Note from CCI Director

Our thoughts are with all who have experienced suffering and loss throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite challenges, we have had another successful year with the Center for Civic Innovation (CCI) summer internship program. We welcomed 48 interns representing 15 schools into our virtual internship in 2021. Interns contributed to 12 community-engaged projects focused on themes including sustainability of RVs at end-of-life, access to healthy food, pedestrian-friendly trails, neighborhood development, safe and affordable housing, community asset mapping, traffic calming, equitable access to data, and K-12 STEM engagement. Further details about these projects and related work are included in this report.

We were excited to receive a National Science Foundation Improving Undergraduate STEM Education research grant that will provide $1.2M to CCI, $700,000 to partners at Youngstown State University, and $700,000 to partners at the University of Louisville to replicate CCI’s Community-Engaged Educational Ecosystem Model in these partner Rust Belt Cities over the next four years. CCI’s associate director for research, Dr. Danielle Wood, will lead the grant with several other team members contributing. These funds will also support interns and projects in our local community.

As always, we are very thankful for the support of our community partners, mentors, and sponsors who provide so much in so many ways to our talented interns.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jay Brockman, Director
CCI presented the **Bud Ahearn Leadership Award** at the 2021 Final Presentations for each location. This annual award is named in honor of the late Joseph "Bud" Ahearn, distinguished Notre Dame alumnus and supporter of the CCI Internship Program. Awardees exemplify Bud’s principles of leadership, selflessness, service to others, and commitment to fostering meaningful relationships.

**Gary Gilot Civil Service Award**

The **Gary Gilot Award for Civil Service** is named in honor of CCI Internship co-founder and current volunteer project mentor Gary Gilot. Awardees exemplify Gary’s principles of a heart for civil service, servant-leadership mindset, and doing things “with” and not “for” or “to” the community.

**ELKHART AWARD WINNERS**

**Bud Ahearn Leadership Award**
- Grace Wetli
  - Hometown — West Lafayette, Ind.
  - Rising sophomore chemical engineering major at the University of Notre Dame
  - Part of the Advanced Manufacturing & Sustainability Project team

**Gary Gilot Civil Service Award**
- Miguel Sanchez
  - Hometown — Goshen, Ind.
  - Rising second-year liberal arts major at Ivy Tech Community College
  - Part of the Tolson Neighborhood Project team

**SOUTH BEND AWARD WINNERS**

**Bud Ahearn Leadership Award**
- Marilyn Zizumbo
  - Hometown — Corona, Calif.
  - Senior studying environmental engineering at the University of Notre Dame
  - Part of the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Project team

**Gary Gilot Civil Service Award**
- John Healy
  - Hometown — Rochester, N.Y.
  - Sophomore studying electrical engineering at the University of Notre Dame
  - Part of the dataMichiana Project team

**Academic Year Courses and Capstone Projects**

- **Civic Innovation Project Reflections**
  - Dr. Danielle Wood and Alisa Zorning Gura

- **Community Based Leadership**
  - Dr. Kara Boyles

- **Complex Problem Solving in the Public Sphere**
  - Dr. Jay Brockman and Dr. Danielle Wood
Elkhart Internship Project List

The Elkhart cohort consisted of 14 total interns this summer, tackling 4 community engagement projects with the assistance of 7 Elkhart community mentors. The projects focused on subjects including recreational vehicle (RV) end-of-life-cycle sustainability in collaboration with Thor Industries, public trail design proposals, bilingual communication in schools, and community asset mapping.

Advanced Manufacturing
Interns worked closely with THOR Industries in Elkhart to research RV end-of-life cycle sustainability and help identify opportunities to limit landfill waste. Objectives included researching current usability of RVs (lifespan, end-of-life destinations), composing a list of opportunities for reuse and repurpose of RVs, and developing a premature business plan based on RV reuse.

Elkhart Trails
This project was designed to work with organizations in the City of Elkhart to create a signage proposal for the New River Greenway trail. Promoting more active pedestrian transportation in Elkhart, our interns worked to make it simple and attractive for people to take advantage of the trail. The group researched wayfinding techniques and formulated a proposal plan based on feedback and resources from community partners.

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Food Information Networks
To address the issue of limited access to healthy food options among vulnerable populations, CCI partnered with Notre Dame faculty, Purdue Extension, and Saint Joseph County Health Department to address food-decision support and access problems using recommendation technologies based on user needs and preferences. The team created an initial prototype of an app that gathers and stores user information and compiled a written report on the sustainability of a food hub delivery model.

Southeast Neighborhood Housing Rehabilitation
CCI partnered with South Bend community development corporation 466 Works to research housing rehabilitation best practices and create a process map for acquisition of homes for rehabilitation. 466 Works will be able to apply this process to future housing rehabilitation projects.

Pre-approved Building Plans
CCI partnered with the City of South Bend Department of Community Investment, independent consultants, and Notre Dame staff to test the viability of various housing designs on local lots. Interns developed site plans, proformas, and a final report with recommendations.

Urban Sustainability and Resiliency Project
CCI partnered with the South Bend City Forester to modify the existing tree planting program application that included distribution criteria to ensure trees were planted in under-resourced areas first. The team also started a process with the Department of Public Works to acquire three additional vacant lots for new native tree nurseries.

Rum Village Neighborhood Traffic Calming
CCI and the City of South Bend Engineering Department partnered to create a unique internship experience. The interns received professional mentorship, training, and project management support from CCI while working in person with the City’s Division of Engineering. For this project, interns facilitated and presented at two community meetings, collected and analyzed traffic data, and created and presented a proposal to the Engineering Department for traffic calming in the Rum Village Neighborhood.

dataMichiana
For the second summer, CCI partnered with Notre Dame faculty and community members to construct data narrative storyboards through ArcGIS that were focused on areas related to housing mobility. They developed new data visualizations focused on areas related to internet access and preventative health measures. This team also developed a data viewing tool featuring multiple map layers with data relevant to the Michiana region.
Thank you to our partners!
City of South Bend • Elkhart Community Schools • enFocus, Inc. • City of Elkhart • SOAR • 466 Works • South Bend Venues Parks & Arts • ND LIT • THOR Industries • INDustry Labs • Riley High School • South Bend Regional Chamber • MACOG • Bike Elkhart County • La Casa De Amistad • Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce

Funding for 2021 CCI Internship Program generously provided by:
University of Notre Dame College of Engineering • University of Notre Dame Office of Public Affairs • University of Notre Dame Office of Research

Funding for interns provided by:
University of Notre Dame College of Science • enFocus, Inc. (grant) • Ivy Tech Community College • John and Katie Anthony Family • Judd A. Leighton Foundation (grant) • USDA NIFA (grant) • Wilson Family in conjunction with South Bend Venues Parks & Arts • Community Foundation of Elkhart County (grant) • INDustry Labs • Elkhart Community Schools • Holy Cross College • Indiana EARN • Anonymous Grants • Anonymous Individual Gifts

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CCI MISSION
“To promote the common good by building partnerships between Notre Dame faculty, staff, and community organizations that foster innovative research and educational programs.”

CCI VISION
Be a national model of innovation and learning for the common good within a community