



A MESSAGE FROM THE HUP DIRECTOR

2021 was a strong year for HUP with the launch of 29 projects spanning numerous county departments and university units. This report represents our annual effort to celebrate the policy and organizational impacts of these projects.

In 2021 HUP's primary focus was on building capacity to ensure that collaborative activities support Hennepin County's disparity reduction and climate action efforts, and key elements of the University of Minnesota's systemwide strategic plan, *MPact 2025*. This includes prioritizing multidisciplinary research opportunities and advancing career outcomes for students, and growing opportunities for impactful community engagement.

Critical to this effort is a new student engagement program, the HUP Collaborative Research Assistantship (HCRA), which will launch in summer 2022. The HCRA is funded by the University's Office for Public Engagement. It will match diverse graduate students with Hennepin County-identified disparity reduction research projects and will provide the county with multidisciplinary student expertise to help advance social policy.

In addition, HUP is excited to begin work with Hennepin County to identify critical research questions to guide faculty and student work that supports disparity reduction and climate action. And we plan on re-introducing the HUP Mixers as an opportunity to fund collaborative multidisciplinary teams to work on these complex research questions.

LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS

We said goodbye to long-serving HUP Leadership Team member **Andy Furco** as he returned to his faculty position in the College of Education and Human Development. Professor Furco is replaced by **Heidi Barajas**, Interim Associate Vice President for Public Engagement. We warmly welcome Professor Barajas and look forward to her guidance.

In partnership,

Scott Vargo,
HUP Director

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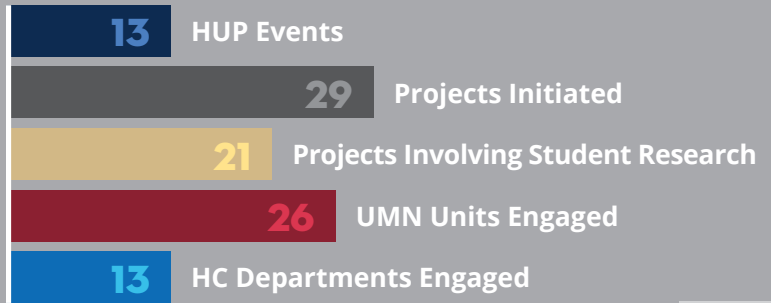
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YEAR AT A GLANCE

2021 IN NUMBERS



PROJECTS AND EVENTS BY TOPIC

Projects may be counted in more than one category



EXPLORE RECENT HUP PROJECTS AND EVENTS AT HUP.UMN.EDU

HUP LEADERSHIP TEAM

Commissioner Marion Greene
Hennepin County Board Chair

David Hough
County Administrator

Jodi Wentland
Deputy County Administrator,
Health and Human Services

May Xiong
Assistant County Administrator,
Disparity Reduction

Lisa Cerney
Assistant County Administrator,
Public Works

Alisa Salewski
Chief Innovation Officer, Center
of Innovation & Excellence

Robert McMaster
Vice Provost & Dean of
Undergraduate Education

Jessica Hellmann
Professor & Executive Director,
Institute on the Environment

Tom Fisher
Professor & Director, Minnesota
Design Center

Heidi Barajas
Interim Associate Vice President,
Office for Public Engagement

Edward Goetz
Professor & Director, Center for
Urban and Regional Affairs

Catherine Squires
Associate Dean, Humphrey
School of Public Affairs

HUP WEBINARS

CONNECTING TO ADDRESS DISPARITY

This year, presenters continued disparity reduction efforts in Minnesota. Eleven (11) presenters approached disparity reduction from different backgrounds, reflecting the multi-faceted challenges that disparities create. These webinars attracted 550 registrations among county staff and are available to watch online.



JANUARY

Contextualizing the Twin Cities Uprising

Professor Adam Bledsoe, Department of Geography, Environment & Society



Virtual Workshop: Ripple Effects Mapping

Scott Chazdon, UMN Extension



FEBRUARY

Get Moving: Empirical-Based Strategies for Exercise Adherence

Professor Beth Lewis, School of Kinesiology



Immigrants in COVID America

Professor Erika Lee, Department of History



MARCH

State of the Minnesota Economy

Professor Laura Kalambokidis, Department of Applied Economics



APRIL

A Reckoning with Race: The Mapping Prejudice Project

Kirsten Delegard, Mapping Prejudice Project



MAY

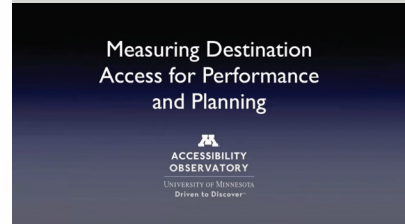
Black Reproductive Health: Getting at the Root Cause of Inequity

Professor Rachel Hardeman, School of Public Health

"I enjoyed the whole topic and hearing everything from the presenter! I especially valued hearing more about what we can do to address discrimination in healthcare and receiving follow-up links on the topic." - Attendee of Dr. Hardeman's presentation on Black Reproductive Health



DOCUMENTING THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES IN THE U.S.



