

UNDERSTANDING POVERTY IN BRAZOS COUNTY

MAY 2016

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Can you imagine a community of great wealth where there is also great poverty? Can you picture a place where some never worry about their next meal and others are still hungry from missing their last meal? Or, what about a community with some of the *smartest* people in the world living side by side with others who are undereducated for today's job market. If you live in Bryan/College Station, Texas (or just about anywhere else), you do not have to imagine it or try to picture it. All you must do is open your eyes as you drive around town or interact with your fellow citizens--the issues of poverty cannot be escaped. Bryan/College Station is well-known as the home of Texas A&M University, but what may be less well-known is that 28 percent of the surrounding community members live in poverty. Even when you consider only adults not enrolled in college, that is more than 15,000 people struggling to meet basic needs.

In August 2015, the Bryan/College Station Salvation Army asked our team to consider its mission, the local Corps' strengths, and our community's needs, and to recommend relevant, sustainable solutions for the Salvation Army to make the greatest impact possible with available resources. In other words, our client wanted to know how it could fulfill its motto: *Do the most good*. To that end, the team logged more than 1,500 hours collectively over eight months digging into the academic literature, analyzing large sets of population data, and conducting interviews to learn about our community's needs.

The team discovered there is less and less affordable housing available in Bryan/College Station. Our community has many residents with persistent food insecurity--including many children. Many of our neighbors have limited access to health care--especially mental health services. Finally, although the community is home to one of the best public universities in the country, there are gaps in the availability of educational opportunities for all.

Although the team originally designed their research with the Salvation Army in mind, they quickly realized their findings were relevant to a much wider audience. They have developed this report for social service providers, educators, policy-makers, and anyone interested in making Brazos County a better home for *all* of its residents. Alleviating the problems discussed in the following pages will require cooperation across sectors. That is my invitation to you. Read on. Think deeply about the issues. Determine how you can *do the most good*.

Best regards,



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Executive Summary

Our Bush School Capstone Team formed in August 2015 to help leaders of the Bryan/College Station Salvation Army (BCSSA) answer a crucial question: *How can the BCSSA best leverage its strengths to sustainably meet community needs?* As we explored the extent of human need in Brazos County in pursuit of this question, however, we realized that our findings had implications for more than just the Salvation Army. We learned that although hundreds of local organizations offer valuable support to our community's most vulnerable residents, poverty-related challenges defy the efforts of individual service providers working in isolation. Achieving long-lasting impacts will require shared knowledge, goals, and resources. Here, we present our study of poverty in Brazos County to encourage that collaboration.

In Part I, we describe the methodology behind our study. To understand existing community needs, we used a qualitative and quantitative research design that drew from both secondary and primary sources, including existing reports, American Community Survey and Geographic Information System data, and interviews. By aligning information from this broad array of resources, we developed a rich description of our community.

In Part II, we present our assessment of major human service needs in Brazos County, which includes the following findings:

- Housing is the most pressing concern facing the Bryan/College Station community. Several hundred Brazos County residents experience homelessness in a given year, and thousands more are at risk of losing their homes due to the high cost of housing. The number of homeless and at-risk individuals exceeds our community's supply of short-term shelter and affordable housing. Given the continued growth of Texas A&M University, the decreasing resources available for reducing the cost of housing for low-income individuals, and the stereotypes low-income residents sometimes face as they search for a place to live, housing will likely remain a high-priority issue for the foreseeable future.
- Hunger is a persistent problem for more than one-fifth of Brazos County residents. Some individuals do not take full advantage of the resources available to them, while others have come to rely on a food assistance system that is not designed for chronic use. As a result, local food pantries are experiencing high demand and repeat clients, which challenges their ability to meet the community's nutritional needs.
- Many opportunities for education exist in Brazos County. However, there appears to be a shortage of high-quality services for children aged 0-3, and the community lacks capacity in its out-of-school time (OST) offerings, vocational training, and financial management programs. Moreover, the current educational landscape is fragmented, with little information-sharing or collaboration occurring among the many organizations that offer educational services.
- Although a large majority of Brazos County residents experience good health, chronic medical conditions nevertheless challenge a significant number of people. Mental illness is on the rise, and low-income, minority, elderly, and veteran residents are particularly vulnerable to mental and physical health problems. Gaps in health insurance coverage, a shortage of mental health providers, and inadequate public transportation exacerbate these difficulties.

In Part III, we suggest ways for our community to combat poverty more effectively and sustainably. We examine systemic barriers that can prevent low-income residents from attaining self-sufficiency despite their best efforts and the myriad programs available in our local area. We highlight evidence that indicates our current service provider network is weakened by conflicting priorities and limited collaboration. Finally, we describe strategic planning processes and collective impact initiatives that can strengthen our individual and collective efforts.

We encourage our readers to review our assessment of local needs and consider how they might contribute to meaningful change in our area. By sharing a common understanding of poverty-related problems and a common plan for solving them, our community can, like the Salvation Army, “Do the Most Good.”

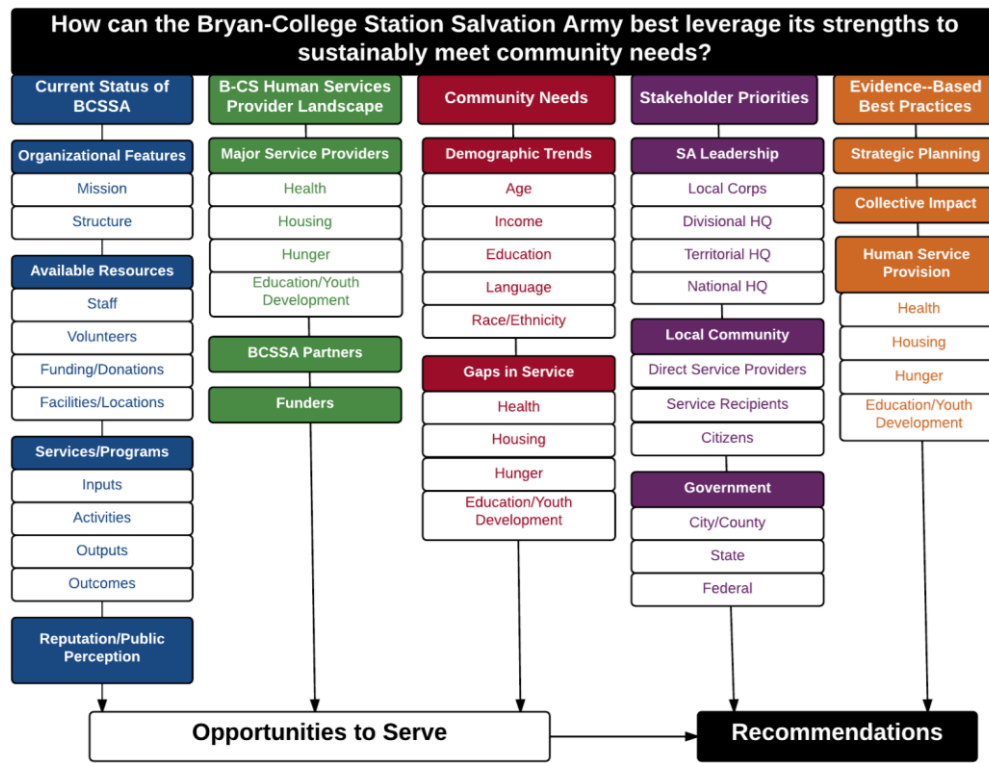
Part I: Methods & Analysis

We utilized a mixed-method approach to study community needs in Brazos County and determine the implications of our findings for local nonprofits like our client. This was a significant undertaking which required investigation of many different sources. In this section, we present our research plan and explain how we utilized secondary and primary sources. Note that this version of the report will only address those areas of our study that are applicable to the entire community; we shared our findings and recommendations specifically relating to the Bryan/College Station Salvation Army (BCSSA) in an internal report and presentation to our clients. Consequently, not every element noted on the original research plan is discussed in the report.

Research Plan

Our original inquiry was, *How can the Bryan/College Station Salvation Army best leverage its strengths to sustainably meet community needs?* This seemingly simple question required both breadth and depth of knowledge about our client and the community it serves. We elected a qualitative and quantitative research design that used both secondary and primary sources. Instead of seeking information from only one source, we aimed to establish our key findings by triangulating multiple sources. Figure 1 displays the “roadmap” we used to organize our research; it highlights our major topics of study and shows how they are related to our final recommendations. Figure 2 summarizes the sources we chose and indicates how each related to our project roadmap. In the remainder of this section, we explain our process for collecting and analyzing each data source.

Figure 1: Research Roadmap



this initial review set the direction for the rest of our research strategy. It gave us broad background knowledge about each area to be explored, suggested questions for further research, and alerted us to potential problems our client might encounter and solutions to be considered.

Document Analysis

We gathered data from official city and county reports, specifically the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plans for the cities of Bryan and College Station, the 2013 Brazos County Regional Health Assessment, quarterly United Way 2-1-1 Impact Reports for 2014 and 2015, and the 2014 College Station Community Development Master Plan. These sources indicated the scope of previously identified needs in the community. They also represent the input of hundreds of community members we would otherwise have been unable to reach. For example, Bryan's Consolidated Plan was based in part on questionnaires answered by a total of 151 service providers and residents; College Station's Consolidated Plan included input from 165 survey respondents and 31 participants in a pair of discussion groups.² The community participation incorporated into these sources makes their findings highly relevant to our study. Appendix 1 identifies the number of participants for each community needs assessment.

One of our research objectives was to identify the priorities of major funders who might support a nonprofit organization (NPO) like the BCSSA. To understand today's grant-making landscape, we first visited the websites of approximately 100 nonprofit foundations whose funding geography could include Brazos County and that focus on at least one of our four research areas: housing, hunger, education, and health. We noted each organization's mission, areas of interest, application requirements, and typical award size. Next, we turned to federal government grant programs. We began with a list of every federal agency, then visited the websites of every agency/department/organization that appeared to be related to one of our four research areas. For those organizations whose websites contained sections about funding opportunities, we reviewed the description of each grant program to determine which ones offered funding to NPOs. For large agencies, we used their search tool to narrow down the grant base using our research areas. We followed a similar process to explore state-level funding opportunities, beginning with a comprehensive list of every Texas agency, narrowing it to those related to one of our four target areas, and then visiting those agencies' websites to determine what grant programs might be appropriate for a relatively small human service organization.

Statistical and Spatial Analysis

The annual American Community Survey (ACS) provided us with estimates of key characteristics of Brazos County residents. We were able to identify basic population features such as size, racial composition, and median income using the summary statistics available from the U.S. Census Bureau's online QuickFacts program.³ Our community is uniquely influenced by the large number of students attending Texas A&M University and Blinn College, which makes it difficult to determine how many people are genuinely experiencing poverty, and how many people are students with low earnings but high familial support. To explore this question, we downloaded the

² Methodology for each Consolidated Plan can be found on p. 26 and p. 19 of the plans, respectively.

³ United States Census Bureau. 2014. "Selected Economic Characteristics: 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey." Accessed October 2015. <http://factfinder.census.gov/>.

ACS 2010-2014 Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) for Texas, cut the dataset to reflect only those individuals and households in Brazos County, and explored several variables within this database using the statistical software program Stata. We chose to use the 5-year sample because it provides the largest number of observations, producing more reliable estimates than the 1-year sample.⁴ When analyzing the data, we generated summary statistics for key characteristics such as federal poverty status, receipt of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, and vehicle ownership for the entire population and for the subset not enrolled in college, defined as individuals aged 18 years or older who had not attended school in the past 3 months. Although this method did not perfectly separate out college students from the rest of the community, it gave us a reasonable estimate of how important poverty indicators change when we consider only those residents not enrolled in higher education. This approach also allowed us to estimate the raw number of people in poverty-related conditions (e.g., earning incomes at or below the federal poverty line) so local human service providers like our client can predict the size of their potential client base.

One key limitation of our ACS PUMS data is that Brazos County was our smallest unit of analysis; to protect the privacy of the individuals surveyed, the PUMS does not indicate the census tract where they live. To fill this gap, we used spatial analysis via the ArcGIS mapping program. These tools allowed us to generate Brazos County maps color-coded at the census tract level by key poverty-related characteristics. This gave us a visual representation of where poverty is concentrated in our community. Although we did not have the option of separating out college students from this data, we mapped some indicators of poverty that tend not to be associated with family-supported college students, such as enrollment in SNAP and receipt of a housing voucher, to get a more accurate visual of where in Brazos County residents are truly struggling to make ends meet.

Our analyses of secondary sources gave us a solid grounding in the issues that matter most to our community, but they did not provide the answers to all of our questions. To deepen our understanding, we turned to primary sources.

Primary Sources

Primary sources—information we generated directly—complemented our secondary sources because they gave us direct insight into the current strengths, weaknesses, and priorities of our community. We developed this insight through a series of interviews, a network analysis based on those interviews, and an electronic survey of former BCSSA donors and volunteers. Because our concern in this report is the community at large, we do not discuss our survey methodology or results in this report.

Interviews

Our interviews with community leaders were fundamental to this study. From these conversations, we learned who the major local service providers are, how each provider is working to meet

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau. 2015. “When to Use 1-Year, 3-Year, and 5-Year Estimates.” Accessed March 2016. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/guidance/estimates.html>.

community needs, to what extent organizations are collaborating in their work, what issues are most concerning to them, and what hopes they have for strengthening our community in the future. Our interviews also served to confirm and add to the trends we identified through our analyses of secondary sources.

We selected a purposeful sample of Brazos County leaders and human service providers to ensure representation from each major sector and each topic on our project roadmap. Table I displays our sampling frame. We gathered perspectives from government and business leaders because they can be expected to have a broad view of the community’s strengths and needs and because their support is crucial for any substantial fundraising or programming change our client may attempt. We placed the greatest emphasis, however, on the nonprofit sector because these organizations were most closely related to our client’s work.

Our nonprofit interviewees were all organization or program managers; our sample did not include front-line workers or clients. Although we certainly wanted to include these perspectives in our research, we limited the number of interviewees due to our short time frame and the relatively small size of our team. We made a strategic decision to focus on managers because we expected them to have an understanding of the community landscape along with a high-level view of their organization and a fairly detailed understanding of the experiences of front-line workers and clients because they work closely with both groups. This perspective was most informative for our team given that our inquiry focused on the needs of the community as a whole, not on the effectiveness of one particular organization nor the needs of its specific clientele.

Table 1: Interview Sampling Frame

	Housing	Hunger	Health	Education
Local Government	City of Bryan (2), City of CS (2), Brazos Valley Council of Governments (2)			Bryan ISD (2) College Station ISD (2)
Nonprofits	United Way of the Brazos Valley (2), Project Unity (1), St. Vincent de Paul (1), Brazos Valley Financial Fitness Center (1)			
	Twin City Mission (1)	Brazos County Food Bank (1)	MHMR Authority (1)	Workforce Solutions Brazos Valley (1)
Private Business	Bryan/College Station Chamber of Commerce (1) Bryan/College Station Association of Realtors (1)			
BCSSA	BCSSA and Salvation Army Divisional Headquarters representatives (5)			

We obtained informed consent from each participant before beginning our interviews. Our participants agreed to be audio-recorded, and we agreed to keep their name and position confidential in our final report. We followed a semi-structured format, asking the same core questions each time but adding follow-up questions as needed. This approach allowed us to balance consistency with flexibility to obtain the richest data possible. Our core questions were:

- Tell me a little bit about your organization and the role you play in it.
- What needs are currently priorities for you and your organization? What evidence has convinced you that these are the top needs? (Follow-up, if needed: As we’ve looked at reports about our local community, there are a few big community needs that have stood out to us: mental health services; long-term housing solutions for the homeless; and

emergency food, rent, and utility assistance. Would you say that lines up with your perception of community needs?)

- What actions is your organization currently taking to address these priority needs?
- What challenges have you and your organization encountered in your work?
- What other local organizations do you typically work with as you try to address these priority needs? What works well about those relationships, and what could make them stronger?
- What changes would you like to see in the way your organization or our community as a whole addresses the priority needs we've been discussing?
- Do you have any other comments or information you'd like to share with us?

Afterward, the team member who conducted the interview transcribed the recording for meaning, omitting space-fillers (e.g., "um"), false starts (when the participant started a sentence, paused, then began the sentence again), and tangents (portions of the conversation not relevant to the research questions). After transcribing all interviews, each team member wrote a summary of major themes surfaced by the interviews s/he conducted. The team met to discuss the collective list of themes generated and consolidated it into the following categories:

- Barriers to Self-Sufficiency (factors that make advancement difficult for low-income residents)
 - Transportation
 - Housing
 - Education/Knowledge of Governmental, Financial, and Social Service Systems
- Human Service Provider Barriers (common organization-level problems)
 - Shortage of Staff/Resources
 - Lack of Collaboration with Other Organizations
- Community-Wide Issues (characteristics of the general public)
 - Lack of Awareness of Community Needs and Services
 - Differing Perceptions of Low-Income Residents
 - Advantages and Disadvantages of being a College Town

Finally, each team member exchanged transcripts with a partner. Each read the other's transcripts, selecting any comments that aligned with one of the themes above and recording it in a shared spreadsheet. We will use these comments to support and illustrate our results and recommendations.

Network Analysis

The last portion of our research involved creating a visual depiction of the relationships between major human service providers in the community. We reviewed our interview transcripts to identify the organizations with which each interviewee's organization cooperated to provide service, refer clients, or identify community needs. Then, we used the program NodeXL to generate a network diagram showing the connections between organizations. By examining this diagram, we could identify which organizations serve as hubs for the community and which organizations operate largely outside the main network.

Assessing the extent of poverty-related needs is a significant undertaking in any community and particularly complex in a “college town” like ours. Our team triangulated an array of secondary and primary sources to capture as detailed and accurate a picture of Brazos County as possible. We took a predominantly qualitative approach to our work, following protocols and corroborating our findings with quantitative sources to ensure consistency and minimize bias. Although no single data-point we uncovered is the final word on poverty in Brazos County, when taken altogether our findings create a rich portrait of our community. In Part 2, we describe the community needs we identified with respect to housing, hunger, education, and health. In Part 3, we discuss changes that can enable our community to provide long-term solutions to those needs.

Part II: Needs Assessment

In a community as diverse and rapidly-growing as ours, it is not surprising that some residents may struggle to secure stable housing, adequate nutrition, a high-quality education, and sound health. What *is* surprising, though, is the number of our neighbors who struggle to meet these needs and the persistence of the problems they face. In this section, we provide an overview of the county, then assess local human needs in four areas: housing, hunger, education, and health. For each need, we provide a brief background suggesting causes and solutions we identified in our literature review, statistics that indicate the local extent of the need, a description of programs currently available to residents who require assistance, and an explanation of the major challenges these residents face in meeting that particular need.

Overview of Brazos County

We begin by placing our needs assessment in context with an overview of Brazos County's population, economy, and broad indicators of poverty.

Population

Brazos County is located in the middle of the “Texas Triangle” region, which consists of Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, and Austin bounded by Interstate 35, Interstate 45, and Interstate 10, the major roadways that connect those cities. Brazos County is the 23rd largest county by population in Texas and is anchored by the cities of Bryan (its county seat) and College Station. Brazos County was home to an estimated 209,152 people in 2014, with the cities of Bryan and College Station making up more than 88 percent of the county's population.⁵ The population has grown by 10.4% since 2010, driven in large part by the presence of Texas A&M University's flagship campus and Blinn College's Bryan campus. Nearly 59,000 students attended Texas A&M-College Station in the fall of 2015, joined by over 12,600 Blinn-Bryan students.^{6,7} With 2015-2020 projected student enrollment growth rates of 12.4% and 15.9%, respectively, these two institutions guarantee the continued expansion of our community for the foreseeable future.⁸

As we show in Table 2, Brazos County is fairly diverse. Its two major cities, however, have two distinct demographic patterns when it comes to race and ethnicity. College Station has a significantly higher proportion of Caucasian residents; Bryan is more evenly divided between Caucasian, Hispanic/Latino, and African-American residents. There is also a sharp contrast between the two cities when it comes to those who are economically disadvantaged. Seventy-four percent of Bryan Independent School District students are considered economically disadvantaged by virtue of their eligibility for the federal Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Program (FRLP), while

⁵ United States Census Bureau. 2014. “Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2014.” <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>.

