

## Sample Application for Community Learning Research Fellows 2016-17

**Name:** Cara Midlige

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**Class Year:** 2017

**Major-Minor:** Educational Studies major; Community Action minor

**Faculty sponsor:** Jack Dougherty

**Community Partner:** Cecilia Schlossberg, education committee member, Southwest/Behind the Rocks Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ), Hartford, (contact info removed from sample)

**Project type:** Senior project/thesis

**Credits expected:** 1.0

### **Project:**

My study is titled "Parent Perceptions of Resource Inequities in the Behind the Rocks Neighborhood District and Magnet Schools." The research project will focus on the inequities in resources in a district and magnet school in the Behind the Rocks neighborhood in Hartford. I will be using the research questions: What are the resource differences between district and magnet schools in the Behind the Rocks neighborhood in Hartford and how do parents/teachers perceive these differences? I plan on choosing one district and one magnet school from four schools in the Behind the Rocks neighborhood (McDonough Middle School, Moylan Elementary School, Environmental Sciences at Mary Hooker Magnet School, and Breakthrough Magnet School) and looking at the inequities in funding and resources, for which I will use state and local data and talking to parents and teachers at public parent and neighborhood events to understand what the perceptions of these inequities are from the perspective of neighborhood residents.

### **Interest:**

I became interested in this topic after doing multiple placements in local schools in Hartford. After having attended a magnet school and a district school, immediately I noted a difference in the resources and became interested in learning about why these differences occur and what community members think about these differences. After taking classes in the Educational Studies department, and in particular *Cities, Suburbs, and Schools*, where we learned about the *Sheff v. O'Neill* case and school choice in the city, I knew I wanted to take this research further. I have taken many CLI courses where I have done placements in schools and in conjunction with my Ed Studies curriculum and methods training, I feel that I will be able to build on my prior knowledge in order to successfully complete this research project.

### **Relationship:**

My proposed community partner is the Southwest/Behind the Rocks NRZ. This partnership is new to me, but my faculty sponsor has previously worked with other people in the organization. I have been in contact with Cecilia Schlossberg, who is a member of the education committee at the NRZ and will be attending a meeting with the education committee in the middle of April to talk more about the details of the project and how my research will be able to better serve the needs of the organization and help inform their work. I will also be attending public events at the two schools that I choose to work with in order to talk to parents and teachers. However, since all the events I will be attending will be public, I will only need

participant consent from the people that I interview and will not be directly working with the schools themselves.

**Benefit:**

This work will be particularly helpful for my organization, as it will provide them with the data on the perceptions of the schools in their community. The NRZ works to make the SW/Behind the Rocks neighborhood a great place for people to live and work and having great schools and education for their students is an essential component to this work. Learning more about what is going on in these schools and how parents are viewing the differences in school resources will help the NRZ to better advocate for their schools and students. I have already expressed to my community partner that I would like to share my findings with them at the end of the project and would also like to learn more from them about how I can assure that I include important information that the NRZ thinks is essential to their organization. It is my hope that the meeting in April with the education committee will help to set a path for the next steps in starting my research with this organization.