HUP Webinars
watch at youtube.com/universityhennepin



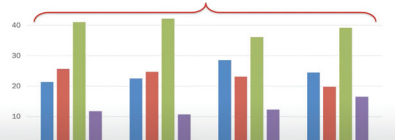
CONTEXTUALIZING THE TWIN CITIES UPRISING



"If you don't understand the story behind the story, you don't understand the story."
-Mahmoud El-Kati
(Community elder and intellectual leader)

Substantial contradictory exposure reported

Across nutrition topics, over 70% reported medium or higher levels of contradictory exposure; only 10.4% reported no exposure



Get Moving: Strategies for Exercise Adherence

Beth Lewis, PhD
Professor & Director, School of Kinesiology



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Drives to Discover



JUNE

National Accessibility Evaluation - Phase II

Andrew Owen, Center for Transportation Studies



JULY

The Right to Home - How Home Interiors Relate to the Production of Disparities

Professor Tasoulla Hadjiyanni, College of Design



SEPTEMBER

Braver Angels

Professor William Doherty, Department of Family Social Science



OCTOBER

Conflicting Information's Effect on Health Campaign Success

Professor Rebekah Nagler, Hubbard School of Journalism and Mass Communication

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Exploring the Future of 911 Dispatch Technology

Many 911 systems use older technologies that struggle to account for the diverse ways of communicating during an emergency. This results in dispatchers making rapid decisions based on limited information.

Given this, HUP coordinated a connection between Hennepin County and Professors **Tom Fisher** (College of Design) and **Saif Benjaafar** (College of Science and Engineering) to envision a smart, integrated and resilient emergency response system. The team received funding from the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Civic Innovation Challenge for a four-month planning grant, during which the team learned about the 911 system and explored opportunities to implement new technology.

While the team did not receive Stage 2 funding, the planning period catalyzed several partnerships with Hennepin County Public Safety, Sheriff's Office, and Human Services that continued into 2022, including evaluating residents' experiences with dispatch and conducting an in-depth environmental scan of emergent 911 technologies.

[Watch a summary of the project here - z.umn.edu/NSF911Video](https://z.umn.edu/NSF911Video)



Source: Rebecca Slater | cts.umn.edu/news/2021/july/benjaafar

"Working with the UMN allowed [us] to be able to explore new ideas in a way that became really iterative, and allowed us to think of possibilities that otherwise would have been almost impossible to do."

- Leah Kaiser, Behavioral Health and Justice Strategies director



Source: mcohs.umn.edu/the-impact-of-work-related-stress-on-law-enforcement-personnel

The Impact of Work-Related Stress on Law Enforcement Personnel

Occupational Injury Prevention Research Training program PhD student, **Teddy Nam**, studied the impact of work-related stress on law enforcement. This study included interviews with law enforcement personnel to understand stressors experienced in their positions and the availability and use of support services. Through this project, both agencies better understood the prevalence of work-related stress, as well as the perceived effectiveness and use of the stress support resources currently in place. Researchers hope that the study results will allow for better mitigation of work-related stress, yielding better outcomes between communities and officers.

"The communication and willingness to adapt to the changing demands and landscape due to COVID and civil unrest, on the part of the research team was remarkable."

- Hennepin County Lead

Spring and Fall Class Highlights

Working with seven UMN faculty, HUP identified opportunities for 14 county staff to enroll in graduate-level courses as non-degree seeking students. County staff were able to utilize Hennepin County tuition reimbursement dollars to cover course fees. County staff gained valuable knowledge they can use in their daily work. **Courses included:** Principles and Methods of Evaluation; Poverty, Inequity, and Public Policy; State and Local Public Finance; Civic Participation in Public Affairs; Introduction to Policy Analysis; Leading Across Sectors; and Negotiation.