⁶ Texas A&M University. 2016. “Student Demographics.” Accessed May 2016. <https://accountability.tamu.edu/All-Metrics/Mixed-Metrics/Student-Demographics>

⁷ Blinn College. 2016. “Blinn College Fact Book.” Accessed May 2016. <http://www.blinn.edu/Institutionalresearch/Blinn-College-Fact%20Book-2015-16.pdf>

⁸ Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. 2015. “Enrollment Forecast: 2015-2025.” Accessed May 2016. <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/reports/PDF/6620.PDF?CFID=41617710&CFTOKEN=85396150>

just 34.5 percent of College Station Independent School District students are.⁹ The FRLP is open to students with a family income up to 185 percent of the federal poverty level, so it may be a somewhat inflated indicator of poverty. Still, this metric illustrates stark income differences between the two cities.¹⁰

Table 2: Demographic Composition of Brazos County

Jurisdiction	Total Population	% Caucasian	% Hispanic/Latino	% African-American	% Asian-American	% Economically Disadvantaged K-12 Students
Brazos County	194,851	57.2	24.8	11.4	5.6	57.2
Bryan	80,913	43.0	36.2	18.0	1.7	74.0
College Station	103,483	68.3	14.0	6.8	9.1	34.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Texas Education Agency

Economy

Economically, Brazos County is diverse, but it lags behind the rest of the state in several key metrics. First, Brazos County’s median household income from 2010 to 2014 was \$39,060, about \$13,000 less than the state average.¹¹ Per capita income over that same time period was \$22,243, about \$4,000 less than the average across the state. In addition, the homeownership rate in the county, 45 percent, is significantly lower than the statewide rate of 63 percent. Each of these metrics may, however, be influenced by the community’s large student population.

As of 2012, Brazos County was home to 14,857 businesses.¹² Although employment is available in many sectors, the labor market is dominated by three industries. First, the educational services, health care and social assistance industry provides employment for nearly 34 percent of Brazos County.¹³ This can be explained in part by the presence of Texas A&M University and Blinn College and the large numbers of individuals they employ. In 2013, the Texas A&M System, which is based in Brazos County, accounted for more than \$4.4 billion in economic impact and employed more than 21,000 people.¹⁴ Second, the retail industry employs 10.9 percent of the county’s residents. The arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services industries come in a close third at 10.7 percent.¹⁵ Regardless of the sector, business appears to be booming. Of the 720 business owners throughout the county who responded to a recent survey conducted by the

⁹ Texas Education Agency. 2014. “Snapshot 2014 School District Profiles.” <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/snapshot/2014/index.html>.

¹⁰ Cruse, Craig and David Powers. 2006. “Estimating School District Poverty with Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Data.” <https://www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/publications/files/CrusePowers2006asa.pdf>.

¹¹ United States Census Bureau. 2016. “QuickFacts: Brazos County, Texas.” <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts>

¹² Ibid.

¹³ United States Census Bureau. 2014. “Selected Economic Characteristics: 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey.”

¹⁴ Texas A&M Today. 2014. “Texas A&M Economic Impact Locally at Record Level - More Than \$4.4 Billion for 2013.” Last Modified January 29, 2014. <http://today.tamu.edu/2014/01/29/texas-am-economic-impact-locally-at-record-level-more-than-4-4-billion-for-2013/>.

¹⁵ United States Census Bureau. 2014.

B/CS Chamber of Commerce, 66 percent reported that sales had increased since the previous year, and 49 percent anticipated hiring more employees in the coming year.¹⁶

Poverty

Although Brazos County provides significant and diverse economic opportunities, a substantial portion of its residents struggle with poverty. Slightly more than 28 percent of the population lives at or below the federal poverty line. This includes 26.3 percent of those less than the age of 18, 10.6 percent of those more than age 65, and 15.9 percent of families in Brazos County.¹⁷ This rate is higher than the statewide rate of 17.6 percent.¹⁸ Members of racial/ethnic minority groups are much more likely to be affected by this problem. Forty-eight percent of African-Americans and nearly 29 percent of Hispanics were estimated to be living in poverty in Brazos County in 2014 as compared to 24 percent of Caucasians.¹⁹

Poverty measures can be inflated in an area that, like Brazos County, is home to thousands of college students who often live on a limited income but enjoy the advantages of financial support from their families and the prospect of earning higher wages upon graduation. Of course, some college students do indeed struggle with poverty and should not be ignored. For the sake of comparison, however, we examined American Community Survey data in detail to examine how poverty indicators change when we look exclusively at residents over the age of 18 who were not enrolled in school in the previous three months. Table 3 displays our findings.

Table 3: Poverty Indicators among Students and Non-Students

	All	Non-Students 18+ Years Old
Percent At or Below Federal Poverty Line	28.1% (56,544)	15.2% (15,654)
Median Individual Income	\$13,109.53	\$25,210.63
Median Household Income	\$45,379.13	\$59,496.55

Source: 2010-2014 ACS PUMS

Although the poverty rate drops and median income rises when students are removed from the sample, there are still a notable number of residents living with very limited resources. There is, then, a genuine need in Brazos County that has significant implications for the community’s health, economic stability, and quality of life.

¹⁶ Bryan/College Station Chamber of Commerce. 2015. “Summary of Statistics - Local Economy.”

¹⁷ United States Census Bureau. 2014.

¹⁸ United States Census Bureau. 2016.

¹⁹ United States Census Bureau. 2015. “Poverty in the Past Twelve Months: 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.” Accessed October 2015. <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>.

Housing

We found housing and homelessness to be one of the greatest concerns to the Bryan/College Station community. Although there are several human service providers trying to tackle this issue, providing housing assistance in Bryan-College Station has not been an easy task. Any readers interested in helping low-income community members find and retain stable housing should be aware of the challenges that characterize this work.

Background

Homelessness decreased 11 percent in the United States between 2007 and 2014, but there are still an average of 578,424 people who experience homelessness on any given night.²⁰ Homeless individuals constitute 63 percent of the homeless population; the remaining 37 percent are families. More than 23 percent of the homeless are children under 18 years of age, and about 9 percent of homeless people are veterans. In a survey of 25 cities in the United States, the reasons for homelessness varied. Among families, the highest reported cause of homelessness was lack of affordable housing, followed by poverty, unemployment, low-paying jobs, and domestic violence.²¹ Among single adults, the highest reported cause of homelessness was substance abuse, followed by lack of affordable housing, mental illness, poverty, and unemployment. How might homelessness be addressed? In this section, we review the strengths and weaknesses of the traditional emergency shelter, then describe several prevention-oriented practices that provide more robust support for people in need of stable housing.

Emergency Shelters

Traditionally, the most readily-available option available to people without a home has been an emergency shelter. These institutions provide a temporary place to stay for people with nowhere else to go. They are often governed by policies that limit the number of nights clients can stay, require clients to be in the shelter by a certain time each evening, and so on, but the number and type of restrictions vary widely across locations. Emergency shelters fill an important need during times of personal crisis, providing safety and relief from the elements when all other options have been exhausted.

On the other hand, the emergency shelter approach does little to prevent people from losing their homes in the first place or avoiding chronic homelessness.²² The shelter environment can also prove particularly difficult for families with its lack of privacy and imposition of external rules. Finding a balance between being both a parent and a client who has to submit to staff authority can be difficult.²³ Moreover, the prospect of losing one's bed for arriving late or failing to participate in support programming makes shelters an inherently unstable solution. Thus,

²⁰ United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. 2014. "The 2014 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress." Accessed October 13. <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2014-AHAR-Part1.pdf>.

²¹ United States Conference of Mayors. 2008. "Hunger and Homelessness Survey" Accessed September 8. http://usmayors.org/pressreleases/documents/hungerhomelessnessreport_121208.pdf.

²² Philipps. 2012.

²³ Meschede, Tatjana, and Sara Chaganti. 2015. "Home for now: A mixed-methods evaluation of a short-term housing support program for homeless families." *Evaluation and Program Planning* 52:85-95.

emergency shelters cannot be a community's only or primary method for combatting homelessness. Recent research contains evidence that other options may have the potential to get homeless families and individuals into stable housing.

Prevention-Oriented Approaches

Homelessness prevention is a set of strategies that help low-income households stabilize their current housing or move into new housing without first entering a shelter or experiencing homelessness.²⁴ Adopting a prevention-oriented framework reduces homelessness not by offering short-term shelter once housing has been lost, but by addressing the conditions that place people at risk of losing their homes in the first place. The prevention of homelessness can be thought of as “shutting the front door to homelessness.”²⁵ There are three stages of homelessness prevention:²⁶

- *Primary prevention* prevents new cases of homelessness by targeting households before they experience a crisis that results in their loss of housing.
- *Secondary prevention* identifies and addresses conditions at earlier stages of homelessness; aims to expedite exits from homelessness back into housing for those who have entered the “front door.”
- *Tertiary prevention* slows the progression or mitigates the effects of homelessness once it has been established.

Homelessness prevention is a necessary component of any program for ending homelessness. The more coordinated and well-targeted the prevention program is, the more likely it is to reduce the number of people who experience homelessness.²⁷ Intervening before families have to resort to shelters is easier and more cost-effective than it is to wait until families are homeless and/or seeking shelter to provide assistance. To keep a family or individual housed is much easier than it is to find and pay for a new residence for a person or family once they have become homeless.²⁸ Intervening early by counteracting threats to stability while families are still in their homes is better for the individuals and is less costly to society and the government.²⁹ Programs that provide utility assistance, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, and rental vouchers are all designed to address homelessness at some point along the prevention spectrum.

Utility Assistance

To help individuals navigate temporary financial crises, some nonprofits use the primary prevention tactic of offering utility assistance to households struggling to make payments. This service pays part or all of a household's utility bills so residents can contribute more of their income to rent, thus avoiding eviction due to non-payment. Income level is often the determining

²⁴ Metraux, Stephen, Thomas Byrne, and Dennis Culhane. 2011. “A Prevention-Centered Approach to Homelessness Assistance: A Paradigm Shift?” *Housing Policy Debate* 21 (2):295-315.

²⁵ United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. 2013. “Homelessness Prevention.” Accessed October http://usich.gov/usich_resources/solutions/explore/homelessness_prevention.

²⁶ Metraux et al. 2011.

²⁷ United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. 2013.

²⁸ Brazos County Assistance Programs. 2015. “Financial Assistance from Salvation Army in Texas.” Accessed October. http://www.needhelppayingbills.com/html/salvation_army_texas_financial.html.

²⁹ Ibid.

factor for utility assistance program eligibility, but eligible participants are not always guaranteed assistance. In a study of 6 states where utility assistance was provided, only 7 to 24 percent of eligible households received assistance due to the large number of applicants and the limited block grant funding available.³⁰ This is a troubling finding because lower-income residents, who tend to live in older and less energy-efficient homes, spend a higher proportion of their income on utilities compared to other households. One possible solution to the lack of utility assistance funds is for human service organizations and utility companies to develop partnerships which allow for payment plans to be negotiated early on, before households' debt becomes insurmountable.³¹ Although at this point little data exists regarding the long-term impacts of utility assistance, it appears to be a promising practice worth supporting.

Transitional Housing

Transitional housing is a secondary prevention tactic that provides homeless people with a place to stay for up to twenty-four months, combined with supportive services to help individuals overcome barriers to securing and retaining permanent housing. Although it does not serve as a permanent residence, transitional housing provides the bridge some individuals and families need from crisis to stability. For example, in one study, female trauma victims in Calgary reported that the transitional housing program in which they participated provided them with the safe space, supportive community, and time they needed to heal and prepare for independent living.³² Similarly, youth who had participated in a transitional housing program in Chicago described the sense of family, community, and structure they received in the program were crucial to their later success.³³ Transitional housing is not ideal for everyone; some may be ready to move directly from homelessness to stable housing, while others may need lifelong support that a temporary program cannot provide. Still, this approach is an important part of any community's strategy for reducing homelessness.

Permanent Supportive Housing

Permanent supportive housing (PSH) is "decent, safe, affordable, community-based housing that provides tenants with the rights of tenancy and links to voluntary and flexible supports and services for people with disabilities who are experiencing homelessness."³⁴ PSH programs take multiple forms; some use a "scattered-site" approach with multiple units across a city, while others host all tenants in the same building. PSH clients typically require long-term assistance and additional services such as mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, or vocational training.

³⁰ Landey, Alana, and Yuliya Rza. 2014. "Approaches to Low-Income Energy Assistance Funding in Selected States." Accessed November 14. <http://aspe.hhs.gov/basic-report/approaches-low-income-energy-assistance-funding-selected-states>.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Fotheringham, Sarah, Christine A. Walsh, and Anna Burrowes. 2014. "'A Place to Rest:' The Role of Transitional Housing in Ending Homelessness for Women in Calgary, Canada." *Gender, Place and Culture* 21(7): 834-853.

³³ Holtschneider, Casey. 2016. "A Part of Something: The Importance of Transitional Living Programs within a Housing First Framework for Youth Experiencing Homelessness." *Children and Youth Services Review* 65: 204-2015.

³⁴ United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. 2013. "Permanent Supportive Housing." Accessed September 15, 2015. http://usich.gov/usich_resources/solutions/explore/permanent_supportive_housing.

Although these skills are often a precursor to independent living, participating in these services is not be a requirement to live in a PSH facility.³⁵

PSH has been shown to be more effective in combatting chronic homelessness than reliance on emergency shelters and transitional housing programs. In one study across five Canadian cities, 950 homeless or precariously housed people with serious mental illnesses were randomly assigned to either PSH or treatment as usual. Two years later, the PSH participants had spent 71 percent of their time stably housed, as opposed to just 29 percent of the control group, and entered housing an average of 147 days sooner than their peers.³⁶ In New York City, the four-year housing retention rate among PSH participants was 88 percent, far higher than the 47 percent retention rate experienced by others who had been served by the traditional system.³⁷

PSH can also be less costly than traditional shelters in the long run. One Massachusetts PSH program, for instance, has been estimated to save more than \$9,000 annually per tenant when accounting for reduced emergency room visits, detoxification stays, and criminal justice involvement.³⁸ Additionally, when communities provide PSH, chronic homelessness begins to decline over time, further reducing the costs taxpayers incur due to homelessness.³⁹ These long-term benefits must be kept in mind as communities consider the admittedly substantial upfront costs for PSH facilities, maintenance, and trained professional staff.

Although PSH is generally designed for individuals with chronic mental illness, the approach can be helpful to anyone who struggles to access traditional housing due to a poor credit or criminal history. PSH programs follow a “Housing First” approach, which views housing as a basic human right and provides access to tenants regardless of their background.⁴⁰ PSH provides its clients the opportunity to demonstrate to future landlords that they are able to live within the parameters of a lease. Once a solid rental history is established through PSH, tenants can then move on to a non-subsidized form of housing. Because of all the advantages the “Housing First” approach offers, it has become a central feature of the federal government’s homelessness strategy.

Rental Vouchers

Another option for getting homeless individuals into more stable housing is to provide them with vouchers that provide partial rental assistance for a qualifying housing option.⁴¹ This takes the burden of building, buying, and maintaining affordable properties off of taxpayers because it

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Aubry, Tim, et al. 2016. “A Multiple-City RCT of Housing First with Assertive Community Treatment for Homeless Canadians with Serious Mental Illness.” *Psychiatric Services* 67(3): 275-281.

³⁷ Tsemberis, Sam and Ronda F. Eisenberg. 2000. “Pathways to Housing: Supported Housing for Street-Dwelling Homeless Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities.” *Psychiatric Services* 51(4): 487-493.

³⁸ Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance. 2013. Permanent Supportive Housing: A Solution-Driven Model. *Home & Healthy for Good Progress Report*. Accessed September 12, 2015.

³⁹ Byrne, T., J. Frago, A.E. Montgomery, E. Munley, and D. Culhane. 2014. “The Relationship between Community Investment in Permanent Supportive Housing and Chronic Homelessness.” *Social Service Review* 88:234-263.

⁴⁰ United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. 2013. *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*. Accessed May 2016.
https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/USICH_Annual_Update_2013.pdf.

⁴¹ Meschede et al. 2015.

allows people to simply take advantage of the existing housing stock. A typical voucher program subsidizes a portion of a tenant's monthly rent such that the landlord receives the full market rate; vouchers are typically only applied to units priced in a certain range to ensure tenants do not lease a unit they cannot afford and to minimize the cost to taxpayers. A downside of this criterion is that the quality of housing found by tenants varies, compared to some forms of PSH. Another downside is that the rental subsidy alone does not cover any utility costs the tenants have.

Despite these shortcomings, rental vouchers can be a helpful tool in preventing homelessness. At the conclusion of one two-year trial voucher program, for example, 25.5 percent of those receiving vouchers had transitioned to housing without subsidy, 21.8 percent continued with subsidized housing, and 9.1 percent returned to a shelter.⁴²

Although the strategies described above hold promise for reducing homelessness in any community, it must be noted that other factors must be addressed in order for all community members to maintain decent, stable housing. The availability of affordable housing, job opportunities that pay a living wage, substance abuse prevention, and mental health treatment are critical needs that must be met to truly make an impact on homelessness.

Extend of Need

Although it is difficult to obtain a direct count of homeless individuals, it is estimated that several hundred Brazos County residents may experience homelessness in a given year, and thousands more are at risk of losing their homes due to the high cost of housing. The number of homeless and at-risk individuals exceeds our community's supply of short-term shelter and affordable housing. On one evening in January 2015, a Point-in-Time (PIT) count estimated there were 237 homeless people in Bryan/College Station. The PIT estimate included thirteen sheltered individuals in Bryan, 145 unsheltered, and 79 who were in a transitional housing program.⁴³ In College Station there were a total of 97 homeless people; PIT estimates did not distinguish whether they were sheltered or unsheltered.⁴⁴ Based on counts of homeless K-12 students from the two local school districts, which include families that are "doubled up" in housing that is not their own as well as those temporarily housed in motels, even more individuals experience housing instability in a given year. From August 2015 to January 2016, Bryan ISD served a total of 514 homeless children, and College Station ISD served 116.⁴⁵ All of the emergency shelters in the area, however, stay at capacity. Currently there are only 233 beds in the Brazos Valley available to homeless persons; 82 are transitional, and the rest are in emergency shelter settings, leaving few options for homeless individuals and families who need more time to return to financial stability.⁴⁶ In 2015, 2-1-1 received 7,053 referrals for utility assistance and 6,954 referrals for housing and

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ City of Bryan Department of Housing and Community Development. 2015. "2015-2019 5 Year Consolidated Action Plan."

⁴⁴ City of College Station Department of Housing and Community Development. 2015. "2015-2019 5- Year Consolidated Action Plan."

⁴⁵ Data provided by district representatives.

⁴⁶ City of Bryan Department of Housing and Community Development. 2015. "2015-2019 5 Year Consolidated Action Plan."

homeless prevention; these requests for rent payment assistance and utility assistance made up 35% of service requests over that period of time.⁴⁷

Still more residents are at-risk for losing their housing because rent and utilities comprise such a large portion of their monthly income. Most public housing assistance programs identify cost-burdened households using the “30 percent rule,” which states that people who spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing are likely to have difficulty covering other nondiscretionary costs.⁴⁸ Among non-student renters over the age of 18, one-fifth are paying 30-49 percent of their income in rent, and an additional fifth are spending more than 50 percent of their income on this basic need.⁴⁹ Forty percent of Brazos County residents exceed the 30 percent rule. Thus, there is an unmet need for individuals and families who may need some type of housing assistance.

