appendix III for full responses.

5. The most frequently selected responses were “No” (46%) and “Maybe” (40%) when asked whether respondents would purchase membership as a gift.



Source: Data collected for the Rosamond Gifford Zoo by Lucie Huston, Community Link Project, Syracuse University, November 2016

Comment: Two respondents wrote comments. Respondents said “Christmas gift” (n=1) and “No one to give it to” (n=1). See Appendix III for full responses.

APPENDICES

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Appendix III
Appendix VI

Blank Survey
Data Frequencies
Open-Ended Responses
Codebook & Spreadsheet

Appendix I

Blank Survey

What were your reasons for purchasing your annual zoo membership? (Select all that apply)

It was a better value than purchasing single admission tickets
I visit the zoo on a frequent basis
I wanted to support the animals at the zoo
I often have family and friends visit and the zoo is a great place to take them
My membership was a gift
I support the work the Rosamond Gifford Zoo does with animal care, conservation, and education

What are your reasons for not renewing your membership? (Select all that apply)

I did not see the value in being a member
I did not visit the zoo enough to warrant renewing
I haven't gotten around to renewing my membership
I was unhappy with my experience at the zoo
My children are now older and we don't get to the zoo very often
My membership was a gift
I am a veteran or current military member

What benefits did you use during the course of your membership? (Choose all that apply)

- 10% discount at the Curious Cub Gift Shop
- Reciprocal admission benefits at other AZA-accredited zoos
- Free member t-shirt
- Birthday party discounts
- Discounts on special event tickets
- Reduced pricing on education programs
- Member Appreciation Night in June
- MyZoo Magazine, member newsletter

Are there any additional benefits that you would like to see added to an annual membership? (Open ended)

Would you consider renewing your membership?

Yes No Maybe

Would you consider purchasing a membership as a gift?

Yes No Maybe

Appendix II

Data Frequencies

What were your reasons for purchasing your annual zoo membership? (Select all that apply) (n=70)

It was a better value than purchasing single admission tickets (70%)
 I visit the zoo on a frequent basis (43%)
 I wanted to support the animals at the zoo (39%)
 I often have family and friends visit and the zoo is a great place to take them (19%)
 My membership was a gift (3%)
 I support the work the Rosamond Gifford Zoo does with animal care, conservation, and education (24%)
 Other (5)

What are your reasons for not renewing your membership? (Select all that apply) (n=69)

I did not see the value in being a member (3%)
 I did not visit the zoo enough to warrant renewing (46%)
 I haven't gotten around to renewing my membership (25%)
 I was unhappy with my experience at the zoo (0%)
 My children are now older and we don't get to the zoo very often (39%)
 My membership was a gift (4%)
 I am a veteran or current military member (6%)
 Financial situation changed (12%)
 Other (19)
 No Response (1)

What benefits did you use during the course of your membership? (Choose all that apply) (n=70)

10% discount at the Curious Cub Gift Shop (57%)
 Reciprocal admission benefits at other AZA-accredited zoos (40%)
 Free member t-shirt (74%)
 Birthday party discounts (7%)
 Discounts on special event tickets (27%)
 Reduced pricing on education programs (11%)
 Member Appreciation Night in June (10%)
 MyZoo Magazine, member newsletter (54%)

Are there any additional benefits that you would like to see added to an annual membership? (Open ended) (n=6)

Would you consider renewing your membership? (n=70)

Yes (49%)	No (10%)	Maybe (41%)
Comment (5)		

Would you consider purchasing a membership as a gift? (n=70)

Yes (14%)

No (46%)

Maybe (40%)

Comment (1)

Appendix III

Open-Ended Responses

What were your reasons for purchasing your annual zoo membership? (Choose all that apply) (Other) (n=9)

Bring family and friends (n=3)

1. Had small grandkids that liked to go.
2. My children loved it.
3. We loved visiting the zoo!

Other (n=6)

1. Goes well with homeschooling.
2. I got divorced 2 years ago... can't afford the membership now.
3. We frequently visit zoos when we travel, but do not visit Rosamond Gifford zoo as much now that our child is older, we felt the expense was not worth the discount received at reciprocals.
4. Also gave us a discount at other zoo's.
5. No grandchildren were able to visit this year
6. Children grew up.

