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## Neighborhoods of Refuge: A PhotoVoice Project Proposal

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*Neighborhoods of Refuge: A PhotoVoice Project*, is a collaboration between Florida International University, Miami Dade College, and Camillus House. It explores intersections between homelessness and the merging of public and private spheres from the perspective of those experiencing homelessness in various forms. During the project, participants in Camillus House's art therapy program digitally photographed the neighborhoods they live in and frequent, primarily Overtown and adjacent neighborhoods. The photographers explored challenges, opportunities, stigma, and day-to-day realities related to homelessness. The resulting photographs, captions and poems are both works of art as well as data, serving the dual purpose of human expression for expression's sake while also contributing to bodies of knowledge on homelessness. In addition to using the grounded, ethnographic method of PhotoVoice, we used GIS mapping of housing and social service providers addressing homelessness to identify how they are clustered in specific neighborhoods.

In order to reach a wider audience, researchers and community partners worked alongside participants to fashion digital and physical exhibitions of their work. The digital exhibition is a website that provides an opportunity to continue the project beyond its initial funded time period. We advise others to have a clear technology plan before beginning a similar project, including how files will be stored and accessed, and a way to introduce digitization throughout the project as opposed to in the end. In our presentation, we will explore the website with the audience, highlighting the key themes about urban space and homelessness revealed through the photographers' work. These themes included how urban spaces in and around downtown

Miami can be exclusionary as well as inclusionary, and settings for community formation and self-transformation. We will also explore with the audience how to use the digital exhibition as a vehicle to advance public dialogue about homelessness and Miami's affordable housing crisis.