Available Programs

Several organizations, provide housing assistance in the B/CS area. Forms of assistance vary from short-term immediate shelter to long-term programs that allow residents to become homeowners. Some programs prevent homelessness by allowing clients to remain in their current residence, and others allow those currently homeless to find immediate assistance. Understanding the requirements, limitations, and shortfalls of these programs may shed light on opportunities for others to provide assistance to those in need. Local housing assistance options include:

- Twin City Mission – A homeless shelter providing emergency shelter services to any man, woman, or family. It provides clients with the most basic needs to sustain a livable environment, including food, shelter, and hygiene products.
- Minor Home Repair Assistance – This is a grant program local cities offer to residents. It provides up to \$5,000 to fix small problems with homes, including broken hot water heaters, leaky roofs, and plumbing issues.
- Home Rehabilitation Assistance – This is a no or low interest loan from the city to an individual homeowner for home rehabilitation or reconstruction. This option allows the city to fund the replacement of substandard housing.
- Down Payment Assistance – The amount available varies by city, but this program provides no or low interest loans to home buyers to help them make down payments on their houses.
- Housing Choice Voucher Program – A housing subsidy is paid directly to a landlord by BVCOG on behalf of the participating family. Recipients must have an income below 50% of the area median income. Currently, about 1,700 residents are receiving assistance through vouchers with another 2,000 on a waiting list. Of the 300 people who most recently received a voucher, only about a third are expected to be successful in securing housing with that voucher due to a lack of vacancies for voucher-holders in the rental market. Figure 3 shows the urban concentration of voucher recipients.

⁴⁷ United Way. 2016. “2015 Needs and Trend Analysis.”

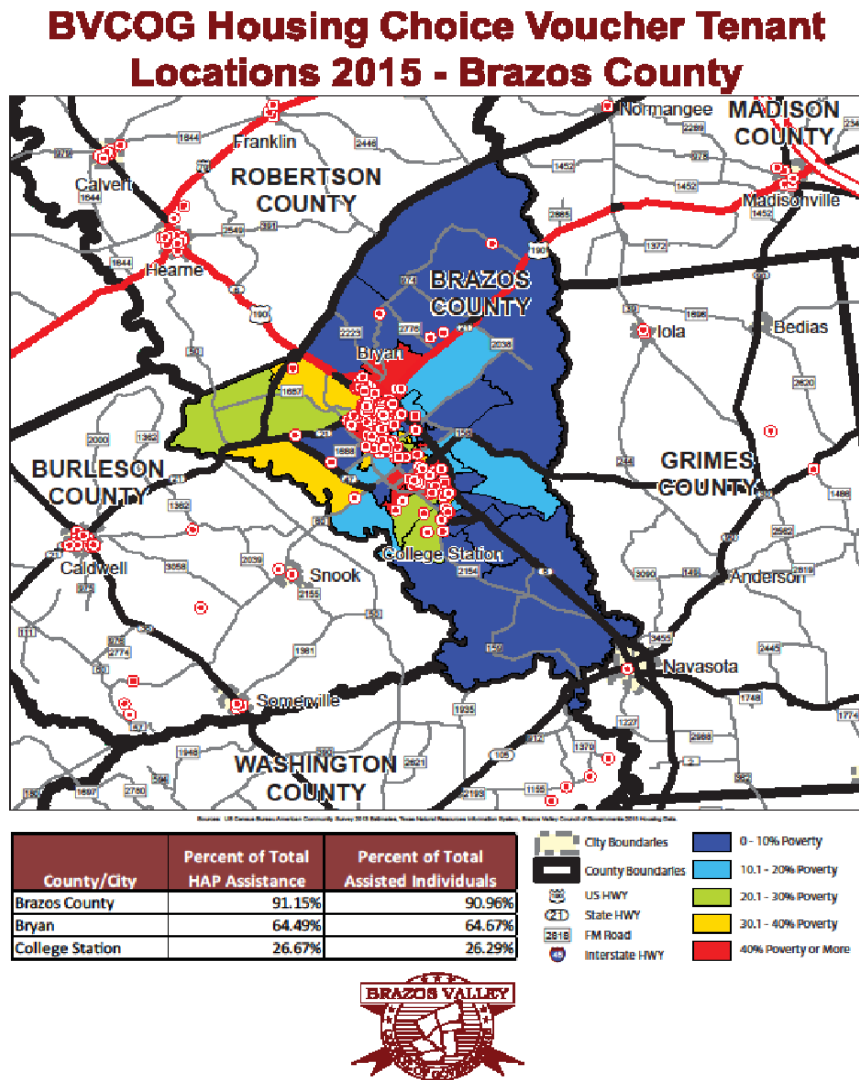
⁴⁸ Schwartz, Mary and Ellen Wilson. 2006. “Who Can Afford to Live in a Home? A look at Data from the 2006 American Community Survey.” U.S. Census Bureau. Accessed April 2016.
<https://www.census.gov/housing/census/publications/who-can-afford.pdf>.

⁴⁹ 2010-2014 ACS PUMS

- Financial Education or Counseling – The intent is to educate users on subjects like establishing credit and balancing a checkbook. These types of classes are provided by the city or through the Family Self Sufficiency Program (part of Housing Choice Voucher Program). The requirement of this educational component varies by program and can be completed online in as little as one day.

Additionally, the BCSSA offers rent/utility assistance to families at risk of losing their housing.

Figure 3: Housing Choice Voucher Tenant Locations in Brazos County



Source: Brazos Valley Council of Governments 2015

Challenges

There are numerous barriers and challenges that residents face when trying to find affordable housing options in the B/CS area. Although no one organization has the resources to overcome all

of these barriers, it is important that all service providers thoroughly understand these barriers since many of their clients have faced, and will continue to face, them.

Competition for Housing

Students, professionals, and retiring Aggies provide competition to low-income residents seeking affordable housing. As Texas A&M University has continued to expand enrollment, college students have taken up more and more housing. Interviewees reported the area has fewer than 100 available apartments across 90 apartment complexes. This high occupancy rate makes it difficult for low-income families to locate acceptable housing. According to several of our interviewees, many apartment complexes do not accept vouchers for fear tenants will only stay for a short time or will not care for the property properly, which is a factor that further complicates housing prospects. Even some who have successfully secured housing with a voucher can expect leases not to be renewed, with the focus shifting toward filling those units with college students. Developers, too, concentrate on building higher-end housing for college students. This option is more lucrative than trying to build low-income housing. The other demographic group making it difficult for low-income residents to find housing is professionals and retirees. As more professors and retired Aggies move to the area, their ability to pay higher housing prices is out-pricing low-income residents from the market.

Affordable housing in the form of rentals and purchases can be difficult to obtain. The B/CS area has a strong economy. We learned from an interviewee that the median price for new home construction is \$245,000, non-new homes average \$200,000, and the price of land is \$40,000 for a lot. Although these prices reflect the success of many, there are also those that suffer. To afford homes at these prices is nearly impossible for residents trying to make the move from low-income apartment living to homeownership. These costs also decrease the number of Down Payment Assistance loans that cities can make since it uses larger portions of available funds per house. According to those interviewed, the average rental prices for two bedroom apartments is \$933. Trying to afford these rates on a minimum-wage salary can be a challenge for a low-income family trying to find a unit.

With the large college student population occupying most apartments, there has been a shift from renting an entire apartment unit to renting each unit by the room. Renting a four-bedroom, four-bath unit by the room is a convenient way to target college students and fill unused units. One college student is only responsible for the rent for one bedroom instead of the entire unit. This trend of renting by the room is difficult to overcome for families seeking to rent an entire unit.

Limited Resources

A prevalent theme in almost all interviews was not only that there are finite resources that are dedicated to providing low-income housing options, but that those resources are decreasing each year. The federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is the primary source of funding to most local programs. The combination of reduced funding and rising rents means program managers are able to serve fewer and fewer clients each year. City employees also noted that strings attached to government funding make program management difficult and complicated.

Stereotypes and Tenant History

Many of those interviewed noted that low-income residents sometimes face stereotypes. Our interviewees noted that some property owners might perceive low-income residents as more likely than college students or professionals to neglect their rental properties, commit crimes, or bring too many residents into one apartment. Since many low-income residents might qualify for vouchers, there may also be concern that they may not be able to come up with the remainder of the rent due each month. Though interviewees say only about two percent of voucher recipients lose their voucher due to these types of problems, the stigma remains. Landlords are also wary of the strings that are attached to vouchers. Requirements for third-party inspections and property maintenance are viewed as a hassle not required with non-voucher tenants, of which there is a growing number.

Several interviewees also mentioned that potential tenants with poor credit or criminal histories are often disqualified for housing. Landlords and program managers often find it difficult to see beyond past problems that may indicate present risks. Even Housing Choice Voucher Program applicants are turned down if they are found to have a criminal history in the last three years.

There are many housing assistance programs available to Brazos County residents. Unfortunately, there are just as many barriers to locating and retaining housing. By reviewing the services already available in the area and understanding the limitations of the current system, local leaders can improve their services to help bridge current gaps or address unique needs.

Hunger

Good nutrition is an important factor for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The ability to obtain an adequate amount of quality food positively impacts individuals' mental and physical well-being. Despite many organizations' efforts to alleviate hunger in Brazos County, hunger remains a pressing issue in the community.

Background

Food security is defined as “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.”⁵⁰ In 2012, more than 17 million American households were faced with food insecurity.⁵¹ The system through which these individuals and families access additional food is comprised of two “parallel” strands: public assistance in the form of federally-funded programs, and private assistance in the form of food banks, food pantries, and soup kitchens.⁵² In this section, we

⁵⁰ United States Department of Agriculture. 2015. “Food Security in the U.S.” Last Modified September 8, 2015. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us.aspx>.

⁵¹ Weinfeld, N., G. Mills, C. Borger, M. Gearing, T. Macaluso, J. Montaquila, and S. Zedlewski. 2014. Hunger in America 2014: National Report Prepared for Feeding America. Feeding America.

⁵² Daponte, Beth Osborne and Shannon Bade. 2006. “How the Private Food Assistance Network Evolved: Interactions between Public and Private Responses to Hunger.” *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 35(4): 668-690.

summarize the history of this two-stranded system and explain its shortcomings, then describe recent efforts to better meet the nutritional needs of low-income community members.

The U.S. Food Assistance System

In the public assistance strand, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp Program), provides eligible recipients with a free monthly allotment of credits that can be exchanged for food.⁵³ The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) allows the federal government to donate excess commodities to states to be distributed through the private food assistance system to those in need.⁵⁴ The private food assistance network is a loose collection of entities operated primarily by nonprofits and churches. Food banks obtain food at low or no cost through TEFAP, through corporate donations of surplus food, and from individual contributions. Food pantries and soup kitchens then gather food from food banks, supplement it with any direct donations they have received, and provide it as a collection of groceries (food pantries) or prepare it as a meal (soup kitchens).⁵⁵

A number of issues limit the effectiveness of the current food assistance system. First, eligibility requirements can prevent some individuals who are truly in need from accessing adequate food. SNAP eligibility is relative to the federal poverty line, an outdated and somewhat arbitrary measure that does not encompass the full range of financial need.⁵⁶ Consequently, 36 percent of people who utilize a pantry in the national Feeding America network report that they do not qualify for SNAP, often because their income is deemed too high.⁵⁷ Food pantries vary widely in their requirements, but many condition food assistance on completion of an application for SNAP.⁵⁸ Additionally, some pantries are intended to respond primarily to temporary, emergency needs, so they refer clients to other agencies if they have come to the pantry for assistance multiple times. Thus, people whose incomes do not align with the federal poverty measure or who experience chronic food insecurity are sometimes left with few options.

Even those receiving public or private food assistance find that it is often inadequate for their nutritional needs. Nearly 55 percent of Feeding America's clients currently receive SNAP benefits but report that those benefits do not provide enough food to last the month.⁵⁹ Researchers studying private pantries have found that often, their inventories include products that are past their expiration dates, physically damaged, unaligned with clients' nutritional needs, or simply undesirable. Moreover, due to increased demand, the portion of the inventory that is edible must be divided among a large numbers of clients, making it even more difficult for individuals to secure enough food.⁶⁰

⁵³ Weinfield et al. 2014.

⁵⁴ Daponte and Bade. 2006.

⁵⁵ Berner, Maureen, Trina Ozer, and Sharon Paynter. 2008. "A Portrait of Hunger, the Social Safety Net, and the Working Poor." *The Policy Studies Journal* 36(3): 403-420.

⁵⁶ Daponte and Bade 2006.

⁵⁷ Weinfield et al. 2014.

⁵⁸ Paynter, Sharon, Maureen Berner, and Emily Anderson. 2011. "When Even the 'Dollar Value Meal' Costs Too Much: Food Insecurity and Long-Term Dependence on Food Pantry Assistance." *Public Administration Quarterly* (Spring): 26-58.

⁵⁹ Weinfield et al. 2014.

⁶⁰ Tarasuk, Valerie and Joan M. Eakin. 2005. "Food Assistance through 'Surplus' Food: Insights from an Ethnographic Study of Food Bank Work." *Agriculture and Human Values* 22: 177-186.

An imbalance of power allows this flawed food assistance system to persist. The federal government initially developed public food programs to provide economic support for farmers, and agricultural interests continue to influence these programs today.⁶¹ In the private sector, donating surplus food allows corporations to dispose of unwanted inventory while promoting their brand and charitable reputation, as well as receiving a sizeable tax deduction.⁶² Because Good Samaritan laws protect these corporations from liability for unhealthy or unsafe food, they donate freely and protect food assistance programs as they currently stand.⁶³ Meanwhile, citizens who suffer from food insecurity not only are hesitant to “bite the hand that feeds them” for fear of losing access to essential food in whatever form it takes, but due to their financial circumstances they lack the power to voice their criticism of these programs and change the food assistance system for the better.⁶⁴

Promising Practices

Although the foregoing is a bleak picture of the food assistance landscape, there are nevertheless a number of strategies operators of local food pantries can use to strengthen their clients’ food security. A key strategy is to stock products aligned with their clients’ specific needs rather than simply accepting whatever donations are most easily obtained. The food-insecure population is quite diverse. Some clients need food for infants and toddlers, while others have growing teenagers to feed; some clients are trying to abide by religious food restrictions, and others have strong preferences rooted in their ethnic heritage; many need not only food, but common household items such as soap, toilet paper, and toothpaste.⁶⁵

Adopting a client-choice model can ensure that people experiencing food insecurity can meet their most essential nutritional and health needs. This approach allows food pantry visitors to select the items they want rather than receiving a pre-bagged selection. The model can take various forms. For example, some client-choice pantries allot a certain number of points to each customer based on their family size, and then customers use a computerized system to allocate their points to the selection of goods that best meets their needs. Others provide clients with a printed menu; they check off items, and a worker bags up those items for them to take home. But client choice can be as simple as laying out groups of food items on different tables and posting signs that say “Choose two,” “Choose one bag,” and so on. Although this approach is relatively new, it is becoming increasingly popular as food pantry managers report greater cost savings and improved client satisfaction because less food is wasted.⁶⁶ Moreover, in one randomized experiment, clients of a

⁶¹ Daponte and Blade 2006, 670.

⁶² Ibid., 682.

⁶³ Tarasuk 2005, 184.

⁶⁴ Tarasuk, Valerie and Joan M. Eakin. 2005. “Food Assistance through ‘Surplus’ Food: Insights from an Ethnographic Study of Food Bank Work.” *Agriculture and Human Values* 22: 183

⁶⁵ Fiese, Barbara H., Brenda D. Hoester, and Elaine Waxman. 2014. “Balancing Household Needs: The Non-Food Needs of Food Pantry Clients and Their Implications for Program Planning.” *Journal of Family and Economic Issues* 35:423-431.

⁶⁶ Rosenberg, Tina. 2015. “To Feed More, Food Pantries Learn from Supermarkets.” May 22, *New York Times*. Accessed April 2016. http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/05/22/allying-choice-and-nutrition-at-food-pantries/?_r=0.

client-choice food pantry became half as likely to experience food insecurity as their peers who were continuing to visit a traditional food pantry.⁶⁷

Other organizations across the nation are experimenting with other novel approaches to food assistance. In Delaware, state social service centers partner with a large food bank to maintain small pantries so they can provide clients applying for federal food assistance with an immediate supply of food and household items while they wait for their application to be processed.⁶⁸ Other strategies for combatting food insecurity include providing supplemental food to school-age children at the end of each month when family finances are especially tight⁶⁹ and supplementing pantry services with a comprehensive client needs assessment and monthly motivational interviewing.⁷⁰

In short, food pantry operators who have a clear understanding of their clients' needs and are familiar with the community's resources are well-positioned to improve diet quality and alleviate food insecurity for low-income individuals and families.

Extent of Need

Food insecurity is an ongoing problem in the B/CS community. In 2013, 22 percent of Brazos County residents experienced food insecurity.⁷¹ After housing-related needs, food pantry needs and other food-related requests were the second highest need on United Way's 2015 2-1-1 report, with 4,161 total referrals in 2015.⁷² It is also worth noting that a number of Brazos County residents qualify for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), including 23,352 households with at least one working member, as shown in Table 4. Simply having a job is not necessarily enough to ensure consistent access to adequate food, and working families may be just as much in need of assistance as others. Households receiving SNAP are concentrated in Bryan, as shown in Figure 4.

⁶⁷ Martin, Katie S. et al. 2013. "A Novel Food Pantry Program: Food Security, Self-Sufficiency, and Diet-Quality Outcomes." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 45(5): 569-575.

⁶⁸ Wolfe, Robin, Nancy Cotunga, and Carolyn K. Manning. 2012. "Food Closets in State Social Service Centers: One-Stop Shopping." *Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition* 7:414-425.

⁶⁹ Behrman, C., M. Benedetto, T. Derrig, B. Harsh, E. Marchione, L. Ross, and M. Vimont. 2014. "Food Insecurity and an Urban American Elementary School: Development of a Community-Based Research and Service-Learning Partnership." *Partnerships: A Journal of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement* 5 (2):122-136.

⁷⁰ Martin et al. 2013

⁷¹ Falls, Clay. 2015. "Food Insecurity an Ongoing Problem in Brazos County." Accessed March 2016. <http://www.kbtx.com/home/headlines/Food-Insecurity-an-Ongoing-Problem-in-the-Brazos-Valley-326511401.html>.

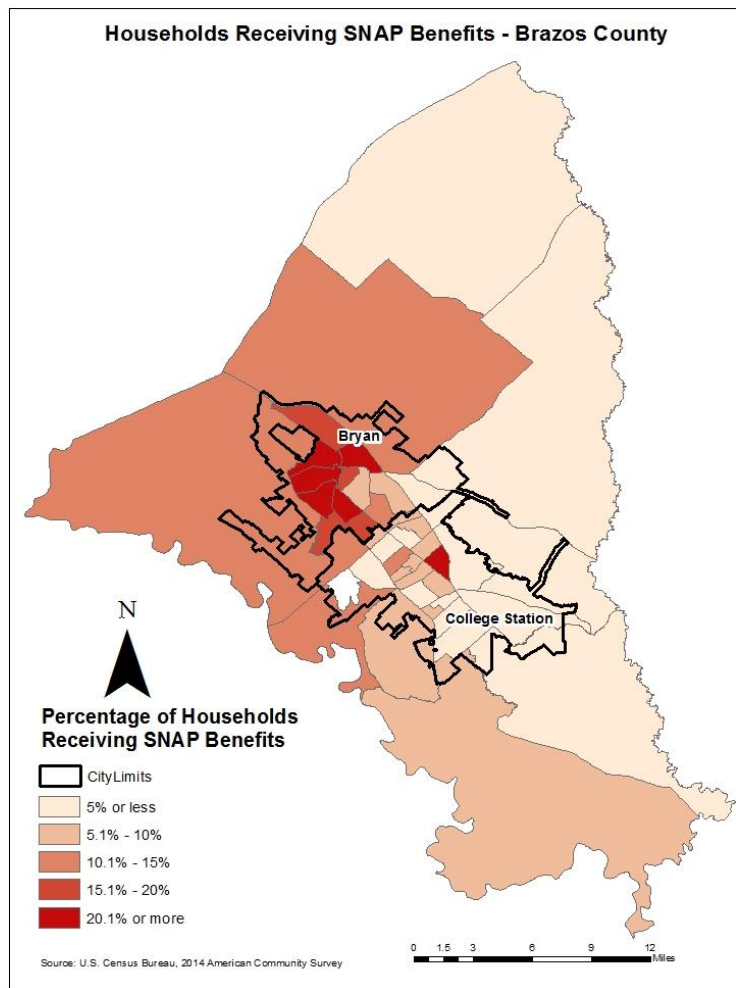
⁷² United Way. 2016. "2015 Needs and Trend Analysis."

