

Civic Engagement as a Catalyst for Community Change: 2021 Research Grantee Dialogue.

Civic Engagement and Environmental Stewardship

June 08, 2021

Civic Engagement and Environmental Stewardship *Panel Moderator*

Melissa Gouge, Ph.D.,
Research Analyst,
*Office of Research and Evaluation/
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Civic Engagement and Environmental Stewardship

INARO

Carlos Vázquez Rivera, Ph.D.

Social Community Psychologist

*University of Puerto Rico at Humacao
Department of Social Sciences*

2018 Grantee



Civic Engagement and Environmental Stewardship

Grantee Program Accomplishments

INARO - Montones de voluntades, transforman realidades: Community and participation in a socio-natural disaster scenario



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Grantee Program Accomplishments

The INARO project is working with the *Montones* community in *Las Piedras* town, through its voluntary association *Jóvenes del Barrio*. The community has experienced two hurricanes, *Irma* and *María* (2017), as the rest of Puerto Rico. Our original research questions are: (1) What community characteristics act to inhibit or promote active civic engagement? and (2) What will be the community cohesion after the experience of a natural disaster? The INARO's Community Research Team (CRT) completed the data collection of the original project by held 7 focus groups, administrated 86 questionnaires and 11 in deep interviews for a total of 160 participants.



Civic Engagement and Environmental Stewardship

Building Civic Engagement in the Post-Harvey Context:
Exploring Facilitators and Barriers to Civic Activity in Four
Hurricane-Affected Communities in Houston

Suzanne Pritzker, Ph.D.

*Associate Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work*

Denae King, Ph.D.

*Research Program Manager
Texas Southern University Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs*

2018 Grantee



Civic Engagement and Environmental Stewardship

Grantee Program Accomplishments

Purpose: To work with community partners to better understand how residents perceive civic engagement and how the disaster experience has impacted their civic engagement(CE).

Core Research Questions

1. How do communities define CE?
2. What are the barriers and facilitators to CE as perceived by community members?
3. How does Hurricane Harvey impact CE?
4. How do perceptions of CE differ across racially/ethnically and economically diverse communities?



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Grantee Program Accomplishments

Hurricane Harvey: Community Members' Civic Engagement Experiences

Lord, don't let this water come in	So many organizations that gave	Coordination was so critical	Everybody was like helping everybody
There was a window of opportunity	Anchored us to the community	We had to do everything on our own	Don't know where to go for help
Pass that information down	Don't know where money went	They ain't working for us	They should take initiative to implement policies
It's for sure gotten worse			

Key Takeaways

- Need for clear disaster preparedness, response, recovery information
- Importance of translated Information, accessible in diverse languages
- Distrust in elected officials related to disaster response, short & long term recovery assistance
- Influences of multiple disasters over time

Civic Engagement and Environmental Stewardship

Slow Violence and Environmental Injustice in NV
Research for Change

Jennifer Willett, Ph.D.
University of Nevada, Reno

Jennifer Sims, MSW
Upward Bound

Youth Scientists & Project Leaders
Research for Change



Civic Engagement and Environmental Stewardship

Slow Violence and Environmental Injustice in NV

Slow Violence:

- Hidden environmental injustices

Research Method:

- Photovoice by Youth Scientists to document slow violence in working class neighborhoods

Findings to Date:

- Climate disasters
- Infrastructure needs
- Illegal dumping
- Connection to housing crisis

Actions:

- Build support and create solutions with our partners



Civic Engagement and Environmental Stewardship

Slow Violence and Environmental Injustice in NV



Civic Engagement and Environmental Stewardship

Neighbors-in-Need CBPAR Project

Franchesca Cifuentes, MS

Program Manager, Evaluator, & Researcher

Drew University, Sociology Department

(2018-2021) CNCS Grantee

Sophia George

Student Researcher

Drew University



Civic Engagement and Environmental Stewardship

Neighbors-in-Need CBPAR Project

To further explore the county's plan to eliminate homelessness in 10 years, a team of faculty and students from Drew University teamed up with a group of 19 diverse stakeholders from housing agencies, community-based organizations, housing voucher recipients, and landlords to implement a community-based participatory action research (CBPAR) project during the 2018-2019 academic year. The **Neighbors-in-Need Project** utilized a mixed methods research design to study county's housing voucher ecosystem in **Morris County, NJ**.