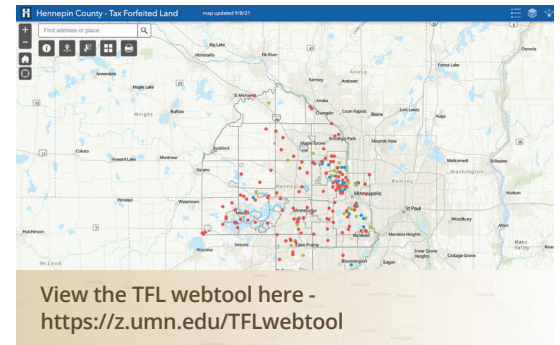
"Taking this course taught me strategies for crafting and completing projects that intertwine government, nonprofit, and public entities."
- Course participant

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Supporting Affordable Housing, Improving Climate Change Resilience and Reducing Racial Disparities through Repurposing Tax Forfeited Land

A team from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs and the Center for Urban & Regional Affairs partnered with Hennepin County Resident and Real Estate services to develop a geographic information systems (GIS) webtool. This webtool is intended to assist with decision making around ways to distribute and transfer ownership of properties which have been forfeited due to tax delinquencies. The GIS webtool compiles property condition and neighborhood demographic data to better understand the trade-offs between different strategies and how repurposing tax

forfeited land can address critical goals, such as supporting affordable housing, improving climate change resilience, and reducing racial disparities in Hennepin County.



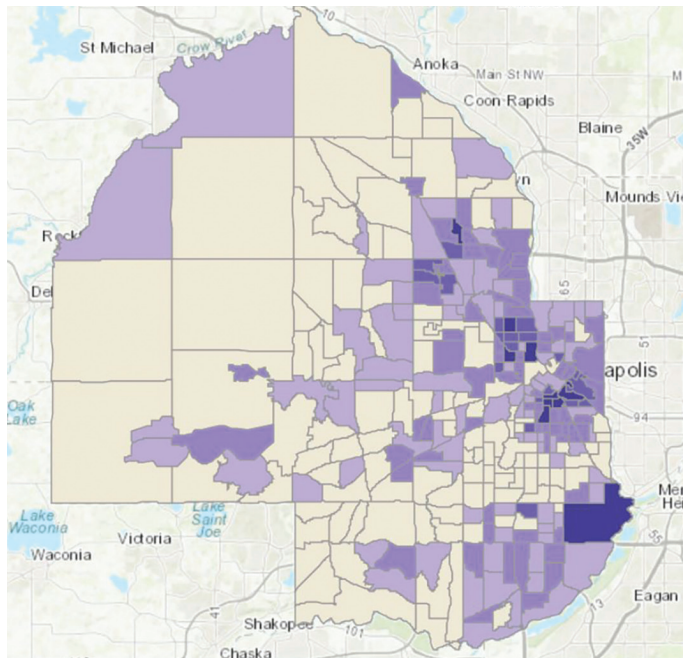
"Partnerships with professors like Ryan Allen demonstrate a commitment by Hennepin County to listen and learn from a variety of perspectives. Through this partnership, Resident and Real Estate Services has discovered new knowledge, and new ways of better serving our residents." - Mark Chapin, Resident and Real Estate Services

Developing a Digital Divide Evaluation Framework

Evaluation PhD students **Heather Gilich** and **Katie Boone** (advised by Professor **John LaVelle**, College of Education and Human Development) designed an evaluation plan to help guide Hennepin County's efforts to reduce the digital divide.

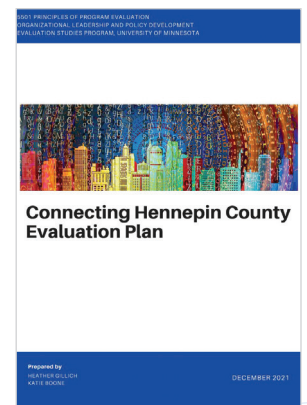
The partnership began when the county's Office of Broadband and Digital Inclusion expressed interest in better understanding the relative effectiveness of strategies to increase internet access and knowledge of how to effectively navigate online for communities of color. Many of these strategies were implemented quickly to address disparate impacts resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The project team gathered information about the various digital equity programs created to respond to the impacts of COVID-19. The final report details a multi-pronged evaluation and provides comprehensive guidance for conducting a community survey, community-based participatory research sessions, and engagement with key stakeholders, such as community organizations, public schools, and internet service providers. Hennepin County is interested in implementing more elements of this plan in 2022.



Households without an internet subscription

Source: Hennepin County's Digital access map
hennepin.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=681c2b9d9bea4522bc516fa130d1c71e



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Evaluating Hennepin County's 2020 Emergency Rental Assistance Program

In 2020, Hennepin County distributed \$16.3 million in emergency rental assistance, funded by the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act. In 2021, a team of Humphrey students in Professor **Jerry Zhao's** (Humphrey School of Public Affairs) capstone workshop partnered with Hennepin County Housing and Economic Development to examine the effectiveness of this funding in preventing evictions. The team explored several questions, including how well funds were targeted to those most likely to experience eviction, particularly in historically underrepresented and marginalized communities.