Table 4: SNAP Enrollment in Brazos County

	% Receiving SNAP
All	13.8% (27,813)
At least one labor force member in household	12.7% (23,352)
No labor force members in household	25.3% (4,461)

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample

Figure 4: Geographic Distribution of SNAP Enrollment in Brazos County



Available Programs

Several local providers are taking actions to alleviate hunger in Brazos County, including the BCSSA, St. Vincent de Paul, Twin City Mission, the Boys and Girls Club, and Brazos Valley Food Bank. The Brazos Valley Food Bank (BVFB) is one of the largest local food assistance providers working to end hunger in the Brazos Valley. BVFB partners with a network of thirty-

four hunger relief partners across the Brazos Valley to distribute food and educational resources to six of the seven counties in the Brazos Valley (Brazos, Burleson, Grimes, Madison, Robertson and Washington). Table 5 lists other programs that address hunger in Brazos County.

Table 5: Additional Food Assistance Programs in Brazos County

Program	Description
BVFB Back Pack Program	Schools identify K-12 students on free and reduced lunch and send bags of food home during the weekends to make sure students have something to eat on weekends.
BVFB Senior Bags Program	While Meals on Wheels delivers food to senior citizens through the week, Senior Bags are provided as supplemental food for the weekends to home-delivered meal recipients.
BVFB Mobile Food Pantries	Volunteers travel on trucks to distribute food for Grimes, Madison, and Washington Counties. Similar Mobile Pantries are coming to Brazos County.
BVFB Nutrition Education	Instructors teach community members how to be all-around healthy, encouraging healthy eating and regular exercise.
Twin City Mission Community Cafe	Provides food services for shelter families and anyone in the community in need of a hot meal, Monday through Friday at 12:00 noon OR 5:00 p.m (community members can eat one meal a day at no cost, either lunch or dinner).
Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program	Provides supplemental food and nutrition education to low-income women with children five years or younger.
School Food Pantries	Both Bryan ISD and College Station ISD operate small food pantries at school sites for students and their families.

One food assistance program that is notably absent from our area is the Campus Kitchens Project (CKP). CKP is a national nonprofit that helps students establish an on-campus organization to recover, prepare, and deliver excess food to community members in need.⁷³ Local pantries would benefit from a similar partnership if Campus Kitchens were to be established at Texas A&M University or Blinn College.

Challenges

Limited Awareness of Services

A key challenge noted by several of our interviewees was a general lack of awareness about the food assistance that is available in Brazos County. Local providers shared that a lack of advertisement and awareness has caused challenges in their organizations and has limited the number of clients they can reach in the community. Many providers stated a belief that increasing awareness of services offered by local organizations will effectively fill gaps in service by reaching more potential clients who are living in poverty but do not meet the criteria to receive SNAP benefits and may not be aware of the programs offered by nonprofits. A nonprofit provider said that a large number of clients are brought in through referrals, but that increasing community awareness could bring in even more people. Additionally, increasing other service providers’

⁷³ The Campus Kitchens Project. 2016. “Student-Powered Hunger Relief.” Accessed April 2016. <http://www.campuskitchens.org/mission/>

knowledge of the food assistance network will allow them to refer more clients to the appropriate program for assistance.

Chronic Use of Emergency Food Assistance

A number of factors have created an unsustainable pattern in which low-income individuals and families rely on food pantries for ongoing needs rather than only utilizing them as an occasional emergency measure. First, outdated eligibility criteria have prevented some people who genuinely need food assistance from receiving SNAP benefits. As a result, an estimated 36 percent of clients at food banks in the national Feeding America network do not qualify for SNAP because their income is too high, despite their ongoing food insecurity.⁷⁴ Second, some individuals who *are* eligible for SNAP are not enrolled for various reasons, including a desire to remain independent and a lack of knowledge about how to apply for benefits. In an interview, a local nonprofit organization representative noted that of the 12,434 people in Bryan who are potentially eligible for SNAP, 4,582 people (37 percent) are not receiving its benefits. College Station has 28,444 people who are potentially eligible for SNAP and only 3,260 people (11 percent) are receiving benefits. This leaves 29,766 potential beneficiaries across the two cities at risk of food insecurity. Third, even for low-income individuals who have successfully enrolled in SNAP, food insecurity can still be a continual problem. Among Feeding America network clients, 55 percent report receiving SNAP benefits but finding them inadequate for their families' nutritional needs.⁷⁵

As a consequence of these shortcomings, a significant number of low-income individuals experiencing food insecurity regularly visit food banks to supply their needs. In a recent study, 36 percent of food pantry clients reported visiting a pantry at least once per month during the prior year, and an additional 18 percent had used pantries at least six months out of the previous year.⁷⁶ Despite this shift, food pantries like those in Brazos County continue to operate as if they are emergency resources rather than a routine source of food for many low-income repeat clients. Each organization varies in its requirements, but many condition food assistance on completion of an application for SNAP, and they refer clients to other agencies if they have come to the pantry for assistance multiple times. Under these conditions, clients move from pantry to pantry, but the underlying problem of food insecurity remains unsolved.

In summary, food insecurity is a persistent problem for more than one-fifth of Brazos County residents. Some individuals are not taking full advantage of the resources available to them, and others have come to rely on a food assistance system that is not designed for chronic use.

⁷⁴ Borger, Christine et al. 2014. *Hunger in America 2014: National Report Prepared for Feeding America*. Feeding America.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Feeding America. 2010. "Food Banks: America's New Staple." Accessed March 2016. <http://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/our-research/hungers-new-staple/>.

Education

Education is a powerful support to an individual's quality of life, earnings, financial management, and citizenship. A labor force equipped with the skills the job market requires is also key to a community's economic prosperity. Brazos County offers a variety of educational opportunities to young children, K-12 students, and adults. However, there appears to be a shortage of high-quality services for children aged 0-3, and our interviews have suggested the community lacks capacity in its out-of-school time (OST) offerings, vocational training, and financial management programs. Moreover, the current educational landscape is fragmented, with little information-sharing or collaboration occurring among the many organizations that offer educational services. We explore these issues further in the following section by establishing the relationship between education and income, then providing an overview of our community's needs, programs, and challenges with respect to early childhood, K-12, and adult education.

Background

Although there are certainly exceptions, American children who live in poverty tend to have poorer educational outcomes than those who do not; this goes on to affect them adversely later in life. One study indicates that students who live in poverty and are not reading proficiently by third grade are about three times more likely to drop out or fail to graduate than those who do not live in poverty.⁷⁷ This research resonates with student performance data in Texas. In 2015, for example, only 65% of economically-disadvantaged (ED) students in grades 3-12 passed their State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) exams in all subjects, as compared to 85% of non-ED students. Within the class of 2014, 85% of ED students graduated, about three percentage points fewer than the state average of 88%. In the same year, ED graduates scored an average of 1273 points on the SAT, significantly below the state average of 1417.⁷⁸ These gaps are concerning because academic achievement in K-12 affects educational attainment, lifetime earnings, and a number of other important outcomes.

A discussion of appropriate educational interventions is beyond the scope of this study; our focus is on the role NPOs, governments, and local citizens can play in alleviating poverty, not on the public school system. We will note the efficacy of two community-based interventions, however.

First, there is growing consensus that school readiness is critical to students' success. Children who enter kindergarten with below-average motor and cognitive skills are more likely to be retained, placed in special education, or perceived as behaving poorly in elementary school.⁷⁹ Some studies have connected children's level of school readiness with even more distant outcomes, such as high school graduation, income, and criminal behavior.⁸⁰ Early education,

⁷⁷ Hernandez, Donald J. 2011. *Double Jeopardy: How Third-Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation*. The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

⁷⁸ Texas Education Agency. 2015. *Texas Performance Reporting System: 2014-2015*. Accessed April 2016. <https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tprs/2015/srch.html>

⁷⁹ Pianta, Robert C. and Sandra J. McCoy. 1997. "The First Day of School: The Predictive Validity of Early School Screening." *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology* 18: 1-22.

⁸⁰ United Nations Children's Fund. 2012. *School Readiness: A Conceptual Framework*. http://www.unicef.org/education/bege_61646.html.

particularly in the form of prekindergarten, has proven effective in improving the school readiness and long-term success of low-income children. For example, low-income children who were randomly assigned to the 1972-1977 Carolina Abecedarian program from age 6 months to kindergarten earned grade-equivalent scores an average of two years higher than their non-participating peers at age 21.⁸¹ Low-income 3- and 4-year-olds randomly assigned to the 1962-67 High Scope/Perry Preschool program ultimately outperformed their non-participating low-income peers with respect to their high school graduation rate (77% v. 60%), employment at age 40 (76% v. 62%), median annual earnings (\$20,800 v. \$15,300), and a number of other long-term outcomes.⁸² Although half-day pre-K programs can be beneficial, full-day programs have been shown to have stronger effects on children's school readiness in a number of domains.⁸³ Data from Central Texas also suggest that parents are more likely to enroll their children and bring them to school consistently in a full-day program.⁸⁴

Second, one promising avenue for supporting students later in their K-12 career is the development of a strong out-of-school time (OST) network. OST providers build on the contributions of the school system by offering students opportunities for remediation, enrichment, mentoring, and positive social experiences after school and during long breaks.⁸⁵ Communities with a wide range of high-quality, affordable after-school and summer programs offer their low-income children rich opportunities to master academic concepts, discover their talents, build their social skills, and find positive role models. Recent research suggests that mentoring programs for adolescents can be particularly helpful in this regard.⁸⁶

Extent of Need

Educational attainment is remarkably uneven across our community. As indicated in Table 6, more than half of College Station residents 25 years and older have earned at least a bachelor's degree; in Bryan, that figure is just one-fourth. In contrast, 22.8 percent of Bryan residents have no high school credential, while the same is true for only 5.6 percent of College Station residents. Figure 5 illustrates the geographic distribution of bachelor's degrees across the county. This sharp difference between the two cities helps explain the higher prevalence of poverty in Bryan discussed earlier. In fact, among Brazos County residents aged 18 and older who are not currently enrolled in school, those with at least a bachelor's degree earn an average of \$59,973, while those without a bachelor's earn about \$24,992. Residents with at least a bachelor's have about a 6.4 percent chance of earning an income at or below the federal poverty line; for those without the degree, the

⁸¹ Campbell, F. A., Ramsey, C. T., Pungello, E., Sparling, J., & Miller-Johnson, S. 2002. "Early Childhood Education: Young Adult Outcomes from the Abecedarian Project." *Applied Developmental Science* 6(1): 42-57.

⁸² Heckman, J. J., Moon, S. H., Pinto, R., Savelyev, P. A., & Yavitz, A. 2010. "The Rate of Return to the High/Scope Perry Preschool Program." *Journal of Public Economics*, 94(1): 114-128.

⁸³ Robin, Kenneth B., Ellen C. Frede, and W. Steven Barnett. 2006. "Is More Better? The Effects of Full-Day versus Half-Day Pre-Kindergarten on Early School Achievement." National Institute for Early Education Research Working Paper. Accessed March 2016.

⁸⁴ E3 Alliance. 2015. Central Texas Education Profile: School Readiness. Accessed March 2016. <http://e3alliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/School-Readiness.pdf>.

⁸⁵ Hahn, Robert A. 2015. "Out-of-School Time Academic Programs are Recommended to Improve Academic Achievement and Health Equity." *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice* 21(6): 609-612.

⁸⁶ Grineski, Steve. 2003. "A University and Community-Based Partnership: After-School Mentoring for Low Income Youth." *The School Community Journal* 13 (1):101-114.

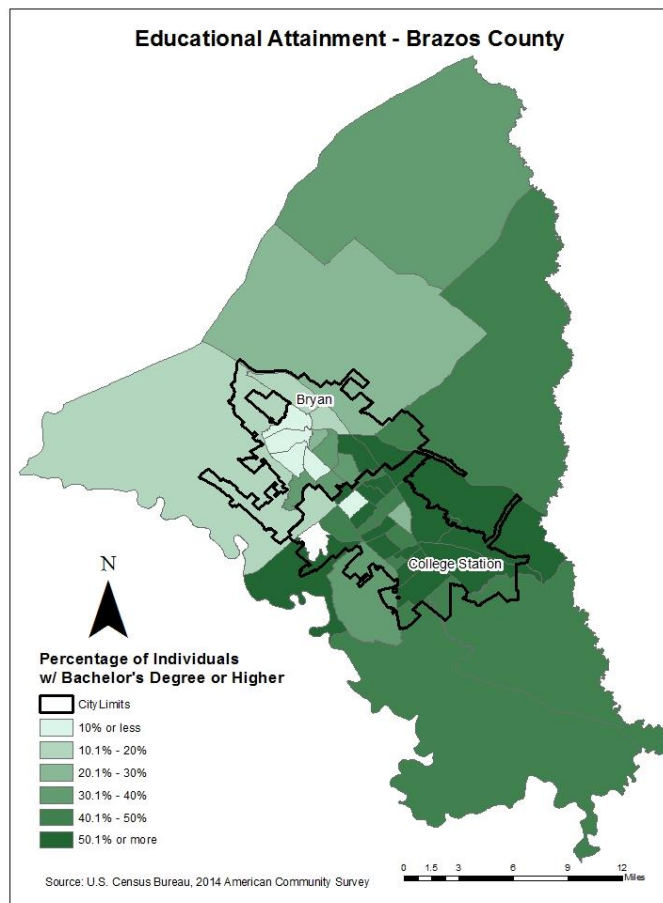
probability jumps to 20.6 percent.⁸⁷ These statistics are rough estimates; other factors like age and experience can affect earnings. Still, they illustrate the striking relationship between education and income in our community.

Table 6: Educational Attainment of Brazos County Residents Aged 25 Years and Older

	Texas	Brazos County	Bryan	College Station
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	26.6%	38.4%	25.7%	55.1%
Associate’s Degree	6.5%	5.2%	5.1%	4.8%
Some College, No Degree	22.7%	20.2%	18.9%	20.8%
High School Diploma or Equivalent	25.3%	21.5%	27.5%	13.6%
No High School Credential	18.8%	14.4%	22.8%	5.6%

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Figure 5: Geographic Distribution of Bachelor's Degrees in Brazos County



⁸⁷ United States Census Bureau. 2014. “Selected Economic Characteristics: 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey.”

Given the link between educational attainment and income, what supports are in place to help Brazos County residents and their children advance their learning and, consequently, their economic prospects?

Available Programs

Early Childhood Education

About half of the approximately 5,000 three- and four-year-olds in Brazos County are involved in some form of early education, as seen in Table 7. Children in College Station are more likely to be enrolled in early education and more likely to attend a private school than are children in Bryan.

Table 7: School Enrollment among 3- and 4-Year-Olds in Brazos County

Brazos County		Bryan			College Station			
% of All 3 & 4 Year Olds	% of Enrollees		% of All 3 & 4 Year Olds	% of Enrollees		% of All 3 & 4 Year Olds	% of Enrollees	
	Public	Private		Public	Private		Public	Private
47.0%	49.6%	50.4%	39.0%	78.7%	21.3%	58.6%	26.6%	73.4%

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Early childhood education can occur in a number of settings: a federally-funded Early Head Start (ages 0-2) or Head Start (ages 3-5) program, a state-funded pre-kindergarten program (age 4), or a private nursery or preschool. Publicly-funded early childhood programs are free to low-income families; private schools generally charge tuition. All private child care providers must meet minimum health and safety standards to be licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services; some of these programs also implement a robust curriculum for their children and have consequently attained additional accreditation by a nationally-recognized early childhood organization such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Four such accredited private providers operate in Brazos County. A summary of all local early childhood education providers is found at the end of Appendix 4.

Although the collective capacity of all these organizations may seem large, it should be noted that access to high-quality early childhood education is limited for low-income families for several reasons. Few of the accredited private institutions accept tuition subsidies. The majority of low-income families, then, must rely on a publicly-funded system that is stretched thin, particularly for children aged 0-3. We do not know the exact number of children in Brazos County who are eligible for these services, but we can provide a rough estimate. One key determinant of eligibility for Early Head Start, Head Start, and Texas’s free public pre-K program is a family income at or below the federal poverty line.⁸⁸ By comparing the number of children whose families meet this requirement to the number of children participating in a free early childhood program, we can estimate the gap in capacity. As Table 8 shows, the need for Early Head Start exceeds the capacity of our local providers by more than 2,000 children, and there is a shortage of about 600 spots in

⁸⁸ Children can be eligible for these programs based on other needs, such as homelessness or disability; however, we focus on income since it accounts for a large number of enrollees.

Head Start for 3-year-olds. This finding aligns with Head Start provider reports indicating each of our local centers is at 100 percent capacity, along with an interviewee’s comment that the waiting list for his/her Early Head Start program is as long as the list of enrollees. On the other hand, due to the availability of free public pre-K, our community has more than enough capacity to serve 4-year-olds from low-income families, leaving as many as 1,138 spots open for non-low-income children.

Table 8: Capacity of Early Childhood Education Providers in Brazos County

Age	# in this Age Group at or Below Poverty Line	# in this Age Group Currently Served	Gap
0-2	2,321	144 (CSISD and BVCAA Early Head Start)	-2,177
3	662	28 (CSISD Head Start) 35 (BVCAA Head Start)	-599
4	463	200 (CSISD Head Start) 426 (BVCAA Head Start) 975 (Pre-K)	1,138

Even for low-income children enrolled in free pre-K, though, learning opportunities are limited by the length of the school day. The State of Texas funds a half-day pre-K program, but if districts wish to provide a full-day program they must supply the remainder of the funds themselves. Both Bryan and College Station ISDs currently operate half-day programs; our interviews with school officials suggested that although representatives of both districts have expressed a desire to provide full-day pre-K, neither has been able to do so yet.⁸⁹ Thus, while the pre-K programs currently available are undoubtedly helpful, most children from low-income families in our community are not able to benefit from the advantages of a full-day experience.

Regardless of the program, the quality of early childhood education in our community is difficult to assess. Each organization is monitored by a governmental entity to ensure that it meets health and safety standards, and centers that are part of a broad network (e.g., Head Start, KinderCare) are expected to adhere to curriculum standards as well. At present, however, there is no uniform assessment used across the county to indicate how well the various early childhood programs are improving their participants’ physical, socio-emotional, and cognitive well-being. Without this measure, we cannot say whether there is a need for improved early childhood education quality in our community. It is clear, however, that more capacity is needed to enroll low-income students.

K-12 Education

About 93 percent of Brazos County students attend kindergarten through twelfth grade in one of our two public school districts.⁹⁰ The remaining seven percent are educated at home or in a private school. We will focus our analysis on students in public school since they comprise more than 90 percent of the population.

⁸⁹ See also Perrone, Caitlin. 2015. “Bryan School District Pushing for All-Day Pre-K.” January 11, *The Eagle*. http://www.theeagle.com/news/local/bryan-school-district-pushing-for-all-day-pre-k/article_9fb38c4a-19e9-59b2-9ae8-c3cbe7ee3044.html.

⁹⁰ United States Census Bureau. 2015. “Selected Economic Characteristics: 2010-2014 5-Year American Community Survey.”

Table XI displays a selection of key characteristics for each district. Although both districts met the Texas Education Agency’s (TEA) overall accountability standard in 2015, there remains much room for improvement in student scores on statewide academic assessments, particularly as the state will raise performance standards over the next several years. Our interviews with leaders from both districts indicated much work is already being done in schools to support students in their academic growth, particularly if they face obstacles related to poverty or English language acquisition. The question is how our community can best work with our schools to strengthen and extend these supports to raise academic achievement for all.

Table 9: Performance Metrics for School Districts in Brazos County

	Bryan ISD	College Station ISD	Notes
K-12 Students	15,267	12,025	
Economically Disadvantaged	74%	34%	Defined as eligible for free- or reduced-price lunch or other public assistance.
English Language Learners	22%	8%	
2015 TEA Accountability Rating	Met Standard	Met Standard	“Met Standard” is the highest accountability rating and indicates acceptable performance.
At Phase-In Satisfactory or Above on STAAR Reading	70%	86%	The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) program includes assessments in several subjects for students in grades 3-8 as well as students taking selected high school courses. <i>Phase-In Satisfactory</i> was the performance standard used in 2014-2015. <i>Postsecondary Readiness</i> is the performance standard to be used in 2015-2016 and 2016-2017.
At Postsecondary Readiness Standard on STAAR Reading	35%	61%	
At Phase-In Satisfactory or Above on STAAR Math	70%	93%	
At Postsecondary Readiness Standard on STAAR Math	34%	77%	
College and Career Ready Graduates	62%	77%	Graduates who either meet a designated score on the SAT, ACT, or STAAR in both reading and math; earn credit for at least 2 advanced or dual-enrollment classes; or enroll in a coherent sequence of career and technical education courses.
4-Year Graduation Rate	79%	92%	Students who entered high school in 2010-2011 and graduated in 2014.