What are your reasons for not renewing your membership? (Choose all that apply) (Other) (n=21)

Financial situation changed (n=7)

1. Financial situation has changed and it is no longer a financial priority
2. Less disposable cash
3. Financial. My family loves going to the zoo, and being a veteran makes that possible now.
4. Can't afford it this year.
5. Not currently working.
6. Financial reasons.
7. Financial.

Do not live in the area (n=4)

1. My children are all grown and live out of state. I now live 80 miles from Syracuse.
2. We live an hour away (Waterloo, NY).
3. We are also snow birds. And we have passes at the Tampa Zoo where my granddaughter lives.
4. Moved out of state.

Injury/Sickness (n=3)

1. Our son had cancer and we thought we would be able to visit the zoo more, but we just didn't get a chance.

2. After purchasing a membership, my husband and I soon realized that our daughter is very prone to getting carsick.
3. I was injured at work and because of that I am not able to renew or visit the zoo at this time.

Membership plans no longer fit (n=2)

1. There was no membership option that worked well for me. I am a single person with two children and having to either pay for the second child every time, or buy a membership for four people was not a money saver for me. If you come up with more membership options I will definitely do it again.
2. There isn't a plan that fits our situation anymore.

Times are not convenient (n=2)

1. Since my children are now in school, it is not worth it to get there on weekdays given the closing time. Weekends and holidays are crowded; I have a child with Down syndrome who LOVES the zoo but I have a hard time tracking him when there is crowd, which makes for a very anxious visit. Perhaps if there were a way to have a more secure exit it would be less so.
2. The zoo is closed when my grandchildren are with me - after 5 pm on weekdays when I get out of work.

I am a veteran or current military member (n=1)

1. My family loves going to the zoo, and being a veteran makes that possible now

Other (n=2)

1. We frequently visit zoos when we travel, but do not visit Rosamond Gifford zoo as much now that our child is older, we felt the expense was not worth the discount received at reciprocals.
2. Don't know if I will be renewing membership. The heat this year doesn't make for good viewing of the animals.

Are there additional benefits that you would like to see added to an annual membership? (Please list them) (n=9)

Special hours (n=2)

1. More opportunities to interact with animals. Feed the penguins. Early access to exhibits. Open earlier/later for members.
2. I would love to see evening hours on a regular basis, either just for members, or for everyone. By closing at 4:30 with my job I don't get to go very often at all anymore.

Food discount (n=2)

1. Discount on food items while at the zoo.
2. Perhaps a food discount or memberships that last 15 or 18 months.

Other (n=5)

1. I wasn't able to take advantage of many activities with my three and five year old. I would like to see more activities for younger aged children.
2. Just that military should be able to bring all their children three children is not enough I have 4 children which is not unusual. The military should include all children in household whether it 1 or 5.
3. Free guest passes for couples who want to bring a friend sometimes.
4. Reduced admission to Brew at the Zoo.
5. No. The zoo is wonderful and it's a great way to spend time with my grandchildren.

Would you consider renewing your membership? (Comment) (n=10)

No, financial issues (n=2)

1. If our finances improve.
2. We would love to renew it but we can't afford it. My husband is going back to school and we are down to one income.
3. If the price was lower.

No, busy schedule (n=5)

1. We always enjoyed the zoo but it is much harder to visit with school aged children and their busy schedules.
2. If I could work out how to get there more often.
3. We usually renewed our membership when we visited. Now that our son is older, we don't get to the zoo as often, but I'm sure we'll renew whenever we visit again.
4. At this time my son & his fiancée are expecting another baby. Maybe when things calm down & our darling granddaughter is here we will reconsider. My daughter & I would love to come back.
5. My grandchildren are age 16 and 11, they love the zoo but they also have their own lives now and I don't get to take them out much anymore.

Comment (n=3)

1. If you had a plan that would work for us. You don't offer a plan for 2 adults plus one.
2. I just moved to Candor so a trip to the zoo is now about an hour and a half.
3. There's no need because my husband and I are both veterans.

