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Practicum Site:
Meharry-Vanderbilt Alliance
Nashville, TN

Practicum Site Supervisor:
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Strengthening Capacity and Advancing Equity for Minority-Led Emerging Non-Profit Organizations through the Health Equity Workgroup

Purpose: The Meharry-Vanderbilt Alliance is an organization that develops and supports collaborative initiatives between Meharry Medical College, Vanderbilt University Medical Center, and the Nashville community. As the result of the 2016 Community Health Assessment, the Healthy Nashville Leadership Council established the Health Equity Workgroup (HEW) collaborative. The overall goal of the practicum was to work with the HEW to strengthen capacity and advance equity for minority led emerging non-profit organizations that are on the front lines of promoting health equity and well-being in vulnerable communities.

Design: The overall goal of the HEW is to assist organizations as they: (1) increase capacity through self-identified needs, (2) address best practices for organizational structure, data collection and analysis, and (3) identify, apply, and receive proper funding. The HEW developed a list of prospective non-profit organizations and prepared listening sessions to solicit feedback on organizational barriers. These listening sessions provided the foundation for future work to ensure the most problematic areas are being addressed.

Outcomes: Working with the HEW allowed for opportunities to create and present multiple presentations with stakeholders. Funding issues continue to be a problematic area of concern. To address this, one organization was thoroughly reviewed and shown they were not able to demonstrate their program successes. Programmatic materials and an evaluation plan were developed to highlight their achievements thus allowing for increased ability for additional

funding. Linkages have been made between organizations and funders as well. An overall evaluation of the effectiveness of the HEW is currently under development.

Lessons Learned: The primary lessons learned during this practicum were the: (1) barriers that many minority non-profit leaders face, and (2) importance of not only convening community stakeholder to gather input, but also using that information to develop tangible resources that are useful to establish sustainable programming. The process of collaborating and implementing a community informed plan to address and change systems and impact high-risk populations, takes time.