Source: Texas Education Agency, 2014-2015 Texas Academic Performance Reports⁹¹

⁹¹ Texas Education Agency. 2015. 2014-2015 Texas Academic Performance Reports. Accessed March 2016. <https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tapr/2015/index.html>

During the exploratory phase of our study, we identified 17 governmental or nonprofit entities that offer some form of out-of-school educational service such as tutoring, youth development, or educational enrichment. This number does not include private tutoring agencies or the numerous camps and educational programs available through our local museums and other organizations. Despite the number of programs available, however, little is known about how many children and young adults they serve, how their work aligns with the work of public schools, and how effective they are. Without this shared knowledge, our community is unlikely to reap the full benefits of the extensive human capital these more than 17 organizations represent.

Adult Education

Although early childhood and K-12 education have great potential to break the cycle of poverty in the early years, adult education programs can assist those who are beyond the traditional school system in improving their quality of life. These programs were not a major focus of our research, but knowledge of financial and social systems did emerge as an important theme when we asked community leaders about the needs they see on a daily basis. For example, two respondents noted that some community members fall victim to predatory lenders in part due to a misunderstanding of how credit works, which results in unpayable debts and poor credit scores that prevent them from securing reliable housing. Another interviewee spoke of the difficulty some low-income families have with building sufficient credit to be considered for a loan, not only because they have limited funds to save, but because they are not aware of what steps are needed to establish good credit. Others noted a general lack of awareness about how to access community resources. As one nonprofit leader said, “So many resources are available, and people don’t know to take advantage of them or perhaps don’t have access to a computer, so they think that they are not eligible--but then all you have to do is go to a library or workforce room or resource room.”

Participants in discussion groups that formed the basis for the regional health assessment also noted a lack of vocational training. The report’s authors noted, “While opportunities to go to an institute of higher learning like Blinn Junior College or Texas A&M are abundant, residents struggled to find options for technical training in fields like information technology.”⁹²

There are several organizations in Brazos County that help adults build basic skills to improve their quality of life. For example, College Station ISD’s Barbara Bush Parent Center, the Bryan Adult Learning Center, and Brazos County Workforce Solutions offer GED and ESL (English as a Second Language) classes. Others offer instruction in financial management or homebuying, including the Lincoln House of Hope, the Brazos Valley Affordable Housing Corporation, the Brazos Valley Council of Governments, United Way of the Brazos Valley, and the BCSSA. We do not have sufficient data to determine whether there is a need for more or different adult education programming in our community. We can say, though, that low-income residents are unlikely to improve their status without basic skills and a working knowledge of financial and social systems and that some community organizations are attempting to address the skills and knowledge gap.

⁹² Texas A&M Health Science Center 2013.

Challenges

At every level of education, two key barriers are evident. First, there appears to be a shortage of educational opportunities for the community members who would most benefit from them. This is certainly true for children aged 0-3, and it is possibly the case for youth in search of OST and adults seeking vocational or financial instruction. Second, there is little information available about the goals and quality of current educational programming outside of the public school system. Without this information, it is difficult for recipients of educational services to hold the providers accountable and for providers of educational services to coordinate with each other to offer complementary programming.

Health

Poor health can contribute to physical suffering, steep medical expenses, and difficulty maintaining employment. These challenges can, in turn, limit access to adequate housing, food, and educational opportunities. Given the connection between health and these other important outcomes, it is helpful for all service providers to be aware of community health needs, even if they do not provide medical services directly. Although a large majority of Brazos County residents experience good health, chronic medical conditions nevertheless challenge a significant number of residents. Mental illness is on the rise, and low-income, minority, elderly, and veteran residents are particularly vulnerable to mental and physical health problems. Gaps in health insurance coverage, a shortage of mental health providers, and inadequate public transportation exacerbate these difficulties. In this section, we examine the extent of health needs in Brazos County, available health service providers, and local barriers to good health.

Background

Nonprofit health programming can be thought of as comprising a three-tiered pyramid. The bottom level, Informational Services, involves connecting clients with knowledge and assistance and is the least resource-intensive type of programming. The middle level, Support Services, is comprised of programs that meet the secondary needs of people in poor health. The top level, Treatment and Clinical Care Services, represents the direct treatment of one or more health conditions and requires medical expertise and large expenditures of resources.⁹³ We will briefly overview each level of service in the sections below.

Informational Services

Nonprofit organizations can support community health without ever treating a single patient by providing information to their clients. This may take the form of a one-time referral to a single agency, or it could involve matching a client to a number of other programs and professionals as needed. An organization may go one step further by teaching clients how to navigate the often-complex human services system by assistance with the completion of applications for aid or explaining the process a state agency uses to provide its services. Information is a key component

⁹³ DeKraai, Mark B., Denise J. Bulling, Nancy C. Shank, and Alan J. Tomkins. 2011. "Faith-Based Organizations in a System of Behavioral Health Care." *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 39 (3):255-267.

of prevention, as well. NPOs can design public awareness campaigns to discourage unhealthy practices and promote healthy ones, or they might offer in-home, one-on-one consultation to vulnerable populations such as first-time mothers. Whatever form the service takes, NPO managers must ensure that the information they offer is continually updated so that it remains current with the provider landscape and research base.⁹⁴

Support Services

The support services category is a broad one because it includes all of the daily necessities people may have difficulty accessing due to health problems. The other sections of this report address several key support services related to housing, hunger, and education; other services NPOs can provide include transportation aid, assistance with independent living skills, and comprehensive, “wraparound” case management. NPO leaders who seek to positively impact community health but do not have the resources to provide clinical care can find fertile ground for service here because each of these support services is intimately related to health. For example, people who have a nutritious diet often experience improved health, people who have access to reliable transportation are more likely to obtain regular medical care, and so on. NPOs currently offering support services can strengthen their impact on community health by understanding the relationship between their work and clients’ overall physical and mental well-being rather than viewing clients’ problems as individual, compartmentalized issues.⁹⁵

Clinical Care Services

Clinical care can take the form of outpatient, inpatient, or residential treatment, as well as crisis intervention for either physical or mental illnesses.⁹⁶ Because inpatient or residential treatment is most likely beyond the scope of most small and mid-sized NPOs, we focus our review on one type of outpatient clinic known as a community health center.

Community health centers (CHCs) are private nonprofit organizations that receive public funding to provide comprehensive primary health services to residents of a defined geographic area that is medically underserved.⁹⁷ In recent years they have grown in popularity and effectiveness. Health services offered to low-income individuals, especially those without insurance, at CHCs are usually just as effective at achieving desired health outcomes as services offered at hospitals. For instance, researchers examining a CHC for HIV-positive individuals found that there was no difference between the treatment patients received at a hospital and what they received at the community clinic.⁹⁸ This finding has also held for CHCs focusing on low-income patients over the age of 50.⁹⁹ This is an especially important discovery, because people between the ages of 50 and 64 are increasingly likely to develop health problems but are not yet eligible for Medicare.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Schranz, Asher J., Kathleen A. Brady, Florence Momplaisir, Joshua P. Metlay, Alisa Stephens, and Baligh R. Yehia. 2015. “Comparison of HIV Outcomes for Patients Linked at Hospital Versus Community-Based Clinics.” *AIDS Patient Care and STDs* 29 (3):117-125.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ O'Malley, Ann S., and Jeanne Mandelblatt. 2003. “Delivery of Preventive Services for Low-income Persons over Age 50: A Comparison of Community Health Clinics to Private Doctors' Offices.” *Journal of Community Health* 28 (3):185-197.

Access to resources is key to the success of a CHC. For example, the HIV clinics mentioned above were effective because they adhered to research-based treatment protocols, utilized performance measurement to monitor their effectiveness, and employed trained pharmacists on-site. Staff were also well-qualified to educate patients on proper self-care so their health gains could be sustained over time.¹⁰⁰ Additionally, any clinic, regardless of the health issue it addresses, must abide by federal and state regulations and employ licensed professionals.¹⁰¹ All of these practices require a significant investment in facilities, equipment, and staff. Often, CHCs can apply for state and federal grants to support their work.¹⁰² In other cases, it may be possible to develop partnerships in which doctors from local hospitals, clinics, or medical schools periodically volunteer in the community clinic. These arrangements can be mutually beneficial in that they improve the quality of the clinic's services, strengthen the reputation of the volunteers' organization in the community, and provide valuable experience to young practitioners.^{103,104}

It is important for CHC operators to ensure the patients in greatest need have access to the clinic. A generous operator may wish to offer its services to all comers, but this may result in a flood of patients who have other options and simply wish not to use them, which consumes valuable resources required by the neediest patients. Thus, development of a policy that restricts access on the basis of need and to target outreach efforts to the specific population the CHC serves is appropriate.

Extent of Need

About nine percent of respondents to the 2013 Regional Health Assessment Survey conducted by the Texas A&M Health Science Center rated their overall health as Fair or Poor, a rate that was relatively low compared to the surrounding counties and the state of Texas as a whole. Still, 31.7 percent of respondents reported experiencing 1-5 days of poor physical health in the previous month, and an additional 7.7 percent reported more than ten days of poor physical health in the past month. Commonly reported physical problems included back/neck pain, arthritis/rheumatism, breathing problems, and cardiovascular issues.¹⁰⁵

Mental health issues are becoming increasingly common in the area, particularly for low-income and minority residents. According to the regional health assessment, 19.2 percent of respondents in Brazos County said they had experienced between one and five days of poor mental health and 12.1 percent of respondents reported having poor mental health more than 10 days out of a month. Notably, respondents reported diagnoses of depression and anxiety at rates significantly higher than both the state average and the rates reported for this area in 2010.¹⁰⁶ If Brazos County follows

¹⁰⁰ Schranz et al. 2015.

¹⁰¹ DeKraai et al. 2011.

¹⁰² Schranz et al. 2015.

¹⁰³ Dobson, Sarah, Stephane Voyer, Maria Hubinette, and Glenn Regehr. 2015. "From the Clinic to the Community." *Academic Medicine* 90 (2):214-220; Berlinger, Nancy, Michael K. Gusmano, and Eva Turbiner. 2014.

¹⁰⁴ "Revisiting 'The Clinic': Ethical and Policy Challenges in the US Community Health Centers." *Health Economics, Policy and Law* 9 (4):425-434.

¹⁰⁵ Texas A&M Health Science Center. 2013. RHP 17 Regional Health Assessment 2013, Supplemental Report: Brazos County. Center for Community Health Development.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

statewide trends, it is likely that poor health outcomes are disproportionately experienced by low-income and minority residents. In a recent survey of Texans, 29.5 percent of respondents earning less than \$25,000 annually reported mental health that was “not good” for at least five days out of the previous month. This rate dropped to 20 percent for those making between \$25,000 and \$50,000, and 14.4 percent for those making more than \$50,000.¹⁰⁷ Large discrepancies also exist among different racial groups. African-Americans in Texas experience poor mental health at a higher rate (24.6 percent) than Hispanics (20.8 percent) or Caucasians (19.7 percent).¹⁰⁸

Age and disability can present special challenges for the community. In Brazos County, about 3,300 residents older than five years of age have difficulty with self-care, and 5,434 report difficulty with independent living.¹⁰⁹ Elderly community members face additional struggles such as economic insecurity, lack of transportation, and decreased physical mobility, which make them more vulnerable to falling into poverty.

Veterans also face increased health difficulties. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs evaluates the severity of veterans’ combat-related diseases and injuries by estimating the “average impairment in earning capacity” that can be attributed to those conditions. The estimates are given as the percentage of earning capacity lost in increments of ten percentage points.¹¹⁰ Of the 10,717 Brazos County residents who served in the military, 18.6 percent (1,994) have a disability connected to their service. About 60 percent of this group have a disability rating between 0 and 40 percent, with 13.5 percent experiencing a severe disability rated at 70 percent or higher.¹¹¹ The American Psychological Association states that “persons with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed and live in poverty as a result of having limited opportunities to earn income and increased medical expenses.”¹¹²

Available Programs

For Brazos County residents not able to meet federal eligibility requirements for health care assistance, there are general health services, support services, and clinical care services available through various providers. Some providers offer services at no cost to Brazos County community members; others charge a fee based on a sliding scale targeted to income. Appendix 3 includes organizations and agencies providing health services to low-income residents in Brazos County.

Meeting the need for necessary routine medical visits, the BVCOG, the BVCAA Health Point Clinic, the Health for All Clinic, and the Bridge Medical Ministry offer general health care services. Some of the services provided range from doctor visits, lab tests, X-rays, prescription

¹⁰⁷ Texas Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. 2014. Health Status of Texas Report 2014 - Data Supplement. edited by Texas Department of State Health Services.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ 2010-2014 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample.

¹¹⁰ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. 38 CFR Book C, Schedule for Rating Disabilities, Subpart A - General Policy in Rating. Accessed April 2016. <http://www.benefits.va.gov/warms/bookc.asp#c>.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² City of College Station. 2014. Community Development Master Plan- Phase 2: Current Programs and Gap Identification. College Station, TX: City of College Station, quoting American Psychological Association. 2014. “Disability & Socioeconomic Status.” <http://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/factsheet-disability.aspx>.

assistance, and medical coverage for chronic diseases. Vaccinations and testing are offered by the Brazos County Health Department. If needed, many providers will also offer referral services.

There are a number of organizations that focus on providing services to alleviate mental health issues in Brazos County. Texas A&M University offers some services to the community at little or no cost. For mental health, Texas A&M is home to two clinics, the Counseling and Assessment Clinic and the Texas A&M Psychology Clinic. There are a number of other service providers in the public sector offering mental health services in Brazos County. Of these providers there are also some who provide faith-based counseling. There are an estimated 11 service providers that specialize in offering disability services to residents in Bryan and College Station. The Central Texas Veterans Health Care System provides specialized services targeting veterans in Brazos County. There are six organizations providing health services for the elderly. These providers include both public and private agencies.

Challenges

Lack of Health Insurance Coverage

The greatest barrier to accessing health care in our community is a lack of health insurance coverage.¹¹³ The two largest health insurance programs offered by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission are Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Although these programs provide services to eligible individuals, there is a large number of people who do not meet federal income requirements but still need assistance to cover medical needs. These people can be classified as the working poor and non-disabled citizen adults and they often do not qualify for subsidies offered by the Affordable Care Act.¹¹⁴ As reflected in Table 10, among non-students aged 18 and older, an estimated 23,748 Brazos County residents identified as uninsured. As noted earlier, a lack of health insurance is the greatest barrier to accessing health care. When conducting their community needs assessment, the Center for Community Health Development found the lack of access to affordable health care to be one of the main concerns among B/CS community members.¹¹⁵

Table 10: Health Insurance among Brazos County Residents

	Insured	Not Insured
All	83.1% (167,379)	16.7% (33,953)
Non-Students 18+ Years Old	77.0% (79,337)	23.0% (23,748)

Source: 2010-2014 ACS PUMS

¹¹³ City of College Station. 2014. Community Development Master Plan- Phase 2: Current Programs and Gap Identification. College Station, TX: City of College Station.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Texas A&M Health Science Center. 2013. RHP 17 Regional Health Assessment 2013, Supplemental Report: Brazos County. Center for Community Health Development.

Limited Availability of Mental Health Services

Numerous sources indicate that the limited capacity of local mental health service providers is a key limitation in the community. The regional health assessment describes a “persistent lack of mental health services available in the region” and indicates that the rates of poor mental health in Brazos County are higher than the average for Texas as a whole.¹¹⁶ Our interviewees and survey respondents also identified mental health as one of the most underserved community needs, particularly for teenagers, children, and Spanish-speaking individuals.

Limited Public Transportation

Transportation can be a critical health barrier for the almost 10,000 adults in Brazos County who do not own vehicles.¹¹⁷ Two public transportation options are available to these residents: the Brazos Transit District bus system and the Aggie Spirit transit system. Some nonprofits also provide transportation services to their clients to ensure they are able to keep important appointments, including medical visits.

Several of our interviewees, however, indicated that the existing system is lacking. They shared examples of clients who were unable to access medical services due to a lack of transportation. In some cases, there was not a public bus available to take them where they need to go, when they needed to go. In other cases, they could have used public transit but were unaware of this possibility. It is not just our interviewees, though. Participants in the Brazos County regional health assessment noted transportation problems more than any other issue not only in 2013, but also in 2010, 2006, and 2002, describing the current system as “neither reliable nor affordable.” Furthermore, according to 2-1-1 logs from the local United Way, there were 960 referrals for transportation services in 2015, and 39 percent of these referrals were for getting to and from medical appointments.¹¹⁸

In summary, although a wide range of medical services is available to low-income individuals, options are limited for people who need health insurance, mental health counseling for themselves or their children, or reliable transportation to access care.

We have described a number of critical needs and gaps and service with respect to housing, hunger, education, and health. How might we as a community meet these needs more effectively and sustainably? Part III points the way forward.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ 2010-2014 ACS PUMS

¹¹⁸ United Way. 2016. “2015 Needs and Trend Analysis.”

Part III: Developing Long-Term Solutions

As we reported in Part II, efforts to meet the needs of low-income residents abound in Brazos County. Why, then, is it so difficult to eradicate poverty itself? The fact is that poverty is a “wicked problem” with multiple, connected causes.¹¹⁹ Poverty does not occur in a vacuum; it is the consequence not only of personal choices, but of systematic challenges that characterize our society. Consequently, no matter how excellent an organization may be in providing services to its clients, it cannot eliminate their problems single-handedly. In this part of our report, we discuss the systemic barriers to self-sufficiency that exist in Brazos County and explain how they prevent many residents from reaching financial stability. Next, we highlight the role of conflicting stakeholder priorities and a disconnected service provider network in perpetuating these barriers. Finally, we close with two promising solutions that local human service providers can adopt to make a stronger impact on poverty: strategic planning on the organizational level and collective impact on the community level.

Barriers to Self-Sufficiency in Brazos County

Several of our interviewees expressed a desire to help low-income residents become self-sufficient—to “give a hand up, not a hand out” so the people they serve are able to take care of themselves with their own resources rather than being chronically dependent on the social service system. The logic behind our existing community services is somewhat consistent with this goal. We have several programs that provide emergency assistance to meet needs temporarily; then, program staff attempt to connect clients with the resources they need for long-term success. For example, an ongoing relationship with a general practitioner and other medical professionals is a long-term solution because it can raise a person’s health and quality of life over time. Enrollment in public benefits programs like SNAP can provide additional income when earning a living wage is not feasible. Vouchers for rent and down payment assistance can allow a person to secure stable housing. Education and training programs can make it possible for a person to obtain a job that will earn a family-sustaining wage.

In reality, though, the path to self-sufficiency in Brazos County is full of obstacles that keep many people trapped in the cycle of poverty. Figure 6 displays major barriers to health, nutrition, housing, and income that our interviewees discussed with us. Some barriers occur before a person can even access emergency services. Specifically, a limited knowledge of what services are available and how to access those services can prevent a person from participating in our community’s social safety net at all. Others may be aware of an organization that may be helpful but be unable to reach it due to a lack of transportation, or a schedule that is incompatible with the organization’s hours of operation.