Would you consider purchasing a membership as a gift? (Comment) (n=2)

1. Probably as a Christmas gift in the future.
2. No one to give it to.

APPENDIX IV

Codebook

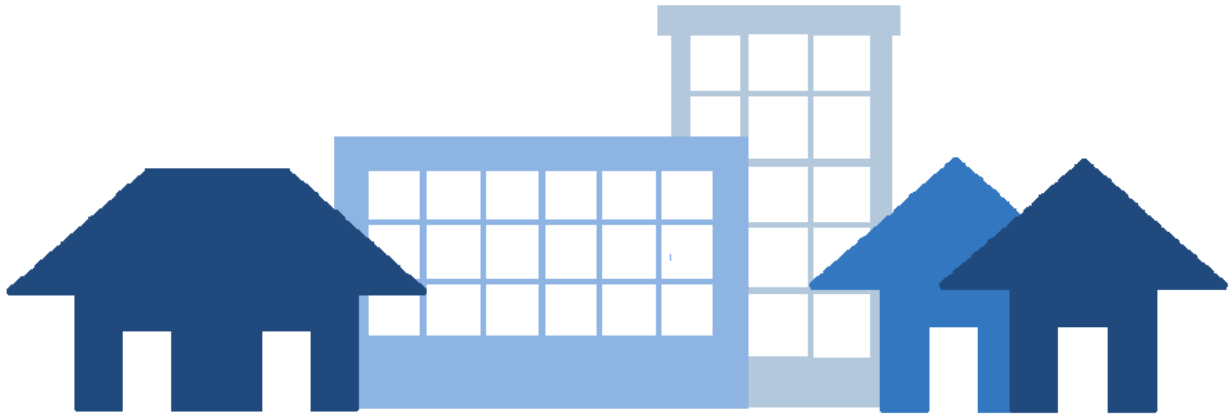
COLUMN	FIELD NAME	DEFINITION	CODE
A	ID	Respondent's anonymous identification number	Code is identical to identification number
B	TYPE	Membership type	1= Family 2= Family + 1 3= Grandparent 4= Dual 5= Patron + 1 6= Senior Dual
C	PURCHASE1	What were your reasons for purchasing your annual zoo membership? (Select all that apply) - It was a better value than purchasing single admission tickets	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
D	PURCHASE2	What were your reasons for purchasing your annual zoo membership? (Select all that apply) – I visit the zoo on a frequent basis	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
E	PURCHASE3	What were your reasons for purchasing your annual zoo membership? (Select all that apply) – I wanted to support the animals at the zoo	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
F	PURCHASE4	What were your reasons for purchasing your annual zoo membership? (Select all that apply) – I often have family and friends visit and the zoo is a great place to take them	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
G	PURCHASE5	What were your reasons for purchasing your annual zoo membership? (Select all that apply) – My membership was a gift	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
H	PURCHASE6	What were your reasons for purchasing your annual zoo membership? (Select all that apply) – I support the work the Rosamond Gifford Zoo does with animal care, conservation and education	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
I	RENEW1	What are your reasons for not renewing your membership? (Select all that apply) – I did not see the value in being a member	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
J	RENEW2	What are your reasons for not renewing your membership? (Select all that apply) – I did not visit the Rosamond Gifford	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response

		Zoo enough to warrant renewing	
K	RENEW3	What are your reasons for not renewing your membership? (Select all that apply) – I haven't gotten around to renewing my membership	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
L	RENEW4	What are your reasons for not renewing your membership? (Select all that apply) – I was unhappy with my experience at the zoo	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
M	RENEW5	What are your reasons for not renewing your membership? (Select all that apply) – My children are now older and we don't get to the zoo very often	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
N	RENEW6	What are your reasons for not renewing your membership? (Select all that apply) – My membership was a gift	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
O	RENEW7	What are your reasons for not renewing your membership? (Select all that apply) – I am a veteran or current military member	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
P	RENEW8	What are your reasons for not renewing your membership? (Select all that apply) – (Other) Financial situation changed	1=Yes 2=No 99= No response
Q	BENEFITS1	What benefits did you use during the course of your membership? (Choose all that apply) – 10% discount at the Curious Cub Gift Shop	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
R	BENEFITS2	What benefits did you use during the course of your membership? (Choose all that apply) – Reciprocal admission benefits at other AZA-accredited zoos	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
S	BENEFITS3	What benefits did you use during the course of your membership? (Choose all that apply) – Free member t-shirt	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
T	BENEFITS4	What benefits did you use during the course of your membership? (Choose all that apply) – Birthday party discounts	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
U	BENEFITS5	What benefits did you use during the course of your membership? (Choose all that apply) – Discounts on special event	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response