The team found that the rental assistance was effectively targeted, with over 70% of funding going to neighborhoods with moderately high to high rates of eviction and that

the majority of funding went to neighborhoods where residents faced a higher risk of being disparately impacted by the pandemic. The team also found that the innovative landlord-initiated emergency rental application was effective in reducing the administrative burden for renters versus renters filling out the application themselves.

Read the report here - <https://z.umn.edu/CARESactCapstone>



Hennepin-University Urban Agriculture Initiative

Hennepin County Resident and Real Estate Services Department partnered with UMN Extension in an innovative effort to transform two county-owned tax-forfeited vacant lots in North Minneapolis into community gardens. Throughout summer 2021, this pilot initiative engaged the North Minneapolis community, including youth and community leaders, in a variety of co-designed programming, such as skill building in urban agriculture and nutrition, community building and healing, and intergenerational learning.

In early 2022, Hennepin County's Department of Climate and Resiliency expressed interest in supporting the Hennepin-University Urban Agriculture Initiative for future years as a part of the county's mission to engage youth in environmental education.

Learn more here - <https://z.umn.edu/UrbanAgricultureInitiative>

Decreasing Barriers to Social Services for Young Parent Families

Hennepin County's Human Services department partnered with the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs' Kris Nelson Program to analyze barriers to accessing welfare benefits by young parent families. The Kris Nelson Program matches graduate students with community-driven projects with the goal of building leadership and power in communities and supporting the capacity of community organizations. Two UMN public policy graduate students undertook research on one proposed eligibility waiver which would lower barriers to accessing welfare benefits, allowing young parents to improve their and their child's income, education, and health opportunities. The students provided a policy analysis of the proposal and design of a pilot, laying the groundwork for a request to the Department of Human Services and the state legislature to grant the waiver.



ADDITIONAL 2021 PROJECTS



EDUCATION RELATED | 5 PROJECTS

included a youth-led conference that aimed to bridge resource gaps; a conference on the intersection of mental health, child welfare, and school engagement; a weekly educational 4-H club that embodied a learn-by-doing model; and two initiatives that empowered youth to be environmental stewards and leaders. County partners included Resident and Real Estate Services, Community Corrections and Rehabilitation, Human Services, County Attorney's Office, the Library, and Environment & Energy. UMN partners included Extension and the School of Social Work.



HEALTH RELATED | 3 PROJECTS

included an evaluation of the effects of school-based mental health services, the creation of a community planning tool to help achieve equity in HIV health outcomes, and trainings on sexual health. County partners included Human Services and Public Health. UMN partners included the School of Public Health and the Medical School.



TRANSPORTATION RELATED | 3 PROJECTS

researched transitway impacts on commercial gentrification, the level of transit access to critical destinations, and how well existing transit service matches travel behavior. County partners included Housing & Economic Development. UMN partners included the Center for Transportation Studies, School of Design, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, and Civil, Environmental, and Geo-Engineering.



CLIMATE RELATED | 3 PROJECTS

included the creation of a web-based software planning tool to aid in natural resources decision-making, nutrition-based cooking classes with a focus on reducing food waste, and a retail merchandising student project to increase participation in the county's Choose to Reuse Program. County partners included Environment & Energy. UMN partners included Extension, College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences, the G.E.M.S. Agroformatics Initiative, and the College of Design.



HOUSING RELATED | 2 PROJECTS

included a qualitative study of evictions and housing stability in Brooklyn Park with the goal of informing policy decisions, and a pilot that resulted in Hennepin County no longer charging people to stay at family homeless shelters. County partners included Housing & Economic Development. UMN partners included the Center for Urban & Regional Affairs.

FUSE Summer Symposium: Culturally Cognizant Housing Design & Policy

In summer of 2021, an expert panel on housing from the University of Minnesota and Hennepin County convened via Zoom to explore housing practices through a multicultural lens. The event aimed to generate new ideas on how to address this multifaceted issue, build relationships and share information, and lay the groundwork for collaborative projects. The 50 event participants had the opportunity to hear from housing experts, ask questions, and engage in conversations during breakout sessions.



*"I learned we should take culture and the sense of home more into account when planning housing especially for those who are most vulnerable."
- Attendee of the FUSE Summer Symposium*

Summer of EngageMNT

Six students connected with Hennepin County through volunteering opportunities developed as a part of the Office for Public Engagement's Summer of EngageMNT during the summer of 2021. These students worked in a variety of areas including disparity reduction, public engagement, public health, and advocacy.

*"I had a great time working on this project because I was able to channel a lot of creativity and innovation into the work I was doing, and I was able to do so because I had great support throughout."
- UMN Student Volunteer*

HUP

HENNEPIN-UNIVERSITY
PARTNERSHIP

connecting where it counts