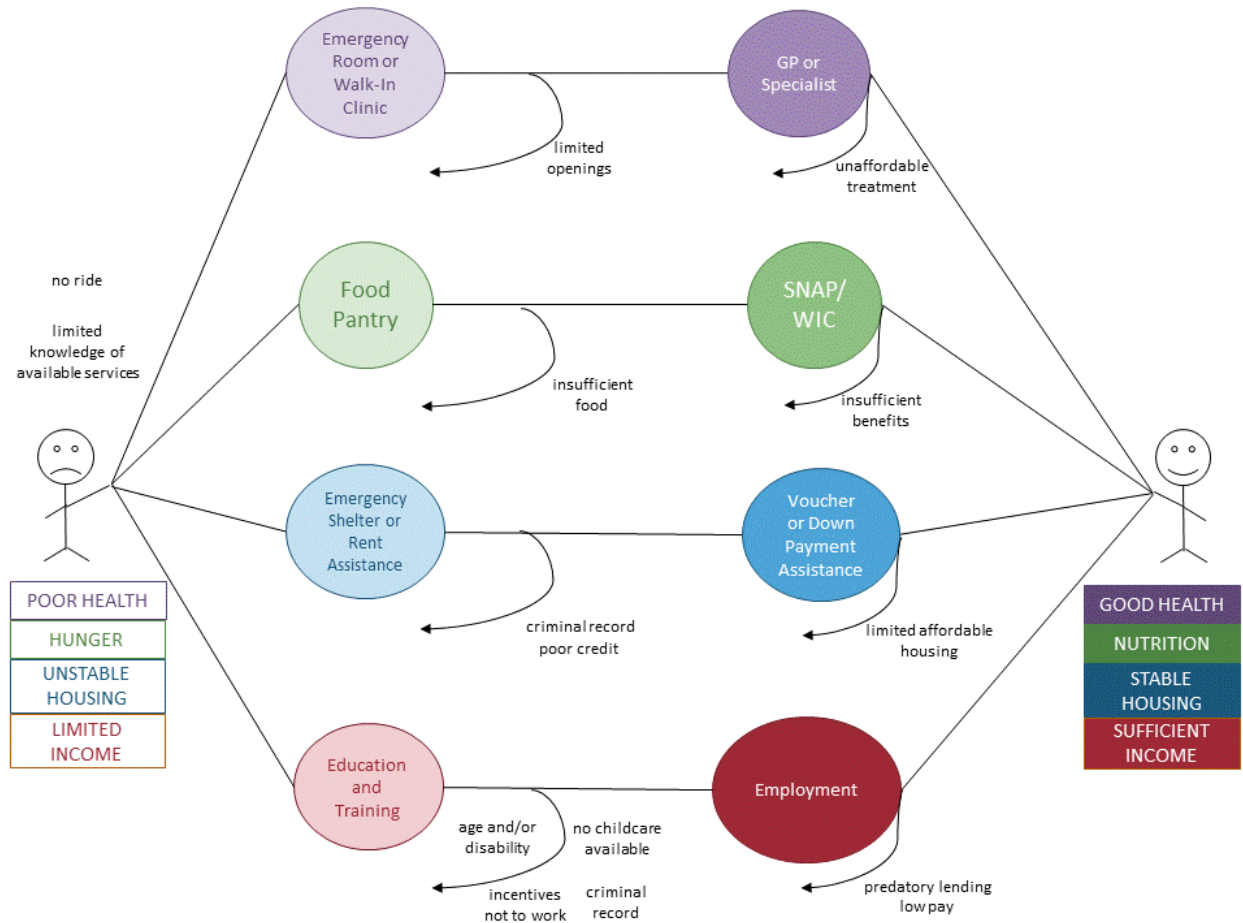
Some residents overcome these barriers to access the first tier of services in emergency circumstances, but another round of obstacles makes it difficult to secure long-term assistance. A person may be referred to a specialist but be unable to make an appointment because demand for that specialist is so high. Another person might visit a food pantry but find the food provided inadequate for the month, resulting in repeated trips to pantries throughout the area. Someone may

¹¹⁹ Batie, Sandra S. 2008. “Wicked Problems and Applied Economics.” *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 90(5): 1176-1191.

make it to an emergency shelter or obtain rent assistance for the month, but be unable to secure a rental voucher due to a criminal record or poor credit. Finally, a person may have some education or training but be unable to leverage it into employment due to age, disability, a criminal record, or lack of affordable child care. Moreover, the structure of some public benefits programs provides an incentive *not* to work because net monthly income--a criterion used to determine eligibility--is often higher when the recipient is unemployed.

For those who manage to access a long-term support, success is still far from guaranteed. Someone may make it to a medical professional but be unable to afford the recommended treatment, whether it be a medication, piece of equipment, series of appointments, or dietary change. A client may enroll in a food assistance program but find that the benefits are still insufficient to meet his/her nutritional needs. The person may be eligible for a voucher or down payment assistance but be unable to secure housing because the community lacks affordable housing. Even someone who works full-time may still not earn enough to cover all expenses, which might create vulnerability to the vicious cycle of predatory lending.

Figure 6: Barriers to Self-Sufficiency in Brazos County



These barriers represent community-wide problems that persist *despite* the efforts of individual organizations, human service professionals, and low-income residents themselves. They persist because they are influenced by a number of different decision-makers--not only nonprofits, but

governments, businesses, voters, and consumers. To reduce these barriers, therefore, all stakeholder groups must work together quite closely. How united is our community in combatting poverty?

Priorities and Collaboration

Stakeholder Priorities

We spoke with a number of leaders about their own perceptions of local poverty and the attitudes and priorities they had observed other community members display. Everyone with whom we spoke voiced a personal desire to alleviate poverty. Their ideas about how best to do so, however, varied. Specifically, we noted a divide between people who focused on long-term solutions and those who favored a continuance of the short-term services our community has traditionally provided. Regardless of the approach they preferred, our interviewees often cited funding as a major concern. We determined through our funding source analysis that major grant-making organizations, both public and private, have shifted toward a preference for sustainable solutions that go to the roots of poverty rather than providing temporary fixes. In this section we explore these differences in a discussion of two stakeholder groups: local service providers, leaders, and community members; and funding organizations on the local, state, and national levels.

Local Community

Many local service providers pride themselves in giving helpful, high-quality services. This stems from a passion for their work and a sense of responsibility to those in need. As one nonprofit leader said during an interview, “Social service is a calling. We have a responsibility to the poor, we have a responsibility to the widow. In essence we have a responsibility to help.” At the same time, some service providers feel that their resource constraints and limited capacity hinder their work. As one service provider said, “The biggest challenge is capacity. Not only internally but externally as well. We see a lot of agencies wanting to do really big things and really strong work, but they just don’t have the capacity. We run into that internally as well. We don’t have the staff or human resource capacity for it...it’s just not going to get done.”

These resource constraints prevent many organizations from sharing information and resources to create long-term solutions. As one of our interviewees put it, “There’s limited money and plenty of nonprofits that need it. We should all of course be in this together--a collective thing--but how do you that when there’s limited funding?” Another interviewee expressed a desire to collaborate with another organization that serves the homeless but explained that since that organization receives public funding that requires intensive data collection, the partnership seemed infeasible because his own staff does not have the capacity to meet those requirements. For many smaller NPOs struggling to maintain adequate staff and volunteer levels to keep up with daily operations, meaningful collaboration with others may feel next to impossible.

Both city governments are taking steps to address poverty, but the two cities do not necessarily share the same resources or priorities. The City of College Station receives a higher proportion of need-based federal grant money (e.g., Community Development Block Grants) than Bryan does because it has more low-income census tracts, despite the fact that by all other indicators, Bryan is the city with higher levels of need. By all accounts, this money does go to support low-income

residents via community development projects and infrastructure support in low-income neighborhoods, as well as grants to local service providers through the citizen Joint Relief Funding Review Committee with the City of Bryan. On the other hand, there appears to be little political support among College Station citizens for increasing the existing stock of affordable housing. The College Station City Council considered an affordable housing measure at one point in the recent past, but when some local citizens opposed the measure, it was dropped from consideration.

We also noted that some of the most popular charitable events among citizens are fundraisers with only short-term impacts, such as campaigns to provide school supplies, Christmas gifts, and clothing to children. There may be many reasons for this preference. Many of these campaigns have been held for decades, leading to a sense of loyalty and tradition among their supporters. These events provide immediate, visible impacts that donors find particularly gratifying, and they are relatively low-cost and low-risk. In contrast, there may be limited awareness of the need for and effectiveness of long-term solutions like the Housing-First approach. These types of programs take longer to demonstrate results, and they involve more up-front costs. Moreover, they may involve extending service to people some community members may consider undeserving: it is easier to donate to an innocent child than to a drug addict, a former felon, or a family that has been evicted multiple times. Yet, if we truly wish to eradicate poverty in our community, we must face the question of how best to serve *all* of our neighbors in a *sustainable* way. As one interviewee put it, “Ultimately if you’re not taking care of your people, you’re going to create a larger number of folks who are struggling and troubled.”

Funders

From our analysis of grant opportunities throughout the nation, we learned that large foundations and government agencies can contribute valuable assets to community organizations, but their expectations differ from what is typical for a nonprofit in Brazos County at this point. Table 11 summarizes the expectations we encountered most frequently in our funding source analysis and their implications for service providers who wish to secure funding from these sources.

Table 11: Funder Priorities and Their Implications for Service Providers

Priorities of Large Funders¹²⁰	Implications for Service Providers
Collaborative/collective impact efforts are preferred over programs operated by single organizations.	Establish a formal partnership with one or more community organizations.
Programs that address root causes are preferred over those that treat symptoms.	Develop a sound logic model that explains how the program addresses the causes underlying the problem it seeks to solve.
Organizations receiving funding must demonstrate a record of strong leadership, a diverse board, and sound financial management.	Recruit highly-qualified leaders, board, and staff members and document proof of their effectiveness.
Organizations receiving funding should have the capacity to provide evidence of concrete outcomes/improvements due to their program.	Establish procedures and resources for evaluating the impact of the program, not just the number of people who participate in it.
Programs are to become independently sustainable rather than reliant on philanthropic funding.	Obtain multiple sources of funding and develop a long-term plan for sustaining the program beyond the life of any individual grant.
Grant opportunities are by invitation only; the foundation does its own research and networking to find the organizations it funds.	Look for opportunities to network and publicize the organization’s work within the U.S. nonprofit community.

Successfully obtaining and managing a grant from one of these funders requires a substantial investment of time and resources that may seem beyond the reach of many local organizations. Nevertheless, the priorities of these large grant-makers are unlikely to change in the foreseeable future, and they align with research-based practices in the fields of nonprofit management and human service provision. Thus, we recommend that all organizations work toward adopting the practices large funders favor, even if applying for a grant is infeasible at present. We also encourage community members with a resource to share, whether it be a skill, free time, or a financial donation, to contribute that resource to a local human service organization on a regular basis. By sharing our immense strengths, we can substantially increase our community’s capacity to serve those in need.

The Service Provider Network

As we have emphasized throughout this report, partnership and collaboration between service providers is crucial to the fight against poverty. It allows organizations to build on each other’s strengths, share information, eliminate unnecessary duplication, and fill gaps in service. Ultimately, collaboration increases a community’s capacity to solve problems.¹²¹ How strong is

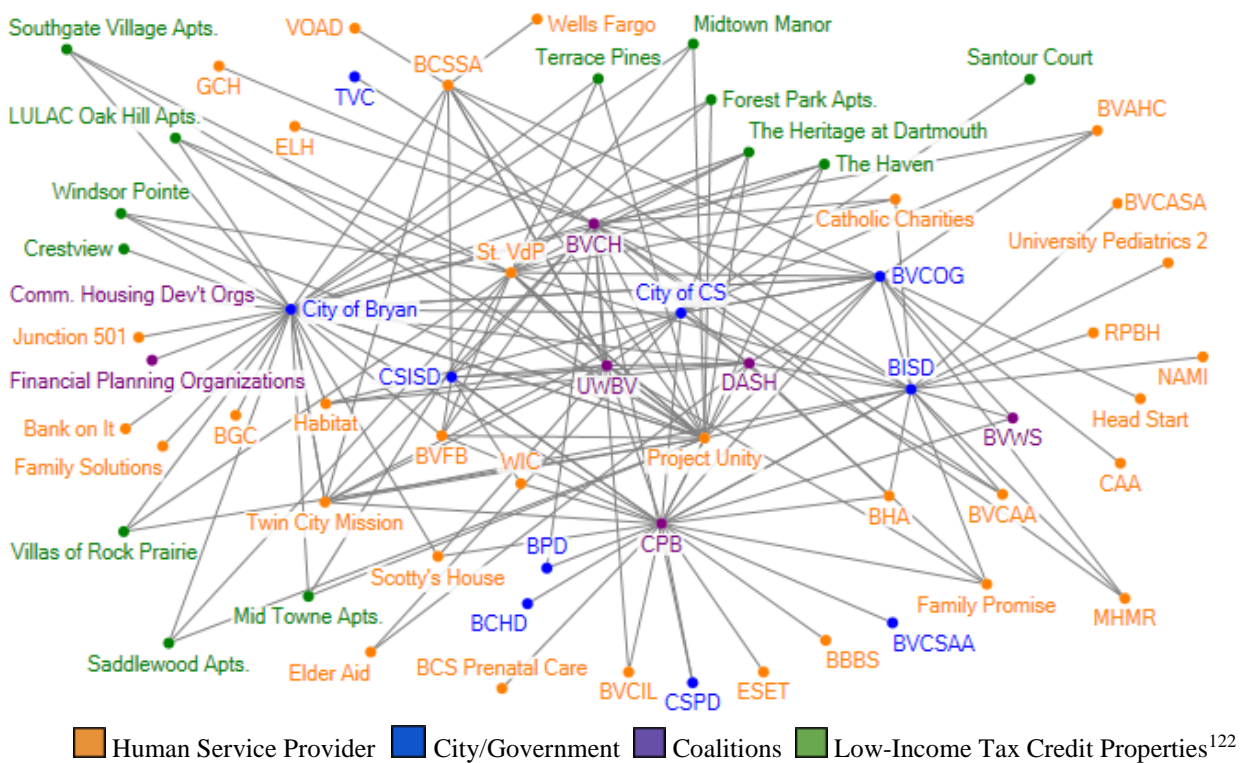
¹²⁰ Examples include the Gates, Ford, MacArthur, Chase, Kresge, GE, Casey, Arnold, Citi, JPB, Doris Duke Charitable, and Annenberg Foundations, as well as most federal agencies.

¹²¹ Nowell, Branda, and Pennie Foster-Fishman. 2010. “Examining Multi-Sector Community Collaboratives as Vehicles for Building Organizational Capacity.” *American Journal of Community Psychologists* 48:193-207.

Brazos County’s current network of partnerships? Our team’s research offers a partial answer to this question.

We asked each of our interviewees to name other organizations with which their organization partnered to provide services to clients. We allowed the interviewee to interpret the term “partner” as they wished; in some cases, the partnership was a long-standing commitment to volunteer for that organization. In other cases, one organization consistently referred clients to another. Other partnerships were based on sharing information about current needs and best practices. The diagram in Figure 7 provides a visual depiction of the partnerships described in our interviews. Each point, or node, in the diagram represents one organization. (We provide a key giving the full name of each organization in Appendix 2.) A line between two nodes indicates some form of partnership between two organizations. Although this is not an exhaustive display of every single connection that exists in reality, it provides an idea of our community’s current network.

Figure 7: Network of Human Service Providers in Brazos County



As indicated in the diagram, there are a large number of providers in our area that work with others in some way. There are also several organizations that serve as major “hubs” for activity due to their large number of connections. The Community Partnership Board (CPB), for example, provides informational and networking opportunities for dozens of organizations. CPB meetings

¹²² Low-income tax credit properties are properties receiving HUD grants to create affordable housing targeted toward low-income households. For more information please visit the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development webpage or read an overview of the program at <http://www.enterprisecommunity.com/financing-and-development/low-income-housing-tax-credits/about-lihtc>.

are initiated by Project Unity but sponsored by various service providers, such as the City of College Station. The CPB alone is connected to 22 organizations offering programs in our areas of interest. Through these meetings community organizations learn about the services being provided to meet the most pressing community needs. At the end of each meeting, attendees are given time to network with one another. Two of the most pressing issues tackled in these meetings are education and housing/homelessness.

Two additional hubs for human service providers tackling the issues of housing and homelessness are the Brazos Valley Coalition for the Homeless (BVCH) and the Decent Affordable Safe Housing (DASH) initiative. BVCH is made up of organizations, agencies, and individuals that focus on finding solutions to help meet the needs of the homeless in Brazos County. The Coalition also tracks the number of homeless individuals in the area. DASH focuses more broadly on housing issues in Brazos County. Although the client base for both coalitions overlap, they concentrate on separate problems and solutions. Regarding hunger, the Brazos Valley Food Bank (BVFB) serves as a major source of food and information for its 34 partners (not all of whom are displayed here).

On the other hand, several organizations currently operate largely outside of the main network. As illustrated in Figure IV, these organizations tend to be human service providers in the health and housing sectors such as low-income tax credit properties, community housing development organizations, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), and the MHMR Authority of Brazos Valley. Although it is possible these organizations have more partners than are displayed in our diagram, the infrequency with which they were mentioned by our interviewees may indicate that there is a need for them to become more deeply connected.

The messiness of Figure IV is also significant. It demonstrates that there is currently not a clear structure among the many human service providers in B/CS. Although there are a few small networks, a community-wide collaboration network does not yet exist. This lack of centrality may make it difficult for smaller NPOs, low-income residents in need of services, and community members in search of service opportunities to understand where to become involved.

In summary, local service providers work with each other to meet clients' needs fairly frequently, and a few hubs help promote information-sharing and coordination across the community. Still, our network would be improved by deeper involvement from providers on the outskirts and stronger organization that allows newcomers to find their place more readily. The potential of the B/CS community to harness the power of collaboration is tremendous.

Getting There from Here

So far, we have described a wide range of human needs in Brazos County and argued that our community cannot adequately meet these needs without sharing priorities and resources in a coordinated fashion. At the same time, we have established that many local service providers are overwhelmed and under-resourced, leaving them seemingly at a loss to undertake any major changes. The remainder of our report will offer suggestions from academic and practitioner sources that can enable our community to move forward. The first section focuses on how an individual organization might maximize its resources through strategic planning. The second

section introduces the collective impact approach as a framework our entire community might adopt to focus its efforts.

Strategic Planning for Programming Changes

Nearly every human service organization faces local needs that far exceed the resources at their disposal. In such circumstances, it is advisable for organizational leaders to periodically re-evaluate the portfolio of services they provide and determine whether they can best serve the community by continuing their current programs, removing a service, or starting a new initiative.

Adapting programming is a major change that should not be undertaken lightly. NPO leaders who choose programs and client base wisely are more likely to see their organization increase its public value, sometimes quite dramatically. On the other hand, programming for which there is little client need, community support, or funding can drain an organization's resources and social capital.¹²³ Leaders of faith-based organizations have the additional responsibility of ensuring that any changes they undertake are aligned with the organization's religious identity and do not force the compromise of key values.¹²⁴

Certain organizational attributes can mitigate the risk that is particularly associated with new programs. Organizations that offer multiple services may be better equipped to take on another program because they already are experienced in managing many initiatives at once. Relatively large, well-financed organizations tend to be more successful in establishing new programs because program adoption requires a significant investment of resources in market research, program development, staff training, marketing, and sometimes additional staff. These are simply generalizations, however; smaller, single-program entities have also successfully added programs in the past. On the other hand, program revisions are almost guaranteed to fail in organizations whose personnel are resistant to change due to their commitment to current mission and programming.¹²⁵

The principles of new product development (NPD) are a potentially helpful, albeit under-studied, resource for NPOs contemplating any changes in programming. Several studies in the for-profit sector have established the efficacy of six practices for the development of new products and services: 1) aligning new products with organizational strategy, 2) managing products as a portfolio rather than as individual entities, 3) consistently using a formal NPD process, 4) conducting market research to determine key needs and interests, 5) designating "champions" to shepherd the new product from creation to delivery, and 6) measuring the product's performance on the market.¹²⁶

Very little research exists on the application of these practices to the nonprofit sector, but two investigations suggest they hold promise. First, one group of experts guided a Canadian NPO

¹²³ Auer, Jennifer Claire, Eric C. Twombly, and Carol J. De Vita. 2011. "Social Service Agencies and Program Change: Implications for Theory and Policy." *Public Performance and Management Review* 34(3): 378-396.

¹²⁴ Bielefeld, Wolfgang and William Suhs Cleveland. 2013. "Defining Faith-Based Organizations and Understanding Them Through Research." *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 42(3): 442-467.

¹²⁵ Auer et al. 2011.