		tickets	
V	BENEFITS6	What benefits did you use during the course of your membership? (Choose all that apply) – Reduced pricing on education programs	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
W	BENEFITS7	What benefits did you use during the course of your membership? (Choose all that apply) – Member Appreciation Night in June	1= Yes 2= No 99= No response
X	BENEFITS8	What benefits did you use during the course of your membership? (Choose all that apply) – MyZoo Magazine, member newsletter	1=Yes 2= No 99= No response
Y	LIKE TO SEE 1	Are there additional benefits that you would like to see added to an annual membership? (Open ended) -	1=Yes 2= No 99= No response
Z	LIKE TO SEE 2	Are there additional benefits that you would like to see added to an annual membership? (Open ended) -	1=Yes 2= No 99= No response
AA	LIKE TO SEE 3	Are there additional benefits that you would like to see added to an annual membership? (Open ended) -	1=Yes 2= No 99= No response
AB	LIKE TO SEE 4	Are there additional benefits that you would like to see added to an annual membership? (Open ended) -	1=Yes 2= No 99= No response
AC	LIKE TO SEE 5	Are there additional benefits that you would like to see added to an annual membership? (Open ended) -	1=Yes 2= No 99= No response
AD	MEMBERSHIP	Would you consider renewing your membership?	1= Yes 2= No 3= Maybe 99= No response
AE	GIFT	Would you consider purchasing a membership as a gift?	1=Yes 2= No 3= Maybe 99= No response

Spreadsheet

[illegible]



FINAL NOTICE:

AN ANALYSIS OF EVICTIONS AND HOUSING INSTABILITY IN SYRACUSE, NY

**A REPORT BY THE MAXWELL COMMUNITY BENCHMARKS
PROGRAM**

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INTRODUCTION



Introduction

For 21 years, the Community Benchmarks Program (CBP) of the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs has produced research reports and accompanying policy recommendations that address societal problems plaguing Syracuse, New York and other Rust Belt cities. CBP reports have been produced for and in partnership with local organizations that are dogged in their efforts to create a more equitable city and society. CBP is proud to produce a new report in partnership with the Syracuse Department of Neighborhood and Business Development and the Volunteer Lawyer's Project of Onondaga County, Inc. that addresses evictions and residential instability in Syracuse.

The 2017 Pulitzer Prize Winner in General Non-Fiction was the book *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in an American City* by sociologist Matthew Desmond (2016). The key insight promulgated by Desmond's magnum opus is that evictions are not just products but *catalysts* of poverty, especially for single African American mothers. In Syracuse—the city with the highest concentration of racialized poverty in the nation—this finding requires serious attention. CBP and our partnering organizations have adopted *Evicted* as a call to action.

This report starts by outlining the magnitude of the problem of eviction and residential instability among renters in Syracuse's private rental housing market. It then continues to delineate the causes and acute consequences of eviction and residential instability according to previous social science scholarship. The report then turns to a delineation of our methodology and our quantitative findings, which describe relationships between eviction, residential instability, and various demographic and housing characteristics. It concludes with policy recommendations for lowering eviction and residential instability and buffering their pernicious effects. The goal of this report is to help reduce poverty in Syracuse by informing policy and programmatic solutions to housing instability and inadequacy.

Jennifer Senior of the *New York Times* proclaims that since the publishing of *Eviction*, it is “no longer possible to have a serious discussion about poverty without having a serious discussion about housing.” We hope that our work fuels this serious discussion in Syracuse.

PROBLEM STATEMENT



Problem Statement

Research has shown that the urban poor experience severe residential instability. One cause of this instability is forced eviction from rental property. Desmond found that around 16,000 adults and children are evicted from 6,000 rental housing units in Milwaukee, Wisconsin each year. That is 16 evictions per day (Desmond, 2014a).