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Grantee Program Accomplishments

- Created a Pilot Intervention Program
- Engaged multiple stakeholders:
 - Housing agencies (Family Promise, Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris County, Monarch Housing, Morris County Housing Authority),
 - Community-based organizations (Atlantic Health Systems and Madison Baptist Church)
 - housing voucher recipients as community researchers
- Developed a Public Engagement Campaign
 - Communicate and educate state and local elected officials, property owners/managers, faith-based communities and grassroots organizations about our research findings and mobilize support
 - Launched a Four-part Webinar series
- Design a digital curriculum toolkit about the CBPAR research approach
- Held Trainings led by CAT members
- Dissemination of Efforts



Civic Engagement and Environmental Stewardship

Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI)

Penn Loh

*Senior Lecturer and Director of
Community Practice*

*Tufts University Dept. of Urban &
Environmental Policy & Planning*

*2018 Grantee (w/ Dudley Street
Neighborhood Initiative)*

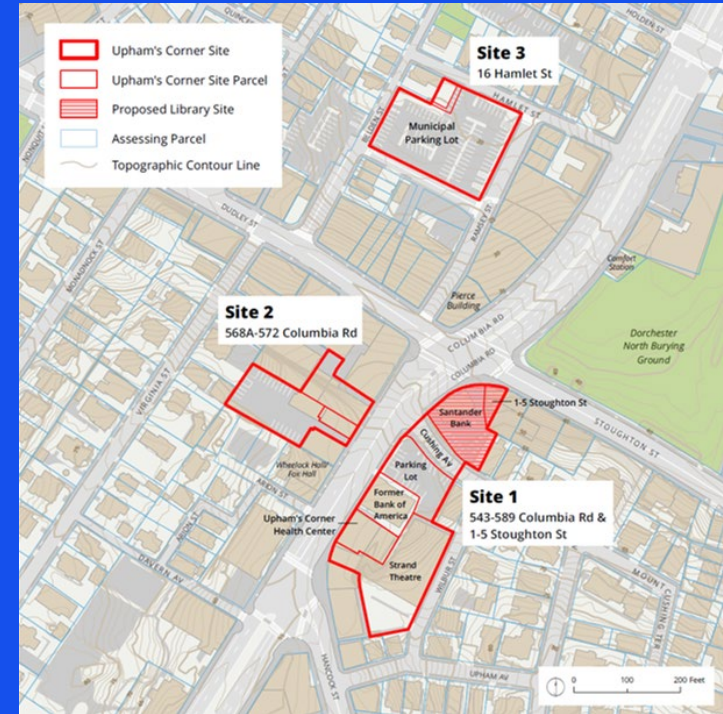


Civic Engagement and Environmental Stewardship

Grantee Program Accomplishments

How can civic engagement strengthen community capacity for control over land use and economic development in Boston's Dudley neighborhood?

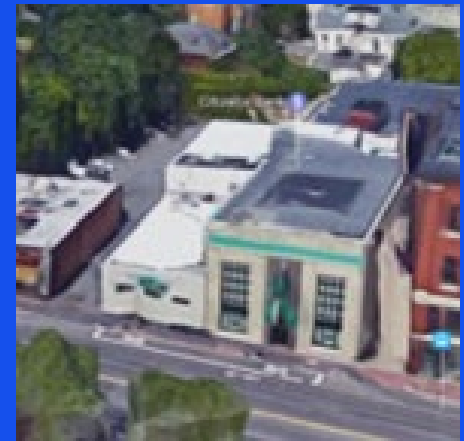
Since mid-2017, DSNI and City of Boston have been collaboratively leading a planning process for redevelopment of key sites in Upham's Corner, known as the Upham's Corner Implementation process. The goal is to catalyze development of an arts and innovation district and create economic opportunities for existing residents while preventing displacement. The sites include the DSNI-owned former bank building, as well as the City-owned Strand Theater, a former Bank of America building acquired by the City to build a branch library, a municipal parking lot, and several privately owned sites adjacent to the Strand and Bank of America.



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Grantee Program Accomplishments

- Supported DSNI in co-facilitating community planning process, with multi-stakeholder advisory group from 2018-present.
- A team of 9 youth leaders conducted their own action research in summer 2019 to further build youth vision around the redevelopment of DSNI's building.
- Conducted 18 key stakeholder interviews.
- Published a website with tools to orient new participants to the Upham's Corner Implementation process:
<https://sites.tufts.edu/uit/>.
- Published in Shelterforce in September 2020:
<https://shelterforce.org/2020/09/28/planning-an-arts-district-with-art-and-fighting-displacement-with-community/>
- Supported DSNI's developer selection process in spring 2021.



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Panelist Discussion and Q&A



Melissa Gouge, Ph.D.,

Research Analyst,

*Office of Research and Evaluation/
AmeriCorps NCCC*



Jennifer Willett, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

University of Nevada, Reno



Franchesca Cifuentes, MS

*Program Manager,
Evaluator, & Researcher*

*Drew University,
Sociology Department*



Carlos Vazquez Rivera, Ph.D.

*Social Community
Psychologist*

*University of Puerto Rico at
Humacão*



Dr. Arthur Pressley

*Associate Professor of
Psychology & Religion*

Drew University

Theological School



Penn Loh, Ph.D.

*Associate Chair/ Senior
Lecturer*

*Director of the Master of
Public Policy Program
and Community
Practice*

Tufts University



Suzanne Pritzker, Ph.D.

*Associate Dean for Academic
Affairs and Associate Professor*

University of Houston



Sophia George

Student Researcher

Drew University

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Tuesday, June 8, 2021 – Thursday, June 10, 2021

Closing Statement

Mary Hyde, Ph.D.

Director,

Office of Research and Evaluation