¹²⁶ Barczak, Gloria, Kenneth B. Kahn, and Roberta Moss. 2006. "An Exploratory Investigation of NPD Practices in Nonprofit Organizations." *The Journal of Product Innovation and Management* 23:512-527.

through the process of needs-based segmentation, which is grounded in one principle of NPD: market research. Essentially, the leaders of this NPO identified the shared and unique needs of their current and potential clients to identify clients' motivations for accessing each service the organization provided. This process helped them make informed decisions about which segments of their clientele they were best suited to serve. Marketers and public relations professionals have practiced audience segmentation for decades, but this appears to have been a unique application to the nonprofit sector.¹²⁷

Second, Gruber and Mohr suggest that NPOs can manage their resources effectively if they view their programs and services as a complete, interdependent portfolio in which changes to one affect the costs and benefits of all the others. They propose a four-way model that classifies programs by the financial returns and social value they produce.¹²⁸ We have modified this model to reflect the fact that not all NPOs provide services that generate financial returns; for these organizations, the net impact of each program on their resources is more relevant. We present our framework in Figure 8. Service providers can use this framework to classify each of their programs into one of the four categories and refocus their resources accordingly. First, what social benefits does the program produce? The metrics used to answer this question can vary by context; they may include the number of people who use the program each month, the average dollar value of the service provided, the number of other local programs that provide the same service, or the extent to which the program makes a long-term impact. Second, what does the program cost the organization? It is important to consider not only the financial costs associated with the program, but the physical space and staff/volunteer time required to operate it. On the other hand, the program's potential to generate revenue or motivate donor support for the organization as a whole may offset some of the costs it incurs.

¹²⁷ Finley, D.S., G. Rogers, M. Napier, and J. Wyatt. 2011. "From Needs-Based Segmentation to Program Realignment: Transformation of YWCA of Calgary." *Administration in Social Work* 35: 299-323.

¹²⁸ Gruber, Robert E. and Mary Mohr. 1982. "Strategic Management for Multiprogram Nonprofit Organizations." *California Management Review* 24(3): 15-22.

Figure 8: A Framework for Prioritizing Programs

Resource Costs	Low	<i>Low-Cost, Low-Benefit</i> Limited usefulness; use as a second-best alternative when high-cost, high-benefit programs are not feasible or find a way for the program to generate revenue	<i>Low-Cost, High-Benefit</i> Best type of program; expand if possible
	High	<i>High-Cost, Low-Benefit</i> Lowest value program, but sometimes protected for political reasons; discontinue if possible	<i>High-Cost, High-Benefit</i> Helpful, but difficult to sustain; consider re-allocating resources from low-benefit programs to support these programs
		Low	High
		Social Benefits	

Adapted from Gruber and Mohr 1982

Once programs have been classified, leaders can divert resources from low-benefit programs to high-benefit programs, balancing their decisions with a consideration of the costs associated with each. Organizational change is rarely easy, especially when some stakeholders are heavily invested in the *status quo*. Adopting a strategic mindset and thoroughly evaluating the benefits and costs of each program, however, can help leaders clarify and communicate the priorities that will best fulfill their organizational mission. Moreover, individual organizations that have a clear sense of their own purpose and role in the community are well-poised to participate in a powerful collective impact initiative.

Collective Impact

In 2011, John Kania and Mark Kramer introduced the idea of *collective impact*, defined as “the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem.”¹²⁹ Participants in collective impact can include governments, nonprofits, businesses, schools, community members, and more. At first, collective impact may seem similar to a simple partnership or collaborative. In reality, though, the two approaches are fundamentally different. In collaboration initiatives, participants work together to create new programs. In collective impact, participants work toward continually improving outcomes over time.¹³⁰ Collaboration initiatives use data to show that programs and services are “working;”

¹²⁹ Kania, John, and Mark Kramer. 2011. “Collective Impact.” *Stanford Social Innovation Review* Winter 2011:36-41.

¹³⁰ Edmondson, Jeff. 2012. “The Difference between Collaboration and Collective Impact.” Accessed October 10, 2015. <http://www.strivetogether.org/blog/2012/11/the-difference-between-collaboration-and-collective-impact/>.

collective impact uses data to track a specific social problem.¹³¹ The final and greatest difference is that in collaborative initiatives, collaboration is time-limited, restricted to specific meetings and tasks. In collective impact efforts, participants continually coordinate with one another over the long term as they work toward a common agenda to solve a collectively defined problem. Collective impact becomes part of participants' everyday work.¹³²

Five conditions are crucial to the success of a collective impact initiative: a common agenda, shared measurement systems, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and backbone support organizations.¹³³

- A *common agenda* is a shared understanding of the problem under consideration, agreement about what actions participants will take to move toward a solution, and vision for success. Without this shared understanding in place, participants will find themselves continually clashing about how best to approach the problem.¹³⁴
- Participants develop a *shared measurement system* by agreeing on the indicators they will use to measure progress toward their mutual goals, then creating a mechanism for collecting and reporting on those indicators. This ongoing evaluation process allows all members of the effort to remain focused on their shared vision, hold each other accountable, assess the strength of the collective impact effort as a whole, and continually improve their work.¹³⁵
- *Mutually reinforcing activities* occur when every organization involved uses its unique strengths and resources to support common goals in a way that complements the other participants' contributions.¹³⁶ By committing to the principle of mutual reinforcement, participants reduce duplication, conflict, and gaps in service. They also ensure that the data needed to assess the effort's impact will be available to all.
- *Continuous communication* is a lifeline in collective impact efforts. Frequent interactions, whether in-person or otherwise, allow participants to build mutual trust and respect, stay updated about the activities and outcomes of other participants' work, and develop a shared vocabulary for discussing their work.
- Finally, *backbone support organizations* facilitate collective impact by guiding the vision and strategy, supporting aligned activities, establishing shared measurement practices, building public will, advancing policy, and mobilizing funding. They serve as "project manager, data manager, and facilitator" on behalf of the entire initiative, since all the other

¹³¹ Preskill, Hallie, Marcie Parkhurst, and Jennifer Splansky Juster. 2014. Guide to Evaluating Collective Impact: Learning and Evaluation in the Collective Impact Context. Collective Impact Forum.

¹³² Edmondson. 2012.

¹³³ Kania, John, and Mark Kramer. 2013. "Embracing Emergence: How Collective Impact Addresses Complexity." *Stanford Social Innovation Review*: 1-16.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Parkhurst, Marcie, and Hallie Preskill. 2014. "Learning in Action: Evaluating Collective Impact." *Stanford Social Innovation Review* Fall 2014:17-19.

¹³⁶ Kania, John, and Mark Kramer. 2011. "Collective Impact." *Stanford Social Innovation Review* Winter 2011:36-41.

members must dedicate their resources to the everyday work of accomplishing the community's common goals.¹³⁷ Without a backbone organization, a collective impact initiative is likely to fail.¹³⁸

We encourage any community members interested in combatting poverty locally to learn more about the collective impact approach and consider how it might be adopted in Brazos County. In addition to the sources cited above, we recommend the websites of the following backbone support organizations as examples of collective impact in action:

- StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network (www.strivetogether.org): This organization provides technical support to 64 collective impact organizations across the country working to improve their local education systems.
- The Elizabeth River Project (www.elizabethriver.org): Virginia residents developed this initiative in the early 1990's with the goal of making the Elizabeth River swimmable and fishable by 2020.
- Shape Up Somerville (<http://www.somervillema.gov/departments/health/sus>): Inspired by a 2002 study about preventing obesity in local children, Shape Up Somerville has grown into a citywide effort to build sustainable, equitable health for all residents and visitors.
- E3 Alliance (www.e3alliance.org): This Austin-based effort aims to drive economic prosperity in Central Texas by building the strongest educational pipeline in the country.

As this short list suggests, collective impact can be used to address a wide range of problems, and anyone-- business leaders, governments, nonprofits, or ordinary citizens--can start the movement.

Conclusion

Brazos County residents face an important crossroads. As our population and economy boom due to growth in the education and health sectors, a significant number of our neighbors are being left behind. The decisions our community makes about how to best serve these residents will have long-term effects on our region's prosperity and reputation. Although the problems our low-income neighbors face are both intense and increasing, our community is certainly not without hope. Our county is home to thousands of people with the resources and will to tackle poverty head-on; they can be successful if they share an understanding of our collective problems and a vision for solving them. We hope the information provided in this report will support such an effort. We especially commend to our readers the collective impact approach to align the resources and plans of service providers, policymakers, business leaders, and community members. Together, we can ensure that Brazos County is a place where *all* of our neighbors can truly feel at home.

¹³⁷ Phillips, David, and Jennifer Splansky Juster. 2014. "Committing to Collective Impact: From Vision to Implementation." *Community Investments* 26 (1):11-17.

¹³⁸ Turner, Shiloh, Kathy Merchant, John Kania, and Ellen Martin. 2012. "Understanding the Value of Backbone Organizations in Collective Impact." *Stanford Social Innovation Review* July 2012 1:1-8.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Participants in Community Needs Assessments

Report	Participants
2015-2019 Consolidated Plan – City of Bryan	151 survey respondents
2015-2019 Consolidated Plan – City of College Station	165 survey respondents 31 focus group participants
2013 Regional Health Assessment – Brazos County	1,622 survey respondents
2014 United Way Impact Report – Brazos County	24,159 callers
2014 Community Development Master Plan – College Station	Counts not given. Findings based on 2-1-1 reports; survey of residents at Low-Income Housing Tax Credit properties, local food pantries, and BVCAA health clinic; and focus groups involving local human service providers

Appendix 2: Service Provider Network Key

Organizations Connected with BCSSA: First, Second, and Third Degree Network	
Name in Graph:	Full Name:
Wells Fargo	Wells Fargo
VOAD	Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster
CSISD	College Station independent School District
BVFB	Brazos Valley Food Bank
WIC	Women, Infants, and Children Program
BISD	Bryan Independent School District
BHA	Bryan Housing Authority
NAMI	National Alliance for Mental Illness
BVCASA	Brazos Valley Council on Alcohol and Substance Abuse
BVWS	Brazos Valley Workforce Solutions
CPB	Community Partnership Board
St. VdP	St. Vincent de Paul
BVCAA	Brazos Valley Community Action Agency
Catholic Charities	Catholic Charities
BVCOG	Brazos Valley Council of Governments
RPBH	Rock Prairie Behavioral Health
MHMR	MHMR Authority of Brazos Valley
Project Unity	Project Unity
Family Promise	Family Promise
Twin City Mission	Twin City Mission
University Pediatrics 2	University Pediatrics 2
City of Bryan	City of Bryan
Comm. Housing Devt Orgs	Community Housing Development Organizations
Habitat	Habitat for Humanity
Financial Planning Organizations	Financial Planning Organizations
Bank on It	Bank on It
Family Solutions	Family Solutions
BGC	Boys and Girls Club
Scotty's House	Scotty's House

Junction 501	Junction 501
Mid Towne Apts.	Mid Towne Apartments
Forest Park Apts.	Forest Park Apartments
Saddlewood Apts.	Saddlewood Apartments
Southgate Village Apts.	Southgate Village Apartments
LULAC Oak Hill Apts.	LULAC Oak Hill Apartments
The Haven	The Haven
The Heritage at Dartmouth	The Heritage at Dartmouth
Terrace Pines	Terrace Pines
Villas of Rock Prairie	Villas of Rock Prairie
Windsor Pointe	Windsor Pointe Townhomes
Midtown Manor	Midtown Manor
Crestview	Crestview
City of CS	City of College Station
UWBV	United Way of Brazos Valley
DASH	DASH
Elder Aid	Elder Aid
Santour Court	Santour Court
BVAHC	Brazos Valley Affordable Housing Corporation
Head Start	Head Start
CAA	Community Action Agency
BVCSAA	Brazos Valley Council on Substance and Alcohol Abuse
BVCIL	Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living
BCHD	Brazos County Health Department
BBBS	Big Brothers Big Sisters
BPD	Bryan Police Department
CSPD	City of College Station Police Department
BCS Prenatal Care	Bryan/College Station Prenatal Clinic
ESET	Easter Seals of East Texas
BVCH	Brazos Valley Coalition for the Homeless
ELH	Emmanuel Lighthouse Mission
GCH	Genesis Corner House
TVC	Texas Veterans Commission

Appendix 3: Human Service Providers in Bryan/College Station

Health							
	Name:	Services:	Location:	City:	ZIP Code:	Phone:	Website:
1	A&M Church of Christ-Lincoln House of Hope	GED Preparation Classes, Faith & Finances Education, A&M Christian Counseling Center, Food Pantry, The Way to Recovery: Faith Based Family Counseling Services	1013 Eleanor	College Station	77840	(979) 693-0400	N/A
2	Aggieland Pregnancy Outreach	Pregnancy and Parenting Services	2501 Texas Ave., Suite C-105	College Station	77840	(979) 764-6636	www.pregnancyoutreach.org/
3	American Cancer Society	Counseling Services	3207 Briarcrest Dr	Bryan	77802	(979)-776-1463	http://www.cancer.org/MyACS/index
4	American Red Cross	Disaster Relief	4244 Boonville Road	Bryan	77802	(979) 776-8279	http://www.redcross.org/
5	Area Agency on Aging	Senior Citizen Services	3991 E 29th St.	Bryan	77802	(979) 595-2800	http://www.bv cog.org/programs/area-agency-on-aging/
6	Blinn College Dental Hygiene Program	Dental Hygiene Services	2423 Blinn Boulevard	Bryan	77802	(979) 209-7283	http://www.blinn.edu/twe/dental/
7	Bryan College Station Community Based Outpatient Clinic	Veterans Services	1651 Rock Prairie Rd #100	College Station	77845	(979) 680-0361	http://va.gov/
8	Brazos County Health Department	Routine Immunizations, STI/HIV Testing, Hypertension/Diabetes Screening, Tuberculosis Control	201 N. Texas Avenue	Bryan	77803	(979) 361-4440	http://www.brazoshealth.org/

9	Brazos County Veterans Services	Veterans Services	200 South Texas Ave. Suite 264	Bryan	77803	(979) 361-4360	https://www.brazoscountytexas.gov/index.aspx?NID=178
10	Brazos Maternal & Child Health Clinic	Prenatal Care	3370 S. Texas Avenue, Suite G	Bryan	77802	(979) 595-1780	http://www.bcsprenatal.org/
11	Brazos Valley Community Action Agency (BVCAA)	Head Start/Early Head Start, Community Development Housing Programs, Utility Assistance (electric and gas bill assistance), Home Repair/Rehabilitation Assistance, Medical Services, Dental Services, Mental Health Services, Home-Delivered Meals for Elderly, Home-Bound Meals, WIC, Tobacco Cessation Education	3408 S Texas Ave	Bryan	77802	(979) 260-4016	http://www.bvcaa.org/
12	Brazos Valley Council on Alcohol and Substance Abuse (BVCASA)	Drug Treatment Program, Substance Abuse Education	4001 E 29th St.	Bryan	77802	(979) 595-2801	http://bvccasa.org/
13	Brazos Valley Council of Governments (BVCOG)	GED Program, Housing Choice Voucher Program, County Indigent Health Care Program, Aging and Disability Resource Center, Health Education and Food Assistance	3991 E 29th St.	Bryan	77802	(979) 595-2800	http://www.bvcog.org/
14	Brazos Valley Intergroup	Alcohol Dependency Support Group	837 N Harvey Mitchell Pkwy	Bryan	77807	(979) 361-7976	http://www.bvigroup.org/

15	Brazos Valley Rehabilitation Center	Disability/ Rehabilitation Therapy, Autism Charitable Services Program	1318 Memorial	Bryan	77802	(979) 776-2872	http://www.easterseals.com/east-texas/
16	Catholic Charities of Central Texas	Utility Assistance, Health Services, Disaster Response, Counseling Services, Immigration Services	1410 Cavitt Ave.	Bryan	77801	(979) 822-9340	http://ccctx.org/about/contact-us/
17	Central Texas Mental Health	Family Counseling Services	307 S Main St #205	Bryan	77803	(979) 779-2864	N/A
18	Children's Miracle Network	Health Services	1600 University Dr. E	College Station	77840	(979) 207-4074	N/A
19	DARS - Division for Blind Services	Assistive and Rehabilitative Services	1115 Welsh, Suite A	College Station	77840	(979) 680-5292	http://www.dars.state.tx.us/dbs/
20	Department of Protective & Regulatory Services	Counseling and Protection	2400 Osborn	Bryan	77803	(979) 776-3637	https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/
21	Everyday Life, Inc.	Residential Rehab Center	6955 Broach Rd	Bryan	77808	(979) 589-1885	http://www.everydaylifertc.com/Home.html
22	Family Medicine Center of Brazos Valley	Medical Services	1301 Memorial Drive, Suite 200	Bryan	77802	(979) 776-8440	http://www.familymedicine_brazosvalley.yourmd.com/index.cfm/fuseaction/site.home.cfm
23	Family Support Network	Family Counseling Services	219 North Main, Suite 203	Bryan	77803	(979) 845-4612	http://fsn.tamu.edu/home
24	Genesis Corner House	Shelter & Counseling Services	P. O. Box 461	Bryan	77806	(979) 703-6017	http://genesiscornerhousebcs.org
25	Good Samaritan Pregnancy Services	Health Services-Prenatal	505 University Dr E. Ste #603	College Station	77840	(979) 822-9340	N/A
26	Health For All, Inc.	Free Medical Services	3030 E 29th St #111	Bryan	77802	(979) 774-4176	http://hlth4all.org/
27	Hope Pregnancy Center	Pregnancy and Parenting Services	205 Brentwood Dr	College Station	77840	(979) 695-9193	www.hopepregnancy.org

28	Hospice Brazos Valley	Hospice Services for all regardless of income	502 W. 26th Street	Bryan	77803	979-821-2266	http://www.hospicebrazosvalley.org/welcome.html
29	Junction Five-O-Five	Disability Services (Employment Training and Assistance)	4410 College Main	Bryan	77801	(979) 846-3670	http://www.junction505.org/
30	MHMR Authority of Brazos County	Mental Health Services, Disability Services	P. O. Box 4588	Bryan	77805	979.822.6467	http://www.mhmrabv.org/
31	Mosiac	Services for people with intellectual disabilities	302 Post Office Street	Bryan	77801	(979) 823-7622	http://www.mosaicinfo.org/
32	Narcotics Anonymous	Peer Recovery Support Group	N/A	N/A	N/A	979-822-9094	http://bvana.org/
33	National Alliance on Mental Illness of Brazos Valley	Disability-Related Support Group	1713 Broadmoor East Suite 101	Byan	77802	(979) 774-4713	http://www.nami.org/Local-NAMI/Details?state=tx&local=c540c78d-9a34-4b12-b813-1f38d316a70b
34	Project Unity	HIV/AIDS Case Management, Parenting Program, Food Pantry	4001 E. 29th Street	Bryan	77802	(979) 595-2900	http://www.projectunitytx.org
35	Scotty's House	Supportive Programs for Abused Children	2424 Kent Street	Bryan	77802	(979) 703-8813	https://www.scottyshouse.org/
36	Sexual Assault Resource Center (SARC)	Free counseling, accompaniment, and education to assault victims	PO Box 3082	Bryan	77805	979-731-1000	http://www.sarcbv.org/
37	Sheltering Arms	Child Abuse Information and Treatment Center	2505 S College Ave	Bryan	77801	(979) 822-5482	N/A
38	St. Vincent de Paul Society	Utility/Emergency Service Payment Assistance (rent, mortgage, or utility assistance once every 12 months), Eye Exam Expense & Prescription Assistance	300 N. Main	Bryan	77803	(979) 823-4369	http://www.svdpusa.org/