There is a lack of a centralized data source capturing eviction data in Syracuse and Central New York. While it was beyond the scope of this study to undertake the difficult task of calculating the annual average eviction rate in Syracuse, staff at the Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County (OnVLP) estimate that there are between 7,000-8,000 eviction cases brought to the Syracuse City Housing Court every year (D. O'Shea, personal communication, April 17, 2017).

OnVLP has defended an average of 812 cases annually over the past four years. Within the past year (2016), OnVLP estimated that they represented cases that resulted in more than 1,331 children being evicted from their homes (D. O'Shea, personal communication, April 18, 2017).

In an article published in the *American Journal of Sociology*, Desmond (2012) reported that 79.7% of all eviction cases brought to court resulted in eviction during the six-week period during which he conducted a court survey. If 79.7% of Syracuse's estimated 7,000-8,000 cases brought annually to the Syracuse City Landlord Tenant Court resulted in an eviction, 5,577-6,374 households in the city would be evicted each year. The average number of persons in rental-occupied housing units in the city is 2.3 (U.S. Census, 2015), so we can estimate that about 12,827-14,660 Syracuse residents experience eviction each year. In total, about 16.6%-18.9% of Syracuse's 33,654 families in renter-occupied housing units (U.S. Census, 2015) experience eviction annually. These estimates do not account for multiple of these cases being against the same tenants.

This alarming prediction of the magnitude of evictions in Syracuse is supplemented by an equally alarming rate of residential mobility among Syracuse renters. Syracuse is severely residentially unstable: about 28.3% of Syracuse renters—close to one third—had moved at least once during 2015 (U.S. Census, 2015). Many of these moves are likely involuntarily.

Risk Factors for Eviction and Residential Instability

Currently, no existing reports describe the risk factors for eviction among individuals, neighborhoods, and families in Syracuse. This report will begin to uncover potential local risk factors, particularly by exploring the demographic risk factors located by Desmond in the context of Syracuse.

Individual Factors

Black women are more likely to get evicted than black men and white women. Black women (n=147) comprised most of Desmond's sample of evicted adult residents (N=375). He found that women in general were more likely to be evicted than men; about 60% of his sample was comprised of women. However, it was only women living in primarily black and Hispanic neighborhoods, not white neighborhoods that were evicted more frequently than men. In fact, women living in majority black neighborhoods were twice as likely to get evicted as men in these neighborhoods and three times more likely to get evicted than women living in majority white neighborhoods (Desmond, 2012).

Ultimately, over one in five black female renters in Milwaukee reported being evicted at least once in their lifetime (Desmond, 2016). Desmond hypothesized that black women in particular have higher rates of eviction because women's wages in majority black neighborhoods are lower than those of men, even if women are less likely to be unemployed. Gender dynamics between primarily male landlords and female tenants of all races also contribute to the gender gap in eviction rates: women are less likely to confront landlords about eviction notices and try to work out an agreement with them. Single women are also more likely to live with children than are single men, and

having children is a risk factor for eviction (Desmond, 2014a).

Families with children are at a higher risk of eviction. This is likely because children "cause added stress on property, disturb neighbors, and attract unwanted state scrutiny by child welfare agents or law enforcement officers" (Desmond and Gershenson, 2017, p. 372). Of households with children in Desmond's study, one third were led by a single woman with no other adults present in the household. The average age of an evicted child was seven. About 77% of evicted children lived in black households (Desmond, 2012).

Unsurprisingly, most evicted families are very poor. This is because poor individuals have a harder time making rental payments. In Desmond's study, the median monthly household income of evicted tenants was \$935, or \$11,220 per year. An overwhelming 94% were not collecting any form of government housing assistance. Renters become cost-burdened, meaning it will be difficult for them to afford basic necessities such as food and transportation after paying for rent and utilities, when they have to devote 30% of their monthly income to housing costs. Yet, most adults in the study were paying at least 50% of their monthly income on rent. One third of respondents gave at least 80% of their monthly check to rent (Desmond, 2012).

Given these demographic and family compositional risk factors, black, unmarried women with children living in poverty are most likely to experience eviction. Desmond proclaims that the epidemic of mass incarceration among poor black men is akin to the scourge of eviction among poor black women. "Poor black men are locked up while poor black women are locked out" (Desmond, 2014b). This exemplifies the importance of an intersectional approach to understanding eviction risk factors.

