



Beck Institute on Religion and Poverty

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE

Summer 2014

BECK UPDATES — Capacity Building

In a host of ways all involved with Beck have been capacity builders this year, furthering our Learning Collaborative work through enriching the Life Skills Empowerment Programs (LSEP), while developing new partnerships for these programs and important coalition work for advancing restorative justice. This newsletter highlights our new LSEP program partners, program updates, an exceptional Restorative Justice Consultation in November, and a good news follow-up on our “Our Daily Bread” documentary.

Life Skills Empowerment Programs Grow

Collaborations with a diverse community of pioneers and committed service providers began five years ago to develop an evidence-base for the LSEP program model that was developed over 25 years ago by Catholic Charities and the Interfaith Assembly for Homelessness and Housing, to support the homeless, giving them a voice, and building coping skills for more successful life management.

This year we have completed evaluations for 18 LSEP program cycles and are preparing to move to the next phase of development, refining the program model based on all we have learned to support broad replication. We celebrate the completion of reports based on pilot and demonstration evaluations supported by the New York Community Trust that show evidence for the model’s effectiveness in increasing coping and life management for people in transition.

This past winter the Polar Vortex was daunting. Nonetheless, all of the Life Skills programs completed a successful spring cycle, with ten programs graduating participants, all who were true “overcomers”.

Catholic Charities EOP (Educational Outreach Program) reported that this 49th program cycle was their very best! Included in the successful eight fall program cycles were two new programs: one in Ossining for the post-

incarcerated, Breaking the Chains, and the LEAP program at the Reformed Church of Bronxville. All are important new directions, highlighted here.

Through the generous support of an anonymous donor, development for sustainability has enriched all Life Skills programs and made it possible to launch new ones. Important new homes have also been established for LSEP programs that have become active communities to meet the needs of participants.

Metro Baptist Church, in the Hell’s Kitchen area of Manhattan, now hosts two programs, one serving Veterans and the other, domestic violence survivors. West End Presbyterian Church now hosts Panim el Panim, a program serving the homeless. The First Congregational Church of Poughkeepsie is the home for a vital new community program serving the needs of domestic violence survivors (see insert). See our website for program details and research updates.

A Focus on Restorative Justice

The definitive event of this past fall was the Restorative Justice Consultation held at Lincoln Center on November 18, 2013.

Monsignor Quinn, Vice President of Mission and Ministry at Fordham, welcomed over 65 invited guests for the full day event. A panel of national and international restorative justice experts confronted U.S. justice practices, based on their experience of restorative justice. We share possibilities and new direction that resulted from this unique day-long consultation.

Notable achievements for all programs this year are due to our talented and committed Beck team of capacity builders, including GSS MSW and PhD students.

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Our Daily Bread

The College of New Rochelle (BSW program), the Columbia School of Social Work, and Union Theological Seminary recently screened “Our Daily Bread”, Beck’s first documentary film.

We are proud to announce that this documentary was the official selection and was screened at three international film festivals. In addition to the festivals the 45 minute film received the Merit Award from the Best Short Films Competition.

St. John’s Bread and Life, West Side Campaign Against Hunger and Holy Apostles Soup Kitchen, three of New York City’s largest emergency food programs are featured in the film.

Dale Lindquist, the producer, cinematographer, and editor was joined by Tony Butler, Executive Director of St. John’s Bread and Life at the screenings to discuss hunger, food insecurity and the role of the religious, business, and political communities in addressing this growing problem.





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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
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The Bertram M. Beck Institute on Religion and Poverty is an ecumenical institute that partners with New York City interfaith religious and lay leaders who are moved to alleviate poverty in our affluent society. We are committed to preparing leaders who promote social justice and serve the poor.

This newsletter is dedicated to all those who have joined our journey of promoting social justice, fighting hunger and promoting all those aspects of a life that create safety, health, and dreams of a future. Our journey will continue through publications, media projects, research, and coursework.

Student Contributions



Focused on Beck's work on capacity building, sustainability, and restorative justice, graduate students from Fordham's School of Social Service have been crucial to this year's success. Their valued contributions have enriched all who have worked with them. It has been inspiring to see their commitment and growth, encouraging us with creative contributions to the life skills curriculum. Above all, we welcome their investment in working with us on facing the challenges that helping those in poverty present.

Undergraduate students in the Community and Human Services program at SUNY's Empire State College have supported daily program needs including becoming mentors to LSEP program participants. Nine GSS MSW interns served as case managers, advocates, and group facilitators making invaluable contributions to the success of the different LSEP programs. Students had the opportunity to learn about the central role of community through their active assistance in helping people in transition move their lives forward.

Several past and present MSW students involved in the Beck Institute Collaborative have achievements to note: Hope Eisdorfer, 2013 GSSS graduate, was awarded the John G. Sullivan Award for a graduate committed to the service of those who are homeless and suffering from mental illness, substance abuse, and HIV/AIDS. Over the past year Hope has effectively served as the program director for both the Riverside Church's Coming Home Program for the post-incarcerated and Xavier Mission's LSTEP programs for the homeless. Alex Khoobani, MSW graduate 2014 and Research Assistant to Beck, was also granted the honor of the John G. Sullivan Award due to her ongoing support of the Beck Institute Collaborative and LSEP as well as previous fieldwork with homeless families in Ossining (Westchester County, NY). Sue Groman, former MSW 2013 graduate and Research Assistant to Beck, independently developed and coordinated a new Living Well program in Poughkeepsie (Dutchess County, NY). Sue's work in program and community development has been a new chapter in her learning that has been nothing short of phenomenal! She has also continued to hold an important role in transcription of data collection recordings.

Beck's outstanding doctoral candidates have had a central role in diligent data collection and report development, all while managing to successfully pass their courses and for some their comprehensive exams. We look forward to their progress as they continue to work on their dissertations that will bring to light learning gleaned from the past four years of research with the LSEP programs.

Special thanks to: **MSW students** - Argelia Moya, Perthrina Pegus-Neptune, Carlos Bevides, Qualiyah Arrington, Shirin Nassi, Lindsay Cardoza, Sarah Franek, Kara Sprague, Alex Khoobani, Rachel Johnson, and Sue Groman (former RA/MSW student); **Doctoral students** - Jessica Banslaben, Patricia Dawson, Philip Elike, Donald Garner, Jen Hili, Linda Hood, Debbie Mullin, Erica Ponteen. Your commitment to the Beck mission, continued hard work, and wealth of talent has helped us achieve so much this year. We hope the lessons of this year touch your personal and professional lives for years to come.



The Beck Team:

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