39	Texas A&M Counseling and Assessment Clinic	Mental Health Services	3370 S Texas Ave	Bryan	77802	(979) 595-1770	http://epsy.tamu.edu/center/counseling-and-assessment-clinic
40	Texas A&M Health Science Center	Texas C-Step Colon Cancer Screening (free)	8447 TX-47	Bryan	77807	(979) 260-4907	http://tamhsc.edu/
41	Texas A&M University Center on Disability and Development	Family Support Network	4225 TAMU	College Station	77843	979.845.4612	http://cdd.tamu.edu/service-outreach
42	Texas A&M University Student Counseling Services	Short-term counseling	757 West Campus Blvd.	College Station	77843	979-845-4427	https://scs.tamu.edu/?q=node/8
43	Texas Department of Family and Protective Services	Adult and Child protective services	2400 Osborn	Bryan	77803	(979) 776-3637	https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Contact_Us/locations.asp?r=7
44	Texas Health and Human Services Commission	Medical Care Expense Assistance	3000 E Villa Maria Rd	Bryan	77803	(979) 776-1510	https://www.yourtexasbenefits.com/ssp/SSPHome/ssphome.jsp
45	The Bridge Ministries	Free Medical Clinic, Evening Food Pantry	1401 W Martin Luther King Jr St	Bryan	77803	(979) 704-6037	http://www.thebridgeministries.org/
46	Way to Recovery	Counseling for Families who are victims of addiction	2490 Boonville Road	Bryan	77808	979-703-1808	amchristiancounseling.com
Hunger							
	Name:	Services:	Location:	City:	ZIP Code:	Phone:	Website:
1	A&M Church of Christ-Lincoln House of Hope	Food Pantry	1013 Eleanor	College Station	77840	(979) 693-0400	N/A
2	American Red Cross	Disaster Relief	4244 Boonville Road	Bryan	77802	(979) 776-8279	http://www.redcross.org/
3	Brazos Church Pantry	Food Pantry	304 W 26th St.	Bryan	77803	(979) 822-2660	http://www.brazoschurchpantry.org/

4	Brazos Valley Community Action Agency (BVCAA)	Head Start/Early Head Start, Community Development Housing Programs, Utility Assistance (electric and gas bill assistance), Home Repair/Rehabilitation Assistance, Medical Services, Dental Services, Mental Health Services, Home-Delivered Meals for Elderly, Home-Bound Meals, WIC, Tobacco Cessation Education	3408 S Texas Ave	Bryan	77802	(979) 260-4016	http://www.bvcaa.org/
5	Brazos Valley Council of Governments (BVCOG)	GED Program, Housing Choice Voucher Program, County Indigent Health Care Program, Aging and Disability Resource Center, Health Education and Food Assistance	3991 E 29th St.	Bryan	77802	(979) 595-2800	http://www.bvcog.org/
6	Brazos Valley Food Bank	Food Pantry, After School Meal Program, Senior Brown Bag Food Program	1514 Shiloh	Bryan	77806	(979) 779-3663	http://www.bvfb.org/
7	Brazos Church Pantry	Collaboration of over 30 churches to provide food for Brazos County residents.	304 W 26th St.	Bryan	77803	(979) 822-2660	http://www.brazoschurchpantry.org/
8	First Baptist Church of College Station	Food Pantry	2300 Welsh	College Station	77845	(979)696-7000	http://fbccollegestation.com/
9	Lee Chapel United Methodist Church	Food Pantry	903 North Washington Street	Bryan	77803	(979)822-0437	N/A

10	Mobile Food Pantry- Cyprus Grove Intermediate School	Food Pantry	900 Graham Rd.	College Station	77845	(979)696-1726	N/A
11	Project Unity	HIV/AIDS Case Management, Parenting Program, Food Pantry	4001 E. 29th Street	Bryan	77802	(979) 595-2900	http://www.projectunitytx.org
12	Room For Us All	Food Pantry, Counseling, Clothing	P. O. Box 3945	Bryan	77805	N/A	http://roomforusall.com/index.php
13	Single Mothers Created 4 Change	Food Pantry, Assistance for single mothers	1013 Eleanor Street	College Station	77840	979-575-1034	www.singlemothers-created4change.com
14	St. Thomas Episcopal Church	Food Pantry	906 George Bush Drive	College Station	77840	(979)696-1726	http://www.stthomasbcs.org/
15	The Bridge Ministries	Free Medical Clinic, Evening Food Pantry	1401 W Martin Luther King Jr St	Bryan	77803	(979) 704-6037	http://www.thebridgeministries.org/
Housing							
	Name:	Services:	Location:	City:	ZIP Code:	Phone:	Website:
1	American Red Cross	Disaster Relief	4244 Boonville Road	Bryan	77802	(979) 776-8279	http://www.redcross.org/
2	Area Agency on Aging	Senior Citizen Services	3991 E 29th St.	Bryan	77802	(979) 595-2800	http://www.bvccog.org/programs/area-agency-on-aging/
3	BISD Migrant Education	Project Home	101 N. Texas Avenue	Bryan	77803	(979) 209-1033	http://www.bryanisd.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=366634&type=d&pREC_ID=818265
4	Bryan College Station Community Based Outpatient Clinic	Veterans Services	1651 Rock Prairie Rd #100	College Station	77845	(979) 680-0361	http://va.gov/
5	Brazos Valley Affordable Housing Corporation	Community Development Housing Programs, Homebuyer Education Counseling	4001 E. 29th St. Suite 180	Bryan	77801	979-595-2809	http://bvahc.org/

6	Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living	Disability Services (Independent Living Skills and Support)	1869 Briarcrest Dr.	Bryan	77803	(979) 776-5505	http://bvciil.org/
7	Brazos Valley Community Action Agency (BVCAA)	Head Start/Early Head Start, Community Development Housing Programs, Utility Assistance (electric and gas bill assistance), Home Repair/Rehabilitation Assistance, Medical Services, Dental Services, Mental Health Services, Home-Delivered Meals for Elderly, Home-Bound Meals, WIC, Tobacco Cessation Education	3408 S Texas Ave	Bryan	77802	(979) 260-4016	http://www.bvcaa.org/
8	Brazos Valley Council of Governments (BVCOG)	GED Program, Housing Choice Voucher Program, County Indigent Health Care Program, Aging and Disability Resource Center, Health Education and Food Assistance	3991 E 29th St.	Bryan	77802	(979) 595-2800	http://www.bvcog.org/
9	Catholic Charities of Central Texas	Utility Assistance, Health Services, Disaster Response, Counseling Services, Immigration Services	1410 Cavitt Ave.	Bryan	77801	(979) 822-9340	http://ccctx.org/about/contact-us/
10	City of Bryan	Rental Assistance, Homebuyer Education, Counseling	300 S Texas Ave	Bryan	77803	(979) 209-5000	https://www.bryantx.gov/

11	City of College Station	Tenant Based Rental Assistance, Down Payment Assistance, Home repair/improvement assistance, Homebuyer Education Counseling	1101 Texas Ave.	College Station	77840	979-764-3500	http://www.cstx.gov/index.aspx
12	Crestview Retirement Community	Senior Citizen Services	2505 E. Villa Maria Road	Bryan	77802	(979) 774-9938	http://www.mrccaff.org/crestview.aspx
13	Elder Aid	Utility/Emergency Service Payment Assistance (once every 12 months), home repair/improvement assistance	307 S. Main, Ste. 105	Bryan	77803	(979) 823-5127	http://elderaidbcs.org/
14	Embrace Brazos Family	Housing Assistance	200 Tabor Rd.	Bryan	77803	(979) 703-1976	N/A
15	Emmanuel Lighthouse Mission	Homeless Shelter	307 N Houston Ave	Bryan	7803	(979) 822-0441	http://www.ebcryan.org/elm
16	Everyday Life, Inc.	Residential Rehab Center	6955 Broach Rd	Bryan	77808	(979) 589-1885	http://www.everydaylifertc.com/Home.html
17	Family Promise of Bryan-College Station	Homeless Shelter	1806 Wilde Oak Cr.	Bryan	77803	(979) 268-4309	http://familypromisebcs.org/
18	Genesis Corner House	Shelter & Counseling Services	P. O. Box 461	Bryan	77806	(979) 703-6017	http://genesiscornerhousebcs.org
20	Habitat For Humanity	Housing Planning, Course, No-interest Mortgage	119 Lake Street	Bryan	77802	(979) 823-7200	http://www.habitatbcs.org/
21	Heritage at Dartmouth	Affordable Housing (elderly & people with special needs)	2518 Dartmouth St	Bryan	77840	(979) 485-0103	N/A
22	LULAC Oak Hill Apartments	Affordable Housing (Section 202 housing)	1105 Anderson Street	College Station	77840	(979) 693-6676	N/A
23	Save our Streets Ministries	Homeless Shelter	1700 Groesbeck St	Bryan	77803	(979) 775-5357	http://saveourstreetsministries.org/

24	Salvation Army	Utility Assistance (electric, gas, and water service payment assistance), Food Pantry	2506 Cavitt	Bryan	77802	(979)779-3470	http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/plugins/gdosCenterSearch?query=77840&mode=query_1&limit=20
25	Santour Court	Affordable Housing (single-family homes)	3900 Santour Ct.	College Station	77845	(979) 485-0103	N/A
26	Southgate Village Apartments	Affordable Housing (Section 8 housing)	134 Luther Street	College Station	77840	(979) 696-3702	N/A
27	St. Vincent de Paul Society	Utility/Emergency Service Payment Assistance (rent, mortgage, or utility assistance once every 12 months), Eye Exam Expense & Prescription Assistance	300 N. Main	Bryan	77803	(979) 823-4369	http://www.svdpusa.org/
28	Terrace Pines Apartments	Affordable Housing (elderly)	819 Krenek Tap Rd.	College Station	77840	(979) 695-9889	http://www.lan克福ordinterests.com/locations/terracepines.html
29	The Haven Apartments	Affordable Housing (transitional housing community)	2526 Dartmouth St	College Station	77840	(979) 694-2576	N/A
30	The Texas Ramp Project, B/CS Chapter	Accessibility assistance (builds wheelchair ramps for low-income disabled)	2331 W. Briargate	Bryan	77802	214.675.1230	http://www.texasramps.org/

31	Twin City Mission	Emergency Shelter (The Bridge Homeless Shelter) , Transitional Shelter (Housing Support Services), The Bridge shelter café, Youth and Family Services, Temporary Shelter, Counseling & Case Management	P. O. Box 3490	Bryan	77805	979-822-7511	http://www.twincitymission.org/index.html
32	Villas of Rock Prairie	Affordable Housing (elderly)	100 Mortier Dr	College Station	77845	(979) 693-8129	http://www.villasofrockprairie.com/
33	Windsor Pointe Apartments	Affordable Housing	2500 Central Park Lane	College Station	77840	(979) 694-1111	http://www.housingforme.com/Windsor_Pointe.php
Education & Youth Development							
	Name:	Services:	Location:	City:	ZIP Code:	Phone:	Website:
1	A&M Church of Christ-Lincoln House of Hope	GED Preparation Classes, Faith & Finances Education	1013 Eleanor	College Station	77840	(979) 693-0400	N/A
2	Barbara Bush Parent Center	GED & ESL Instruction	1200 George Bush Drive	College Station	77840	(979) 764-5504	http://www.csisd.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=164280&type=d&pREC_ID=337650
3	Big Brothers Big Sisters of Brazos Valley	Youth Support and Engagement	315 Tauber Street	College Station	77840	(979) 224-3660	http://www.bigmentor.org/site/c.biKPI7NPIo16F/b.8718353/k.6694/Bryan_College_Station.htm
4	BISD Migrant Education	Youth Development, Migrant Education, Options or Young Parents, Project Home	101 N. Texas Avenue	Bryan	77803	(979) 209-1033	http://www.bryanisd.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=366634&type=d&pREC_ID=818265
5	Bluebonnet Girl Scout Council	Youth Development	4240 Boonville Rd.	Bryan	77802	979) 774-0050	N/A

6	Boys and Girls Club of Brazos Valley	Youth Development	900 W William Joel Bryan Pkwy	Bryan	77803	(979) 822-7516	https://www.bgcbv.org/
7	Brazos County Veterans Services	Veterans Services	200 South Texas Ave. Suite 264	Bryan	77803	(979) 361-4360	https://www.brazoscountytexas.gov/index.aspx?NID=178
8	Brazos Valley Affordable Housing Corporation	Community Development Housing Programs, Homebuyer Education Counseling	4001 E. 29th St. Suite 180	Bryan	77801	979-595-2809	http://bvahc.org/
9	Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living	Disability Services (Independent Living Skills and Support)	1869 Briarcrest Dr.	Bryan	77803	(979) 776-5505	http://bvciil.org/
10	Brazos Valley Community Action Agency (BVCAA)	Head Start/Early Head Start, Community Development Housing Programs, Utility Assistance (electric and gas bill assistance), Home Repair/Rehabilitation Assistance, Medical Services, Dental Services, Mental Health Services, Home-Delivered Meals for Elderly, Home-Bound Meals, WIC, Tobacco Cessation Education	3408 S Texas Ave	Bryan	77802	(979) 260-4016	http://www.bvcaa.org/
11	Brazos Valley Council on Alcohol and Substance Abuse (BVCASA)	Drug Treatment Program, Substance Abuse Education	4001 E 29th St.	Bryan	77802	(979) 595-2801	http://bvccasa.org/
12	Brazos Valley Council of Governments (BVCOG)	GED Program, Housing Choice Voucher Program, County Indigent Health Care Program, Aging and Disability	3991 E 29th St.	Bryan	77802	(979) 595-2800	http://www.bvcog.org/

		Resource Center, Health Education and Food Assistance					
13	Bryan Adult Learning Center	GED & ESL Instruction	1700 Palasota Dr.	Bryan	77803	(979) 703- 7740	http://www.br yanalc.org/
14	Catholic Charities of Central Texas	Utility Assistance, Health Services, Disaster Response, Counseling Services, Immigration Services	1410 Cavitt Ave.	Bryan	77801	(979) 822- 9340	http://ccctx.org /about/contact- us/
15	ChildreNinos Bilingual Education	Education and Youth Development	2911 Texas Ave. # 203	College Station	77845	(979) 229- 5625	http://www.chi ldreninos.org/
16	City of Bryan Parks and Recreation Department	Youth Development	1309 E Martin Luther King Jr St	Bryan	77803	(979) 209- 5528	http://www.br yantx.gov/park s-and- recreation/
17	City of College Station Parks & Recreation Department	Youth Development	1000 Krenek Tap Rd	College Station	77840	(979) 764- 3486	http://www.cst x.gov/index.as px?page=351
18	C.S. Fire Dept. Injury Prevention Camp	Youth Development	P.O. Box 9960	College Station	77842	979-764- 3712	http://www.cst x.gov/index.as px?page=319
19	CSISD Head Start	Education and Youth Development	1812 Welsh	College Station	77840	(979) 764- 5423	http://www.csi sd.org/apps/pa ges/index.jsp? uREC_ID=164 538&type=d& pREC_ID=337 804
20	CSISD Special Services	Education and Youth Development	1812 Welsh	College Station	77840	(979) 764- 5400	http://www.csi sd.org/apps/pa ges/index.jsp? uREC_ID=262 569&type=d
21	Consumer Credit Counseling Service	Financial Counseling	3833 S. Texas Ave, Ste 275	Bryan	77802	979-822- 6110	N/A
22	Department of Protective & Regulatory Services	Counseling and Protection	2400 Osborn	Bryan	77803	(979) 776- 3637	https://www.df ps.state.tx.us/

23	Dual After School Program - D.A.S.P.	Education and Youth Development	3715 Walley Oaks Dr.	Bryan	77802	979-485-2992	http://www.dualafterschool.com/
24	1st & Goal Foundation	Youth Development	PO Box 5635	Bryan	77803	N/A	1st_goalfoundation@comcast.net
25	George Bush Presidential Library Foundation	Youth Development	Texas A&M University, 1145 TAMU	College Station	77840	(979) 691-4000	http://bush41.org/presidential-library-foundation
26	Girls Club of the Brazos Valley	Youth Development	P. O. Box 1228	Bryan	77806	(979) 822-6312	N/A
19	Goodwill Industries	Affordable Clothing, Job Training	2600 Texas Avenue	Bryan	77802	(979) 764-8297	http://www.goodwill.org/
27	Junction Five-O-Five	Disability Services (Employment Training and Assistance)	4410 College Main	Bryan	77801	(979) 846-3670	http://www.junction505.org/
28	Lone Star Legal Aid	Legal Aid	200 E. 24th Street, Suite A	Bryan	77803	(979) 775-5050	http://www.lonestarlegal.org/
29	Neal Recreation Center	Youth Development	600 N Randolph Ave	Bryan	77803	(979) 209-5210	https://www.bryantx.gov/parks-and-recreation/parks-and-facilities-listings/
30	North Bryan Community Center	Youth Development	705 N Houston Ave	Bryan	77803	(979) 823-2490	N/A
31	Project Unity	HIV/AIDS Case Management, Parenting Program, Food Pantry	4001 E. 29th Street	Bryan	77802	(979) 595-2900	http://www.projectunitytx.org
32	Read by 3rd	Education and Youth Development	308 E. Villa Maria Rd.	Bryan	77801	(979) 209-1008	http://www.readby3rd.org/
33	Scotty's House	Supportive Programs for Abused Children	2424 Kent Street	Bryan	77802	(979) 703-8813	https://www.scottyshouse.org/
34	Sexual Assault Resource Center (SARC)	Free counseling, accompaniment, and education to assault victims	PO Box 3082	Bryan	77805	979-731-1000	http://www.sarcbv.org/
35	Sheltering Arms	Child Abuse Information and Treatment Center	2505 S College Ave	Bryan	77801	(979) 822-5482	N/A

36	Texas Cooperative Extension	Youth Development, Health Education	2619 TX-21	Bryan	77803	(979) 823-0129	http://brazos.grilife.org/
37	Texas Veterans Commission	Job Training & Assistance	200 South Texas Ave. Suite 264	Bryan	77803	(979) 361-4360	https://www.brazoscountytx.gov/index.aspx?NID=178
38	United Way of the Brazos Valley	Financial Fitness Center, GoldSavers IDA Program	909 Southwest Parkway	College Station	77840	(979) 696-4483	http://www.uwbv.org/
39	Voices For Children	Youth Development	115 N. Main Street	Bryan	77803	(979) 822-9700	http://voicesforchildreninc.org/
40	Workforce Solutions - Brazos Valley	Employment Services, Childcare Expense Assistance, Job Assistance Center	3991 East 29 th Street	Bryan	77802	(979) 595-2800	http://bvjobs.org/

Appendix 4: Brazos County Early Childhood Education Providers

Organization	Description	# Children Served
<i>Early Head Start¹³⁹ (pregnant mothers, children aged 0-2)</i>		
Brazos Valley Community Action Agency	Full-day, 5-day/week center-based education; home visits	44
College Station ISD	Home visits	100
<i>Head Start³ (children aged 3-5)</i>		
Brazos Valley Community Action Agency	Full-day, 5-day/week center-based education; home visits	514
College Station ISD	Full-day, 5-day/week center-based education	196
<i>Free Public Pre-K¹⁴⁰ (children aged 4)</i>		
Bryan ISD	Half-day, 5-day/week school-based education	670
College Station ISD	Half-day, 5-day/week school-based education	305
<i>Accredited Private Child Care Providers^{141,142} (population served varies)</i>		
Allen Academy	Pre-K program based at private school	325 (PK-12)
Becky Gates Children's Center	Center-based education and care for children of TAMU employees and students	165 (12 mos. - 5 yr.)
The Brazos School for Inquiry and Creativity - Bryan Campus	Pre-K program based at open-enrollment charter school	Not available
Kinder Care 839	Center-based education and care; programs vary	124 (infants through school-age)
Kinder Care 843	Center-based education and care; programs vary	109 (infants through school-age)
Primrose School of College Station	Center-based education and care; programs vary	233 (infants through school-age)
St. Joseph Catholic School Early Learning Center	Center-based education and care for children 8 wks to 3 yrs old; St. Joseph's also has a pre-K program for 4-year-olds	270 (8 wk. - 3 yrs)

¹³⁹ Office of Head Start. 2015. Program Service Reports. Accessed March 2016.
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/data/psr>.

¹⁴⁰ Texas Education Agency. 2014. Texas Academic Performance Reports. Accessed March 2016.
<https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tapr/2015/index.html>.

¹⁴¹ Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. 2015. Search of accredited Brazos County child care serving Infants, Toddlers, and Preschool-Aged Children. Accessed March 2016.
https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Search_Texas_Child_Care/ppFacilitySearchDayCare.asp.

¹⁴² Texas Private School Accreditation Commission. 2016. Search of Brazos County private schools. Accessed April 2016. <http://www.tepsac.org/#/search/schools>

St. Thomas Early Learning Center	Center-based education and care; programs vary	114 (infants through kindergarten)
<i>Non-Accredited Private Child Care Providers (population served varies)</i>		
47 organizations throughout Bryan and College Station	Programs vary	4,579 (infants through school-age)