Lastly, the “life shock” of losing a job also increases one’s chances of being evicted. This is true even when missing rental payments are controlled for, likely because unemployment represents both a loss of present and future income (Desmond and Gershenson, 2017).

Instead, tenants may purposely withhold rent and force an eviction so they can use their saved rents to put toward the up-front payments for a new apartment (Desmond and Gershenson, 2017).

Housing Factors

Poor rental housing conditions also increase residential instability. Low-income families living in substandard rental housing conditions—those with peeling paint, exposed wires, a non-functioning heater or stove, dark and thus less safe interior and exterior conditions, etc.—moved more frequently (Kull et al., 2016). This may be because some housing units are in such poor condition that the city’s Division of Code Enforcement force tenants to move because the unit is unfit for human habitation. Desmond speculated that families with children living in inadequate housing conditions are at a higher risk of eviction because landlords fear scrutiny by the Environmental Protection Agency (in case of lead poisoning) or child protective services (if the unit is unsafe or unsanitary) (Desmond, 2014a).

Neighborhood Factors

Evictions are more likely to occur in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Desmond found that about 40% of evictions took place in high-poverty neighborhoods. Additionally, nearly 53% of evictions occurred in hyper-segregated neighborhoods (Desmond, 2012). Eviction rates are also higher among individuals and families living in neighborhoods with higher crime and aggregate eviction rates, net of individual-level disadvantage. This may be because individuals are less likely to try to prevent an eviction if their neighborhood is a dangerous or otherwise undesirable place to live.

The Negative Effects of Eviction and Residential Instability

Evictions and residential instability have severe negative effects on the social, economic, health, and academic outcomes of children, parents, families, and neighborhoods.

Children's Academic Outcomes

Children who are evicted or residentially unstable have poorer academic and social outcomes. These youth frequently transfer schools and become disembedded from valuable social networks of teachers, counselors, and peers (Desmond, 2016). One study found that frequent residential mobility lowered children's academic success in the first grade, which in turn helped reduce their academic achievement in subsequent grades (Cotton and Schwartz-Barcott, 2016). Experiencing three or more moves in earlier childhood and adolescence reduces the probability of graduating high school by 14% and 10%, respectively (Haveman et al., 1991). In terms of social consequences, frequently mobile children are more likely to feel victimized in school, have difficulties with self-regulation, and, for males in particular, express aggressive behaviors (Cotton and Schwartz-Barcott, 2016).

Socioeconomic Outcomes

200% higher than their non-evicted counterparts. Mothers are more likely to report that their own health and the health of their children is poor the year after being evicted (Desmond, 2016). Eviction increases parental stress (Robin et al., 2007) and has even been marked as a risk factor for suicide (Serby et al., 2006). Persons with HIV experience increased progression of the illness as a result of eviction (Kennedy et al., 2016).

Individuals experiencing (chronic) housing instability also fare poorly in terms of socioeconomic outcomes and future housing conditions. Those recently evicted are 15% more likely to be fired from their job due to psychological stresses. Families' material hardship is 20% higher within the year after an eviction. Once evicted, individuals and families are less likely to obtain public housing because evaluators mark down public housing applicants with a record of eviction or unpaid rental debt (Desmond, 2016; Desmond et al., 2013). As a result, evicted families often experience homelessness and further residential instability. Half of homeless persons report eviction or other rental problems as the cause of their homelessness (Greenberg et al., 2016 from Lindblom, 1996). Renters who are evicted or otherwise move involuntarily have a 25% greater likelihood of experiencing chronic housing problems than those who move by choice. Further, families who have been evicted are likely to relocate to neighborhoods with higher poverty and crime rates (Desmond, 2016). As such, poverty not only causes evictions, but is reproduced and exacerbated due to evictions.

Health Outcomes

Eviction also negatively impacts mental and physical health. Evicted mothers report symptoms of clinical depression at a rate 200% higher than their non-evicted counterparts. Mothers are more likely to report that their own health and the health of their children is poor the year after being evicted (Desmond, 2016). Eviction has even been marked as a risk factor for suicide (Serby et al., 2006). Persons with HIV experience increased progression of the illness as a result of eviction (Kennedy et al., 2016).

Effects on Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods with high rates of residential instability also suffer. Individuals who do not feel permanently rooted in a neighborhood are less likely to become civically, politically, and socially engaged in that neighborhood. Residential instability lowers trust of one's neighbors and community cohesion, which ultimately diminishes neighbors' collective ability to regulate youth activity and prevent crime through social control (Sampson and Groves, 1989). Youth in residentially unstable neighborhoods are more at risk for dropping out of school, participating in illicit activity, and engaging in risky sexual activity (see Harding and Hepburn, 2014 for a discussion of this). Even after a variety of controls including historic crime patterns, Milwaukee neighborhoods with higher eviction rates experience higher violent crime rates within the year that follows (Desmond, 2016). Additionally, much local tax revenue is spent on court personnel, sheriffs who carry out evictions, and homeless services that could instead be diverted to other productive avenues at the local level (Greenberg et al., 2016).

Existing Local Policy Addressing Residential Instability and Eviction

The city of Syracuse uses a variety of existing public and private resources to prevent evictions and mitigate the critical effects of residential instability on children, parents, families, and neighborhoods. Some examples of services provided to tenants who cannot pay their month's rent or who have already been evicted and/or are homeless are provided:

- ◆ Through a program called "Temporary Assistance," Onondaga County Social Services provides emergency loans for rental assistance.
- ◆ Catholic Charities provides emergency shelter for persons rendered homeless by eviction and provides relocation services and sometimes even grants that can be used for a down payment on a new rental unit and the first month's rent.
- ◆ HALE Homeless Prevention provides financial assistance for rent or energy bills as well as budgeting and job trainings.
- ◆ OnVLP and Hiscock Legal Aid Society provide free legal aid to tenants served with an eviction notice. If the tenant is evicted, volunteer lawyers provide them information about community agencies that can assist them

POLICY RECCOMENDATIONS



Bridge Subsidy Demonstration Program

What is it?

The Bridge Subsidy Demonstration Program (BSDP) is a transitional program that New York State could establish to increase the residential stability of low-income renters. The program provided up to three years of rental assistance to individuals who had a disability, were making less than \$15,000 a year, and were on a waitlist for long-term federal housing assistance such as Section 8 vouchers. Program participants were required to spend 30% of their adjusted monthly income on rent and utilities—the threshold for being cost-burdened. The program paid the difference between 30% of participants' income and the actual cost of rent directly to the landlord. BSDP was first funded by the Maryland state government in 2006. In total, they spent \$2.1 million successfully serving 75 participants. The program was temporary in its initial design and is currently no longer accepting new members. It will only continue to make payments until the final participant has transitioned to permanent housing (Reed, 2017).

This method of providing transitional housing to people on waitlists for Section 8 vouchers would help ensure that our most vulnerable populations do not fall deeper into poverty or develop or exacerbate other socioeconomic, health, and academic problems because of residential instability. BSDP could be implemented to house other vulnerable groups waiting for Section 8 vouchers. For example, families with children under the age of five constitute a population highly vulnerable to the negative effects of residential instability (Ziol-Guest and McKenna, 2014) and may therefore be included among the types of individuals and families who would qualify for a Syracuse version of BSDP.

How would we implement it?

Local organizations and government officials should attempt to secure state resources for the implementation of BSDP at the local level. HOME funds from the Division for Housing and Community Renewal are one avenue to pursue. This policy is less costly than expanding the voucher program in general and could still ensure housing for the most vulnerable populations.

Why is it important?

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development recommends that tenants spend no more than 30% of income on rent and utilities or they become cost-burdened (Crowley, 2008). This program helps ensure vulnerable populations are not cost-burdened and evicted while they are waiting for Section 8. When persons become close to the top of

the waitlist, their housing history is evaluated and those with past evictions are less likely to receive a voucher or public housing. BSDP participants may thus be less likely to accrue a new eviction and be denied assistance. Transitional assistance is also better than forms of short-term assistance (such as loans for rental assistance when a tenant falls behind on payment) because it provides funding before tenants are on the edge of eviction (Reed, 2017).